



This Ministry That We Share

*Southern District - LCMS
February-March 2014*



Sin, Sin, Sin!

"Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come." (Romans 5:14 RSV)



This is the time of the Christian year when the church makes a conscious effort to be aware of and to repent of sin, in preparation for the celebration of Easter. The forty long days of Lent remind us that this is no easy task. Most of the time we shy away from remembering that, although we are "saved," we are still sinners in the process of sanctification. We would rather go to worship and "Sing, Sing, Sing" (a song made famous by Benny Goodman, I know most of you are saying Benny who?), than take time with God to deal with our sin, sin, sin. Therefore it takes a concentrated endeavor to let God show us the areas of our lives which need confession, forgiveness, change, and healing.

Interesting conversations usually ensue when the subject of sin is introduced, and many people believe that it is an outmoded concept in this modern age. Blithely they think that if they had been in the Garden of Eden instead of Adam and Eve, they would have fared much better and saved us a whole lot of trouble. That is easy to say, especially in hindsight, but obviously anyone with that attitude is blinded to the ways in which they are tempted to sin regularly. In reality, people with proper self-awareness know that the story of Adam and Eve is a story about them, and that, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). No mere human being, even someone with high morals, foresight, inspired good intentions, and the sheer grit of dogged perseverance, could have prevented death from coming into the world and marring the order of creation. At the root, we are all the same.

Now, outside the Garden of Eden, as we face death, we are all humbled to know that none of us can conquer it. No foolish statements here. Only Jesus, the Son of God, was able to undo the undoing of Creation. Only Jesus could reconcile us rebellious ones to God in spite of our sin. Only Jesus could bring us back home. This is why we take time to face our sin, sin, sin, so that the stuff which makes us uneasy in God's presence can be eradicated, and we can be more at home with Him. Difficult as it might be to let God "search our hearts for any wicked way in us," it is a good time for coming closer to God and preparing for the celebration of eternal life at Easter, when we can sing, sing, sing with deep gratitude.

Jesus, by your grace I will never forget what you have done for me. Help me to yield to you those things which cause me to avoid you. Amen.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS - 2014

March 2	Installation John E. Karle	St. John Lutheran Church Hattiesburg, LA - 4 PM
March 7	So. Dist. Board of Directors	The Mission Center Slidell, LA
March 9	Installation David R. McIntyre	Zion Lutheran Church Clinton, LA - 2 PM
March 15	Opening Doors Hinge Event	First Lutheran Church Floral, AL
March 23	Installation Mark H Steiner	Our Savior Lutheran Church Columbus, MS - 4 PM
April 25-27	LWML Gulf States Dist. Convention	Marriott Conference Center Prattville, AL
April 25-27	LWML LA-MS Convention	Clarion Inns & Suites Monroe, LA
May 2	So Dist. Board of Directors	The Mission Center Slidell, LA
July 9-13	Black Ministry Family Convocation	Kansas City, MO
July 10-13	Senior High Youth Gathering	Camp Restore New Orleans, LA
Sept. 15-17	Annual Pastors' Conference	Grace Lutheran Church Destin, FL
Sept. 19	So. Dist. Board of Directors	The Mission Center Slidell, LA
Nov. 7-9	Junior High Youth Gathering	Blue Lake Camp Alabama
Nov. 14-16	Junior High Youth Gathering	Tall Timbers Camp Louisiana

REVITALIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION
check out the upcoming
MONTHLY FORUMS and HINGE EVENTS

Congregations in the Southern District can explore a variety of tools for revitalization & transformation. There is a tool that is right to get your congregation started from the basic (simple) to the complex which is more intensive. The important thing is to explore and get started. Overall health and vibrancy will increase through intentional exploration and setting a course of action.

An Exercise survey can be used to help assess where your congregation is in its life cycle. There are measures in five different areas. Also, there is an online survey available to help measure the eight hinge factors to establish a baseline of current performance. While these two tools measure person's perceptions, it is a means of getting in touch with reality.

First Lutheran in Florala, AL is host to an Opening Doors Hinge Event on **Saturday, March 15**. The focus of this Hinge Event will be on: **Basics in Revitalization & Starting a New Life Cycle in Your Church**. The Hinge Event begins at 9 a.m. and ends no later than 3 p.m. A nominal registration fee is charged to help cover cost of the lunch meal, refreshments, and materials.

Monthly forums on revitalization and transformation are being hosted at two sites:

- **New Orleans Area** (4th Tuesday of each month; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.)
- **Northshore/MS Gulf Coast** (4th Thursday of each month; 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.)

These forums are designed for pastor and leaders. Congregations are invited to bring a team as each Forum is an introduction to dimensions of revitalization/transformation. There is no fee for participation in the Forum.

For more information on revitalization/transformation on any of the above, contact Gene Menzel at **504-495-7436** or by e-mail at gwmenz@aol.com I am privileged to serve as the contractor to the Southern District for services in the area of revitalization/transformation.

YOUTH ALERT. . .

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
WATCH FOR DETAILS
SOUTHERN DISTRICT



SENIOR YOUTH GATHERING

July 10-13, 2014 @ Camp Restore in New Orleans, LA

The planning team is busy making preparations.

Share the dates now with your youth leaders.

NEW ORLEANS' PASTORS SHINE BRIGHT IN ST. LOUIS

Clergy of Circuit 1 (New Orleans and Chalmette, LA) were elected to the Executive Board for the Black Clergy Caucus of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod at its annual January meeting. This election took place in St. Louis January 27-30.

- President: **Rev. Byron Williams** (former pastor of **Trinity - New Orleans**)
- Vice-President: **Rev. Aubrey Watson** of **Holy Cross - New Orleans**
- Treasurer: **Rev. Jerome Terry** of **Bethel - New Orleans**
- Secretary: **Rev. Warren Lattimore** of **St. Paul's** (Annette St.) - **New Orleans**

The Black Clergy Caucus of the Lutheran Church, INC. is an organization of ordained black clergy striving to empower the African American Lutheran Church members to minister in the following areas: Evangelism, Ministerial Support, Education, Economic Development, Political Involvement and Awareness, Youth Development, Fellowship and Recruitment.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL and MAY GOD GUIDE YOUR WORK!

MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES



5 years. . .Rev. Dr. Carl Beckwith. . .April 26, 2009

5 years. . .Rev. M. Raymond "Ray" Angerman. . .April 26, 2009

25 years. . .Rev. David L. Goodine. . .May 21, 1989

THE THEOLOGY THAT GOT AWAY

A strange, new thing is happening at the St. Louis seminary. In response to so many pastors reflecting on their seminary training as being completely devoid of clear stewardship theology regarding time and money, the seminary is taking a proactive approach to help the seminarians understand their identity as stewards because they are

already beloved children of God.

I've heard it said that there are basically three kinds of people in the world: those who are good at math and those who are not!

Of course, stewardship is about far more than financial concerns but even so, Mammon has got to be one of the most popular titles.

Jesus told the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:13-21. Ultimately, he called his hearers to seek to be "rich toward God." It seems that the man in the parable had a priority list that looks something like this:

What Matters Most

1. Harvest huge crop
2. Build bigger barns
3. Enjoy financial security
4. Eat
5. Drink
6. Be merry!
7. Remember not to die

JESUS TELLS US that He was not "rich toward God." I propose that being rich toward God would include the following:

---Having a soul that is increasingly healthy through Word and Sacraments;

---Making that which is temporary become the servant of that which is eternal;

---Loving and enjoying the people around you who are also gifted and valued by God;

---Being very generous with your stuff because you find your satisfaction in the promises of God. (Do not let your hearts be troubled; this concept is all over the New Testament! Tithing? -not so much.)

WE CAN BE GENEROUS in all sorts of ways, can't we? These days, time is an unbelievably precious commodity, and when a Christian sacrificially gives their time to another person, it makes an impression. You can also be generous with your gifts and talents that will bless other people. There is somehow, somehow, that God intends to use you as one of his Apps for getting done what he wants to get done in this world. And yes of course, there is financial generosity as well. When Paul refers to giving "Cheerfully" he uses the same Greek word from which we get the word "hilarious." Doesn't that put a new spin on the concept of a cheerful giver? We can actually be hilarious about it! After all, have you ever met a grumpy generous person?

WE CAN ALSO BE GENEROUS with our church buildings. Too many churches sit empty all week when there are needs in the community that could be impacted by simply making space available.

WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED at Trinity, Monroe for at least 15 years by having AA groups use our building. They constantly express their gratitude to us even though we really don't have to do anything for them. As a result of their meeting here and the groups growing through the years, I'm told that about two thirds of the recovery community in the Twin City area meet at our church! Our building stays busy all week and our parking lot is full at various times of the day throughout the week. And yes, it has led to countless opportunities to share the love of Christ with people who come to our building.

ANYWAY, THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF WAYS that we can generously be partners in the Gospel. I want to remind you also that there are several congregations in the district who customarily submit a partnership form for their planned giving to the district mission and ministry. I want to encourage you to go to the district website and print or simply fill out the partnership form at this link: (please fill in the link here, Marion) Then submit it to the very helpful Ronnie Gaise at r.gaise@southernlcms.org.

YOU CAN ALSO submit your financial offering to the district through the district website. You can set up a free bank draft from your checking account or use a credit card (fee applies) at this link: (Marion, please put the link here)

Because He First Loved Us!
Pastor Paul McComack

2014 PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENTS

- **Has your congregation submitted their 2014 Partnership Commitment to the Southern District Mission Center? Please check because THIS JUST CAN'T BE RIGHT! Twenty-six, that's 26, of the 170 congregations who hold membership in the Southern District is the number of Partnership Commitments received in the district's business office. That's 15%.**
- **So, please check with your treasurer and/or other leadership to see if they attended to this task.**
- **These forms assure the accuracy of the district's records and brings attention to any discrepancies in gifts.**

This important form can be found on our web site ---

www.southernlcms.org.

CLICK on the *Discipleship* Tab . . . GO TO *Stewardship Resources* . . . SCROLL DOWN to the bottom of the page.

OUR STEWARDSHIP OF HIS RESOURCES

District and Synod Mission Support Trends	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Total Budget	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000	Budget approved at March 7 Board of Directors meeting.
Budgeted Income through 2/15	\$ 91,667	\$ 91,667	
Actual Income through 2/15	\$ 89,163	\$ 99,895	\$ 88,919



WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER.

These brothers and sisters in Christ coping with cancer:

- Rev. Jack Betz (Emeritus - Miramar Beach, FL)

- Rev. Jerry Conley (Emeritus - Marianna, FL)
- Mrs. Gloria Moritz, wife of Rev. Victor Moritz (Emeritus - Metairie, LA)
- Rev. Sidney Ponseti (Emeritus - Baton Rouge, LA)
- Rev. Ed Rogers (Emeritus - Ozark, AL)
- Mrs. Evy Weier, wife of Rev. Gary Weier (Emeritus - Gulfport, MS), will undergo cancer surgery on March 5th.

These brothers and sisters in Christ coping with various health issues:

- Mrs. Dorie Doroh, wife of Rev. David Doroh (Emeritus - Florence, AL), underwent knee replacement surgery and is now recovering through physical therapy.
- Rev. Jesus Gonzales - Monte de los Olivos - Metairie, LA
- Commissioned Minister Ray Hauer - Huntsville, AL
- Rev. Rory Hermann (Good Shepherd - Gulf Breeze, FL)
- Rev. David Moerbe (Good Shepherd - Gardendale, AL)
- Rev. Vic Moritz (Emeritus - Metairie, LA)

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed. Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NIV)

Rev. Bob and Mrs. Agnes Belknap (Zion - Bogalusa, LA) give thanks to God that the removal of a skin cancer was successful and completely removed the cancer.

**THE 2014 SOUTHERN DISTRICT
ELECTED OFFICER FORM IS FINALLY USER FRIENDLY!
It is posted on our web site www.southernlcms.org
go to Churches and then Resources.**

Editions of:

Issues in Christian Education

published by Concordia U Nebraska are available online.

Topics that will be or have been addressed include:

- "Revitalizing Congregations Through Older Adults" (available, Summer, 2014)
- "Early Childhood Education: A Special Opportunity for Congregations!" (available, Spr, 2014)
- "Connecting with the Non-Connected Through School and Church" (Fall, 2013)
- "The Role of Apologetics in the Church's Mission" (Summer, 2013)
- "The Sexual Revolution: How Shall the Church Respond?" (Spring, 2013)
- "Intentional Family Ministry: A Golden Opportunity" (Fall, 2012)
- "Needed: Marriage Education!" (Summer, 2012)

CALLS AND VACANCIES
CONGREGATIONS IN THE CALLING PROCESS FOR
PASTOR

ALABAMA

First - Birmingham
Our Redeemer - Florence
Grace - Mobile
Prince of Peace - Ozark
University - Tuscaloosa

FLORIDA

Grace - Pensacola

LOUISIANA

Holy Trinity - Covington
Christ the King - Natchitoches
Lamb of God - Slidell
Trinity - Sulphur

MISSISSIPPI

Our Redeemer - Clinton
CrossRoad - Hernando
Beautiful Savior - -Olive Branch

The President's Office expects the following congregations to request a Call List: Jehovah - Pensacola, FL; Christ Our Savior - Panama City Beach, FL; and, Atonement - Metairie, LA.

Deferred Vicar James Garnett received interim approval from the COP and was placed at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Biloxi, MS.

CALLS - ORDAINED - PENDING

- **Gary Faith**, Luth. Ch. of the Pines - Waveland, MS and Southern District Executive to Grace - Key West, FL

CALLS - ORDAINED - ACCEPTED

- **Joshua Leigeber**, Atonement - Metairie, LA to Trinity - Leesville, LA

CALLS - ORDAINED - DECLINED

- **David Robotzen**, Resurrection - Pensacola, FL to Good Shepherd - Sarasota, FL

VICARAGES DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FROM

- **St. Mark's Lutheran Church - Elberta, AL**
- **Luth. Ch. of Vestavia Hills - Vestavia Hills, AL**
- **Christ Lutheran Church - Jackson, MS**

THE GIFT OF GENEROSITY

As we prayerfully anticipate our walk with Jesus to the Cross of Calvary, we look forward to each and every person who will walk side-by-side with us.



In 2013 many supported the Southern District with their time, talent and financial contributions. The shadow of the cross brightens because of you.

We look forward to your continued support. If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings, we encourage you to look into our electronic online giving options.

Visit [here](#) or contact Janice Howard at the Southern District office for more information j.howard@southernlcms.org.

Southernlcms.org

Southern District -LCMS

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Slidell LA 70460

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