

THIS MINISTRY THAT WE SHARE

OCTOBER, 2008

Dear Pastors and Pastors' Wives, Pastors' Widows, Vicars and Wives, DCEs and Spouses, Principals and Spouses, and DCOs and Spouses and Deaconesses and Spouses,

GREAT IS HIS FAITHFULNESS

“ . . . for his steadfast love endures for ever!” (Psalm 106:1b)



In the month of October we celebrate the Reformation. Many have often wondered what enabled Dr. Martin Luther to be the driving force he came to be, during the Reformation. The answer can be found in our verse this month. Dr. Luther knew the security of God's love. Sharing in that security of God's love is the heart of our heritage of faith. It is firm and sure, an immovable rock on which to build, and an anchor to cling to in stormy seas. Vastly different from human love, it is not based on chemistry, feelings, like-mindedness or performance. We can trust in His love no matter what we do or what happens to us. He simply but profoundly loves us.

God's faithfulness is not measured by the instability and fickleness of man's soul. God's love is based on His nature, and on His faithfulness to Himself. In His love, He made a unilateral, unbreakable covenant with His people, no matter what they say or how they act. There are consequences for their choices, but He does not stop loving them, nor does He renege on the covenant. God has a plan to bless and fulfill all of His people. He is faithful to that plan, whether or not individuals refuse or reject His desired blessing for them.

At the foot of Mount Sinai the people of Israel quickly turned aside from the way of Yahweh, created other gods, and spent their time eating, drinking and playing. When in His wrath God turned away from them, Moses appealed to Him, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou didst swear by thine own self " (Exodus 32:13). Psalm 106 recounts Israel's rebellion, murmuring, provoking, and serving idols. Consequences were inevitable, but God never left them.

When the invited guests refused to come to the wedding feast, making light of the invitation and following the gods of labor and business, the ultimate blessing was not dependent upon their reaction. God continued with His perfect plan to save and bless His people by inviting others. The feast was held and continues to be held, because it is His will that it be so. It is by His steadfast love that we participate. Thanks be to God!

Prayer: We rejoice, Father, in your faithfulness and steadfast love for us. Help us to grow in that love, that we may reflect it to a troubled and unstable world. Amen.

Pastor Schultz

LET US PRAY...

IN MEMORIAM

✘ **Commissioned Minister Ralph Bleeke** ✘

May 29, 1931 – September 30, 2008

Ralph leaves to cherish his memory four children: Jonathan, Steven, Debra, and Lisa. Ralph's wife, Peg, preceded him in death on February 11, 2008.

Birthplace: Fort Wayne, Indiana

Graduated: Concordia University - Chicago / 1960 (BS), 1966 (Med)

Commissioned: August 7, 1960

Ministries:

- New Guinea Mission Field / 1960-1974
- Lutheran High School – Metairie, LA / 1975-1988)
- Redeemer – Pensacola, FL / 1988-1996
- In retirement, Ralph served as the pastoral commissioned minister at First Lutheran in Floral, AL, 1997-2001.

Memorial Service: Redeemer – Pensacola, FL; October 18th, 3 PM

Officiant: Rev. Chris Cole and Rev. Robert G. Rupp, Pastor Emeritus of Redeemer – Pensacola, FL

We thank God for Ralph's service and ministry!
We praise God that Ralph now enjoys the fullness of eternal life
in his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ who has summoned him to glory!

ILLNESSES AND INJURIES

- **Linette Cooper (Wife of Adam, retired from St. Matthew – Gulfport, MS)** had her first chemotherapy treatment on September 30th and is now feeling the effects.
- **Harlan Heiserman (Shepherd of the Bay – Lillian, AL)** has completed cycle 1 of his new chemotherapy regimen. His side effects have been tolerable. If his blood numbers are stable, he will begin his next cycle soon.
- **Hal Kieschnick (former Executive Assistant for Parish Services)** has been given an experimental drug to treat his cancer. The side effects keep him tired.
- **Regina Miller (mother of Melanie Cole the wife of Chris Cole newly installed pastor of Redeemer – Pensacola, FL)** was recently hospitalized due to the medication toxicity. We praise God that she has been released from the hospital and continues to return to health at home.
- **Mindy Schrader (Wife of Stephen who serves Prince of Peace – Ft. Payne, AL)** continues her treatments for cancer.

May these friends be led by the Spirit to know they are held in nail pierced hands and are being lifted up in prayer by their fellow saints throughout the District.

Will you or someone in your congregation be receiving care at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota?

Trinity Lutheran Church of Rochester offers their TLCare ministry to out of town medical guests. We strive to serve people in many ways such as prayer support, a homemade meal, a visit from one of our caring members, free parking in our lot, a comfortable place to go between appointments, and more. Please let us know when you are coming to town by emailing Jennifer at tlcjennifer@charterinternet.com or Pastor Otte at pastorotte@charterinternet.com.

EXPECTING

- **Floyd and Sherrill Smithey (Our Savior – Columbus, MS)** are going to be grandparents! Jesse and Laura are expecting a baby around the end of October.
- **Eric and Corinna Hollar (Good Shepherd – Biloxi, MS)** praise God as they await the arrival of their third child due in January.

SIGNIFICANT DISTRICT & CHURCH OCCASIONS / EVENTS

NEW WORKERS' ORIENTATION-----

On September 25th, professional church workers new to the Southern District since September, 2007, met at the district office in Mandeville, LA. Twenty-four were in attendance including DCE and Deaconess Interns. Background stories were shared. The executive staff presented various topics pertinent to the Southern District.



GROUNDBREAKING-----

Immanuel – Bossier City, LA, broke ground for their new sanctuary on August 31st. Long-time pastor, **Sig Kunz**, serves Immanuel with **Vicar Sean Smith**. The targeted completion date is July 2009.

The current construction is the first phase of a three-phased building program. Once the sanctuary and attending renovations have been completed, and funds become available, the congregation is poised to build a 7,000 square foot fellowship/education facility.



ANNIVERSARY SERVICES-----

- ✘ **ST. PAUL – BIRMINGHAM, AL**, kicked off their 55th Anniversary Celebration on April 27th. The festive year is coming to an end when on **October 17th** with an anniversary banquet celebration will be held. President Schultz will be the guest speaker. Their long-time pastor, Tom Noon, will retire a short time later on **November 9th**.
- ✘ **HOLY TRINITY – TUPELO, MS**, will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of their charter on the **19th of October**. A special afternoon worship service (3 PM) will be held with a celebration program and dinner following.
- ✘ **FAITH – SHREVEPORT, LA**, will celebrate their 25th anniversary in a 3:00 PM service on **October 19th**. Wes Toncre will preach. Wes served in the Shreveport area a number of years.
- ✘ **CHRIST – ALBERTVILLE, AL**, will celebrate their 25th anniversary on **November 9th** in their 10:30 AM worship service.

WELCOME-----

Errol Montgomery has now been certified and roistered through the Colloquy Program as an Ordained Minister on the roster of ordained ministers of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Pastor Errol Montgomery and his wife grew up in the LCMS in California. He migrated to the Episcopal church, where he was trained for the pastoral ministry in a small, traditionally conservative seminary. After twelve years of pastoral service in the ECUSA, Errol desired to return to the LCMS. He and his wife, Julie, are parents of two adopted boys from Ethiopia named Timothy and Titus. Presently Errol and his family are members of Trinity – Monroe, LA, where he is assisting with pastoral care while awaiting a call. He brings gifts in the areas of preaching, liturgical worship, spiritual renewal, and a great love of God's people

Christopher Cole was installed at **Redeemer – Pensacola, FL**, on October 5th. President Schultz officiated at the service and installed Chris. The members of Redeemer prepared a Southern dinner following the installation with cheese grits, hush puppies and cole slaw as just a few of the offerings. Chris is a native of Minneapolis where he most likely had different types of meals. He comes to our District from the Missouri District where he served Immanuel – Perryville, MO, as Associate Pastor. Chris and his wife, Melanie, were married in May of this year.

GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

PROJECT CONNECT

Bring hope to your community through Project Connect www.lhm.org/projectconnect/aboutus.htm. Project Connect is an indispensable on-site outreach booklet display ministry resource that uses displays of topical LHM booklets, written from a Christian perspective, to help church members share Christ with the lost.

For more information call 800-944-3450 or e-mail nancy.kellerhals@lhm.org.

OUR STEWARDSHIP OF HIS RESOURCES

<u>DISTRICT/SYNOD MISSION SUPPORT</u>		
BUDGET	2007 (1,080,000)	2008 (1,090,000)
Budget through Sept 15 th	\$720,000	\$726,667
Income through Sept 15 th	\$692,837	\$654,857

The 2009 Salary Guidelines have been posted on Southern District website. To locate them, go to www.southernlcms.org, click on **Resources**, then on **For Congregational Leaders**.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS-2008 and 2009!

SOUTHERN and FLORIDA-GEORGIA DISTRICTS BLACK CHURCHMEN'S CONFERENCE

Trinity Lutheran Church – Selma, AL, (Steve Washington, Pastor) will host this conference October 20-22 beginning at noon on October 20th. Instead of inviting a guest speaker or presenter, the conference has chosen to unpack the passage from Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Their theme is “What Is Christ Saying To And Through His Church?”

2009 GULF DISTRICT LLL CONVENTION

March 20-21 – Pensacola, FL
Rev. Norm Schulz, Chairman

2009 SOUTHERN DISTRICT PASTORS' CONFERENCE

Tentative dates: April 27-30

DISTRICT CONVENTION NEWS WORTH NOTING

AS A RESULT

- of the suggested bylaw changes approved at the 2006 district convention; and,

AS A RESULT

- of the subsequent work of the Southern District Ad Hoc Committee on *Board of Directors Representation*; and,

AS A RESULT

- of the approval by the Board of Directors in their October 2008 meeting; and,

AS A RESULT

- of the approval by Synod's Committee on Constitutional Matters a

**NEW PROCESS FOR NOMINATIONS FOR DISTRICT OFFICES IS IN PLACE.
WATCH FOR DETAILS.**

Members of the 2009 Nominations Committee:

Rev. Kevin C. Kieschnick of LINCNew Orleans – RAI – New Orleans, LA
Rev. Ulmer Marshall of Trinity – Mobile, AL
Rev. Thomas R. Noon – St. Paul – Birmingham, AL (appointed as Chair)
Layperson Gerald “Jerry” L. Babin of St. James – Gonzales, LA
Layperson Nancy Kaul of St. John – Hattiesburg, MS
Commissioned Minister Charles Schiller of St. Paul – New Orleans, LA.

DISTRICT CONVENTION DATES: JUNE 18-20, 2009

→ If you are interested in the dates of other district conventions, click on this site.
<http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=13104>

THIS HOPE THAT WE SHARE – DISASTER RECOVERY



The President's Office has been alerted to the URGENT need for volunteers at Camp Restore and Camp Biloxi. Please consider joining with others in continuing the recovery work for those affected by Hurricane Katrina and now Hurricane Gustav and Hurricane Ike. Seven families of the congregation of Trinity – Baton Rouge, LA, are not in their homes due to extensive damage from Hurricane Gustav. Three of those homes were destroyed. There is much to be done!

To see RAI's (Recovery Assistance Incorporated) web site for their most recent news, go to - www.lcmsrelief.org - and choose Newsletter from the menu options.

DO YOU HAVE?-----

Greetings in Christ from Grace Lutheran Church in Houma, Louisiana.

Hurricane Gustav's fierce winds knocked out the huge stained glass window of the Jesus the Good Shepherd which stood behind our altar. Praise God that those winds must have been driving the rain in a different direction because, despite the gaping hole, we had no water come into the sanctuary and are not dealing with any stink or mold issues. However, we do have an 18' x 5' hole above the altar sealed by plywood. It will likely be many months for the window to be recast. We are wondering if any church out there has a really big banner or wall hanging that we could use to cover the hole until the window is replaced. It's a big hole, but you never know what churches hang on to because "it might come in handy someday." If you think you might have something to fit our need, please call (985) 879-1865 or email me at richrudnik@hotmail.com.

Pastor Rich Rudnik

DISASTER RELIEF NEEDED IN TEXAS URGENT NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS-----

This message was received from Wyatt A. Schultz, Technology Coordinator – Lutheran South Academy. www.core-alliance.org

There is a great need for work teams here in SE Texas after Hurricane Ike and it seems the urgency to help has dissipated. Please heighten the awareness of this problem and encourage your mission minded members to consider rousting some teams together ASAP.

In SE Texas, and the Greater Gulf coast there are thousands of homes that are unlivable; and, as a result thousands of people homeless. This disaster relief is a grass-roots effort implemented by the people of Texas. Your help is needed.

This message was received from Julie Reid, Director of Grants and Public Relations – LINC Houston. www.linchouston.org

We are in dire need of volunteers here at LINC Houston. We are getting daily requests for relief work to be done and are struggling to come up with the needed volunteers. We know that it will be a long road, but God has already worked so many countless miracles in our efforts.

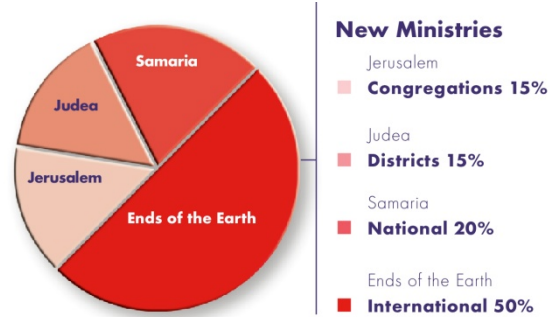
We have an amazing team of people at LINC Houston. **Dave Buss (Southern District Director – Recovery Assistance, Inc.)** has been invaluable in his suggestions and efforts. We are fortunate to be able to assist these families in recovering. That is our goal at LINC, to share Christ's love with the city.



Southern District *Fan into Flame* Progress

- A steering committee has been in place since November 2007
- Circuit coordinators have been identified for each circuit in the district
- Kindle gatherings have been held throughout the district to “kindle” an *Ablaze! / Fan into Flame* response
- Pilot congregations have stepped up and made their commitment
- Congregations are asked to consider hosting an appeal in their congregation by Advent 2008

Fan into Flame is a historic mission effort in the LCMS. ***Fan into Flame*** endeavors to support mission at all levels in accord with the Acts 1:8 concept:



We pray that that the **Fan into Flame** initiative will continue to make a difference in outreach at all levels for years to come. Your **Fan into Flame** circuit coordinator is an advocate and cheerleader for you and your congregation. The coordinators serve as partners and assistants in the **Fan into Flame** initiative.

FanintoFlame CIRCUIT COORDINATORS				Circuit
MR. CAL	BEHRENS	LA, NEW ORLEANS - LUTHERAN HIGH	504-455-4062	1-2-3
REV. SCOTT	SCHMIEDING	LA, BATON ROUGE – TRINITY	225-272-3110	4
REV. JOHN	KARLE	LA, NATCHITOCHE, LA	318-352-6708	5
REV. CHARLES	MILLER	LA, LAKE CHARLES - ST. JOHN	337-478-5666	6
REV. STEPHEN	KOENIG	MS, CLINTON - OUR REDEEMER	601-924-9999	7 C
REV. VIC	MASLOWSKI	MS, OLIVE BRANCH-BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR	662-890-7272	7 N
REV. EDDIE	SCHELER	AL, DECATUR - ST. PAUL'S	256-353-8759	8
REV. DAVID	MOERBE	AL, GARDENDALE - GOOD SHEPHERD	205-631-6590	9
REV. JAMES	BROWN	FL, PENSACOLA - ST. MATTHEW	850-477-0567	10
REV. KEITH	RINGERS	AL, ELBERTA-ST - MARK'S	251-986-8133	11
REV. FERRY	NYE	AL, MONTGOMERY - UNITED	334-262-4326	12/13
REV. PAUL	ELAM	AL, MONTGOMERY - ST. PAUL	334-272-6214	12/13
REV. ROD	PASCH	LA, SLIDELL - BETHANY	985-643-3043	14
REV. DANNY	KOYN	FL, PANAMA CITY - TRINITY	850-763-2412	15

What is Fan into Flame? **Fan into Flame** undergirds the innovative projects and mission goals that will advance the *Ablaze!* movement goal to share the Gospel with 100 million people worldwide. Gifts given through **Fan into Flame** will assist in revitalizing congregations to become mission outposts in their communities, developing programs to equip the laity with Bible-based evangelism instruction, calling additional missionaries for work in national and international mission fields, and planting new ministries at home and abroad.

PROGRESS REPORT:

National Gifts and Pledges: \$35.8 million
District Gifts and Pledges: \$256,170

Time continues to move along and we know that time is a gift for each of us to make an eternal difference through the sharing of the Gospel. Kindled hearts and minds will help us to see that Fan into Flame is much more than simply a financial appeal. It's about bringing the Gospel to those who do not yet know about Jesus! We do not want time to simply "run out" without a response by your congregation!

How can your congregation partner in this historic mission effort?

1. Take *Ablaze!* & ***Fan into Flame*** to your leadership for approval to participate.
2. Consider making a pledge over the next 5 years – above current district and Synod mission giving. *All* congregations in our district are asked to be part of this Synod effort.
3. At your approval meeting, vote to make a gift of new money that totals 10% of your annual giving budget (2%/year over the next 5 years). A congregation pledge form is available on the Southern District website at www.southernlcms.org. The pledge commitment is a “faith goal” and we find that most congregations exceed the goal and see the blessings of participation.
4. Keep your circuit coordinator informed and the district staff on how we can assist to have ***Fan into Flame*** being a positive experience. The District Office can provide the resource materials and support that you may need.
5. As always, pray for the success of ***Fan into Flame***. By giving God’s people a chance to support this historic mission funding effort, we acknowledge the blessings of God that we already enjoy and our gifts are a response to what He has done and continues to do among us.

Please also be free to call on the Southern District staff to assist as we continue to pray “Spirit Kindle.” It only takes a spark and sometimes it’s one person who catches the purpose of *Ablaze!* and ***Fan into Flame*** to see a renewed mission spirit and heart in the congregation. We believe there are people who are willing to “take the journey” as your congregation develops plans, and as you gather to celebrate the Spirit’s blessing through this initiative. To God be the glory as together we grow in mission and a heart for those not connected by faith to Jesus!

504-282-2632

FintoF@southernlcms.org
www.southernlcms.org

PARISH SERVICES

Commissioned Minister to the Southern District Board of Directors – The newly adopted District realignment includes several changes. The first of these deals with the nomination and election of the commissioned minister to the Board of Directors for 2008-2011. Nominations are now open as the new election process calls for the Commissioned Minister to the Board of Directors to be elected at the Conference prior to the Convention. Nominations will be accepted through October 23, 2008. The protocol for **nomination and election will be posted on the Southern District website – www.southernlcms.org** Sue Schiller was elected as the commissioned minister on the Board at the 2006 Convention. Agnes Pegues of Selma, AL is currently filling out that term as Sue went to be with the Lord in December 2006. Commissioned minister nominations may be submitted by any ordained minister, layperson, or commissioned minister.

Junior High/Middle School Gathering – [Early registrations must be postmarked by October 14 to secure the \\$79/person registration rate.](#)

“**Out of the Mud**” serves as the overall theme for this year’s gathering. The Scriptural foundation is based on Isaiah 64:8 “*But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter; we are all the work of Your hand.*” The weekend experience is designed to help youth cope with identity issues, as relationships are such a big part of their life. God from the very beginning created humanity out of the ground and gave His breathe. God continues the creation process today by making each of us unique and special. We want gathering participants to see God at work in their lives and by the power of the Spirit celebrate God’s ongoing handiwork.

Registration is open to students in Grades 6-8. Please note that we are encouraging congregations to consider involving one senior high youth per family group – a youth with leadership interests. (The senior high youth does not qualify as an adult chaperone.) We have two different sites from which you may choose. Both gatherings are scheduled for **November 14-16**. One gathering will be at the **Camp ASCCA** (near Dadeville, AL – between Montgomery and Birmingham). The other gathering is being hosted at **Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center** in Woodworth, LA (just south of Alexandria). Go to www.southernlcms.org to learn all about this year’s Gathering and how you can join in the experience!

Youth Ministry Leadership Training

The Southern District is hosting youth ministry leadership training for DCE’s and other church professionals (pastors, DCO’s, deaconess, etc.) and for volunteers who serve as youth ministry leaders on the congregational level. This special leadership training is being offered at Camp Dixie (near Elberta, AL) on February 5-7, 2009. Craig Oldenburg, former camp director at Camp Dixie, will serve as the facilitator for this training experience. The DCE and other church professional leadership training will begin on Thursday afternoon and conclude Friday night, with the option to stay over on Saturday. Youth ministry leader sessions, for those who serve on a volunteer basis, begin on Friday evening and conclude on Saturday, with an option to stay over for Sunday morning. This will be a special opportunity for leaders in youth ministry to connect with each other and build a stronger network among youth leaders in the district. The registration fee will be nominal and includes meals and lodging. We look forward to a good response!

Upcoming District Educators’ Conferences

Southern District Teachers’ Conference (November 23-25, 2008) hosted in Metairie, LA, with the theme of “**Back to the Future: Toddlers to Technology.**” Check out the information at the Southern District website.

VACANCIES/CALLS AS OF OCTOBER 6, 2008

CONGREGATIONS IN THE CALLING PROCESS FOR PASTOR

Auburn, AL – Trinity	Hartselle, AL – Christ Our Redeemer
Birmingham, AL – St. Paul’s	Mobile, AL – Mt. Calvary
Birmingham, AL – Vestavia Hills	Tuscaloosa, AL - University
Dothan, AL – Trinity	New Orleans, LA – Trinity (Algiers)
Foley, AL – St. Paul’s	Corinth, MS – Prince of Peace

KATRINA CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

New Orleans, LA – Bethel / Our Savior / Gloria Dei / Prince of Peace

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev Eric Hollar of Good Shepherd – Biloxi, MS, to Bethel – Claremont, NC

CALLS PENDING

Rev. Bruce Frederickson of Blaine, MN, to Trinity – Auburn, AL

PAX (sleeping peaceful in Christ),

Kurt