



# The Beacon

Let your light shine . . .



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## Health Stewardship . . . Controlling Stress

by

Rev. Thomas Soltis, EM; SELC Stewardship Director

Christian stewards should be careful caretakers of themselves. Their bodies and minds came from God and belong to God. Disciples of Christ have the spiritual responsibility to manage themselves with goals toward health. This includes controlling their S-T-R-E-S-S!

Stress impedes good health. Classic symptoms include a rapid heartbeat, sweaty palms and a burning hot face. Uncontrolled stress can generate chronic fatigue, anxiety, irritability, concentration-memory difficulties, sleep problems, stomach aches, indigestion, and/or weight loss or gain.

*Short-term stress* does have a positive feature. It prompts us to get things done and be our best. *Chronic stress*, however, is devastating. It generates constant fear, frustration, worry and that frightful feeling of being out-of-control.

The reduction of stress will improve overall health. According to a report from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the control of stress will enable (1) a stronger, immune system; (2) a more resilient heart; (3) better management of diabetes; (4) healthier skin; (5) a brain boost for concentration; (6) healthy digestion; and (7) better sleep.

### Creative Ways to Manage Stress

- \* Set attainable goals
- \* Set realistic deadlines
- \* Start projects well ahead of schedule
  - \* Exercise
- \* Engage an enjoyable hobby or activity which absorbs stress
- \* Talk to others about pressures and concerns
  - \* Laugh
- \* Be flexible with expectations
  - \* Forgive and forget
  - \* Relax to recharge

In addition to the above, the best creative way to manage stress was shared by a pastor in the throes of "burn-out" . . . *Let go — Let God!*

Proverbs 14:30 tells us: Peace of mind makes the body healthy. (Today's English Version). A stress-free mind is a happy mind and "a happy mind is good medicine." (Proverbs 17:22; Beck: An American Translation).

For additional information contact the American Institute of Stress at [www.stress.org](http://www.stress.org) or by phone at 914-963-1200. For an inter-active stress management tool visit the following website:

[www.bluecrossmn.com/blueprint](http://www.bluecrossmn.com/blueprint)

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*Everyone is burdened . . . and it is summer . . . but a reminder to all:*

*For the sake of the church* — each Pastor and Congregation should have received a request from Betty Duda inviting you to receive information and to make special gifts for this wonderful cause of raising endowment funds and increasing the number of LCMS students at our Concordias. Please respond by requesting materials for distribution to your congregations.

*ABLAZE* — encourage each LCMS member to be personally involved in sharing the comfort and power of Christ's love and salvation. Each congregation has been asked to participate in a special in-gathering offering designated for ABLAZE is asked to send a report to your convention delegate (or to Rev. Carl Krueger) so that this report can be shared at the convention.

*A century of grace, a future of hope* — our own SELC 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary observance continues to receive the gifts and pledges made by individuals and congregations. Thank you for your support. All 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary funds are designated for the support of our new mission starts.

## St. Petersburg Golden Agers Hear About Lutheran Haven

Our Savior Lutheran Church, St. Petersburg (Rev. Alan Bachert) hosted Pastor George Plvan of Lutheran Haven, Oviedo, at their recent mid-day gathering.

About twenty-five members enjoyed cake and coffee and a presentation by Pastor Plvan who told the story of Lutheran Haven and provided information on independent living, assisted living and nursing home care at the central Florida facility.

Pastor Plvan also described the progress of BEYOND 2000 which is an effort designed to build a new nursing home and assisted living facility at Lutheran Haven. Construction is expected to begin following a Groundbreaking Ceremony in early summer. The necessary \$3.9 million enabling the project to begin has been gathered and the LCEF has approved the additional \$6+ million to complete the task.

The participation and support of the Pastors and congregations of the Florida/Georgia District has been greatly appreciated and Lutheran Haven is grateful to the Lord and His people.

*Be who you are and say what you believe. Those who mind don't matter . . . and those who matter don't mind!*

**Pastor George Plvan**

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*During Call Day services on April 27, 2004, at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis— 108 pastoral calls, 138 vicarages, and 3 deaconess assignments for students were announced. Those assigned to the SELC District, pictured with our District President are:*



*Front row: Jon Bender and his wife, Christina Bender; Rev. Carl Krueger  
Back row: Joseph Weatherell, Prof. William Utech, and Matthew Gehrke*

## Have you heard of Acts 1:8 Ministry?

It's an outreach approach initiated by a congregation in Wisconsin that seems to work well for our LCMS mind set. The concept is that we can touch people with the love of God through planned acts of Christian kindness. And, it is hoped, such loving actions will sometimes open the door for explicitly telling others about the saving love of Jesus.

The acts of kindness could be having a free car wash or handing out free bottles of cold water on a hot day or offering free gift wrapping at Christmas. Or, here's a good one for the present time . . . give people \$5 toward their next fill of gas at a station near your church. Such selfless love is not common in our world so it catches attention. As people ask why we're doing it, we can tell them about the free grace of God in Christ that motivates our free giving to others.

Another aspect of **Acts 1:8** that is appealing is that it only requires participants to give about two hours of their time to the event. This way, a majority of the members of a congregation can give a bit of time to help reach out to the community through a variety of short-term events.

If you'd like to find out more about **Acts 1:8**, you can go to [www.acts18.org](http://www.acts18.org) or call 920-366-4339 for information. Or, if you want input from someone who has used the idea and seen its benefits, give me a call at 440-845-3252 or email me at [tabiermann@juno.com](mailto:tabiermann@juno.com).

**Acts 1:8** may be just the thing to help us work toward our SELC District goal of setting the world **ABLAZE** by reaching millions of unreached or uncommitted individuals with the Gospel by 2017. As another help toward this goal, you can download a worship service to celebrate **ABLAZE** entitled "Light for the Darkness", at [www.lcms.org/?3252](http://www.lcms.org/?3252) or [www.lcmsworldmission.org/ablaze](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/ablaze).

Bulletin inserts, music, a PowerPoint presentation, short video and other **ABLAZE!** resources are also available.

*In the Name of Christ,*

**Rev. Todd Biermann**

*SELC District Outreach Chairman*

In addition to our electronic District Newsletter, the SELC is recreating our Web Page, under the direction of our Webmaster, Rev. Chris Ongstad. Check it out:

<http://www.holycrosslutheranalsip.org//selcwebsite/index.htm>

# LWML . . . ONE IN SPIRIT AND PURPOSE

The SELC District of LWML was welcomed by the Galloway ladies at their National Convention in Galloway, New Jersey from April 30 to May 2, 2004.

Revised bylaws of the SELC LWML were approved, based on the national bylaws, which includes new names for committees and departments. Also, officers will be elected to two-year terms, for a maximum of four years. [This was done because several officers had to resign after two years in office for personal reasons and we also had difficulty getting ladies to commit to a four-year term.

Officers elected were:

**Ann Havir Bajus, President**

**Leah Socrates, Treasurer**

**Rev. Waldemar Vinovskis, Counselor**

**Virginia Mulik** will serve on the Nominating Committee for the Western Zone.

A highlight of the convention included the acceptance of the **Dorcas Society of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Wilkes-Barre, PA** as the newest member of our SELC LWML. Welcome!!

**Three In-Gatherings were dedicated:** the Lutheran Haven, Atlantic City Rescue Mission, and the local Food Pantry.

Ladies, it's time to get out your calendars, mark these important dates, plan to attend!

**Central Zone — September 2004**

**Western Zone — October 2, 2004**

**Eastern Zone — October 16, 2004**

Keep that calendar out, go to the end of December and mark this date (to be transferred to next year's calendar and finally onto your 2006 calendar.)

**SELC LWML CONVENTION**

**Lutheran Haven, Oveida FL**

**MAY 5-7, 2006**

Mission Grants (formerly known as Mission Projects) were voted upon and will be funded by Mites, as follows:

**Hope, Mullica Hill, NJ:** mailing of 10,000 cards — \$2,300.

**Peace Galloway, NJ:** Sunday School Updated Curriculum — \$350.

**Family of Christ, Tampa, FL:** Visitor evangelism packets — \$800.

**Sts. Peter & Paul, Lorain, OH:** Twelve folding chairs @ \$35 each — \$420.

**Family of Christ, Jackson Twp, OH:** Playground equipment, 2004 — \$500

**Hope, Mullica Hill, NJ:** Mailing of 10,000 cards — \$2,300.

**Peace, Galloway, NJ:** Weekly Crafts — \$200

**Sts. Peter & Paul, Lorain, OH:** two recliners @ \$450 each — \$900.

**Peace, Galloway, NJ:** Supporting music — \$50.

**Sts. Peter & Paul, Lorain, OH:** Four card tables @ \$15 each — \$60

**Family of Christ, Jackson Twp, OH:** Playground equipment, 2005 — \$120.

**Total Grants — \$8,000**

Projects that did not get enough votes to make the above list will be put into the Mission Grants Bank and will be funded by the zones.

Our Human Care Projects (formerly Mission Service) for the Lutheran Haven may be funded by money-raising projects (e.g. cookie walks, teas, rummage sales). Each of our three zones is requested to donate at least \$400 to these projects:

\$1,157 - plant/tree grouping

\$335 each - 14 chairs in the chapel

\$765 each - 4 planters to distinguish between nursing home and assisted living dining areas.

Excellent Devotions, Bible Studies, and Speakers highlighted our Convention. We renewed friendships, made new friends, and left well fed, spiritually uplifted, and ready to "Serve the Lord with Gladness."

Ann Havir Bajus, President

*Contributions to this page also from delegates Virginia Mulik and Bess Cerny*

## ANNIVERSARIES:

75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at:

**Ascension, Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

### OUR CONVENTION DELEGATES:

*Eastern Circuit:*

**Rev. Waldemar Vinovskis**, (Concordia, Macungie PA)

**Mr. James Lesko** (Holy Trinity, Garfield NJ)

*Central Circuit:*

**Rev. Jerome Panzgrau** (John Huss, Arnold PA)

**Mr. Jerold Cahill** (Calvary, Parma OH)

*Western Circuit:*

**Rev. Gerald Kovac** (St. Lucas, St. Louis MO)

**Mr. Doug Chicoine** (Living Word, Orland Park IL)

*Youth Delegates:*

**Heather Harris** (Zion, Norridge, IL)

**Nicholas Brandstrom** (St. John, Cudahy WI)

*Advisory Delegates:*

**Rev. Carl Krueger** (St. John, Cudahy WI) President

**Rev. Andrew Dzurovcik** (Zion, Clark NJ) First Vice-President

**Rev. Chris Cahill** (Christ the King, Lodi OH) Second Vice-President

## ORDINATIONS/INSTALLATIONS

*We introduced you to them last month . . . now here's their important dates!*

**Jon Bender:** (St. Louis):

*Ordained: June 6<sup>th</sup> at St Lorenz, Frankenmuth, MI*

*Installation: June 18<sup>th</sup>, 11:00am at St. John, Cudahy, WI*

**Joseph Weatherell:** (St. Louis):

*Ordained: June 12<sup>th</sup>, 12:00noon, St. John, Allegany NY*

*Installation: June 26<sup>th</sup>, 12:00noon, St. John, Hazleton, PA*

**Rev. Philip Matarazzo:** Installation: June 19<sup>th</sup>, 3:00pm, Peace, Galloway, NJ

**Thomas Woodley:** (Ft. Wayne):

*Ordination: June 27<sup>th</sup>, 3:00pm as SELC Missionary-at-Large for Hope, Mullica Hill: Redeemer, Manchester, NJ*

**Rev. LeRoy Leach:** Installation: August 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:00am, Holy Trinity, Yonkers NY

**Rev. Kurt Mews** has accepted a Call to become Pastor of St. Peter, East Peoria, IL

**Rev. Ken Greenwald** and **Rev. Carl Krueger** met with Concordia, Youngstown OH and Sts. Peter & Paul, Sharon PA about their next step in the Calling process.

**Rev. Waldemar Vinovskis** has received a Call from Redeemer, Chico CA. No decision yet.

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**Got those summer heat blues . . . want to beat the heat?**

**Think Fall! It's not too early to start planning . . .**

## Hiding out on Halloween? Not in Montreal!



While many Christians fear the appearance of any sort of participation in the occurrences of Halloween (the historic eve of the Reformation). **Ascension Lutheran Church** in Montreal, Quebec, Canada opens her doors and uses the evening as an opportunity to share the Reformation Gospel to the neighborhood children who are primarily Muslim, Hindu, and Roman Catholic. In front of the Church, two pumpkins carved with a cross light the path into the darkened church basement *maze*. This past year we had 280 kids crawl through our maze containing scary figures of death and the devil with messages attached to them (e.g. *Jesus is bigger than me!* and *Jesus is bigger than me too!*) Upon exiting, kids of all ages receive a Gospel tract in French or English, an invitation to Sunday School, and an invitation to their parents to join our *English as a Second Language* program. Many of our ESL students are instrumental in the running of the event.

Some other Christians in the region accuse us Lutherans of sharing in pagan festivities. However, ***This is the day the Lord has made! NO day belongs to the devil. He can't have even one of them! They all belong to Jesus.*** And so, on the evening of All Saints Day, the day Holy Church acknowledges that although all Christians remain sinners, all Christians are simultaneously saints because of Christ.

Ascension Lutheran turns this dark and often devilish evening into a night of shining Christ, who *casts away all fears* (which is our theme every year). Whether they be Christmas trees or Easter eggs, Christianity has a history of taking "the pagan" and using it to proclaim "the Christ." Reformation is certainly ongoing.



So . . . why not include some events of Halloween within that fruitful Christian tradition.

*Rev. Harold Ristau*