

# The Beacon

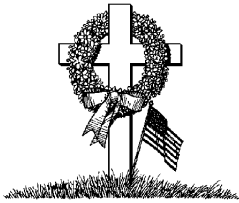
Let your light shine . . .



PUBLISHED BY THE SELC DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

May-June 2004

## Memorial Day



**WE HONOR  
AND PRAY  
FOR  
THOSE  
WHO SERVED  
AND  
ARE SERVING  
OUR COUNTRY**

### *The Scriptures talk about money . . . so should we!*

The Scriptures have about 500 verses on faith, more than 500 on prayer . . . but more than 2,000 references to money, finances, and earthly possessions. Forty percent of Jesus' parables deal with money and possessions:

#### *A sampling of verses about giving!*

Proverbs 3:9-10 . . . First fruit giving

Malachi 3:8-10 . . . Tithes and offerings

Matthew 23:23 . . . Jesus encourages the tithe

Mark 12:41-44 . . . generous 100% giver

Luke 6:38 . . . Proper giving prompts God to give

Luke 18:9-14 . . . self-righteous giving condemned

1 Cor. 16:21 . . . Proportionate/weekly giving encouraged

2 Cor. 8:1-5 . . . example of generous giving beyond ability

2 Cor. 9:6-7 . . . Willing, cheerful (hilarious) giving encouraged

2 Cor. 9:10-11 . . . God's generosity enables Christian generosity.

Rev. Thomas Soltis, EM  
SELC Stewardship Director

### *Here's what's happening around our District . . .*

**Holy Trinity, Yonkers, NY:** The lay leadership continues strong during their pastoral vacancy. Keep them in your prayers. They are looking forward to their new pastor this summer.

**Zion, Norridge, IL:** 2004 is their 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary year; renovations on the Fellowship Hall begin soon. Pastor & Ann celebrated 50 years of marriage and ministry together.

**Holy Cross, Lake Mary, FL:** "Heart's Afire", the new Sunday evening worship service geared toward youth, has been a positive community outreach, under the direction of Pastor Jon Thomas.

**Holy Cross – Alsip, IL:** Spring repairs are in order at Holy Cross as major roof renovations have been completed and sanctuary lighting is being replaced.

**St. John's - Cudahy, WI:** Missions are highlighted as Rev. Ferd Bahr offers a special presentation on his recent trip to the mission field of India. Sharon Owens, member of St. John's and Director of the Macau English Outreach Center, will return to the U.S. on furlough in June. She will make a special presentation on her work in Macau at June 20<sup>th</sup> worship services.

Welcome to your  
SELC Beacon!  
Articles should  
be submitted to:

THE BEACON

c/o Faith Viera Lutheran  
Church; 5550 Faith Dr.  
Rockledge, FL 32955

OR by email to:

faithviera@bellsouth.net

We welcome your  
questions or  
comments.

Gail Peterson, Editor

## ST LUCAS VANDALIZED

St. Lucas Lutheran Church, our SELC congregation in St. Louis, was vandalized on Wednesday morning of Holy week. The vandals also struck the catholic church and the community center nearby.

The vandals smashed the windows between the narthex and the sanctuary; ransacked the sacristy and poured communion wine all over the walls and on the pastor's vestments; threw an electric piano (located in the balcony) over the railing; ransacked the pastor's office and emptied a fire extinguisher in the office and throughout the basement; smashed the pastor's computer as well as a TV/VCR located in the Sunday School office; ransacked the secretary's office; and tried to start a fire in the basement of the church. The other two buildings had similar damage.

The thieves were caught several days later by someone who "tipped" the police in respond to a \$5,000 reward which was offered by the Catholic parish. One suspect who was 16 years of age (considered a juvenile by MO law) is the son of a Baptist clergyman. The other suspect, 17 years of age (considered an adult under MO law) lives in the neighborhood. Both have been charged with 9 counts of second degree burglary, one count of arson and two counts of attempted arson. The vandals succeeded in burning a room at the community center but did not succeed in starting a fire at the churches.

When interviewed by a local news channel, Pastor Gerald Kovac said, *Coming to work this morning the words of Jesus kept going through my mind, 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.'* These words of Jesus shapes our attitude toward the victims.

The members are thankful that there is so much more damage that they could have done. The insurance company responded quickly and the building was usable for Maundy Thursday worship.

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**Zion Lutheran Church in Norridge, IL** dedicated and wore their new blue choir gowns and stoles for the Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday services.

The purchase of these new and beautiful choir gowns and stoles was made possible by a donation from the local Branch 4340 of the Aid Association for Lutherans prior to becoming Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. The new choir gowns were dedicated in a Worship Service on March 28. Mrs. **Nona Schipull** is Zion's organist and choir director

## Pentecost + Sts. Peter & Paul = Grace

**Lakewood, OH:** Pentecost and Sts. Peter & Paul recently merged to form Grace Lutheran Church. The congregation is vacant and in the process of calling a Pastor. Rev. Jeremy Gorline, Pastor of Pilgrim (Lakewood) is currently servicing as vacancy pastor.

A special consecration Sunday Service was held as part of a six week stewardship program led by Rev. *Thomas Soltis*, Stewardship Director of the SELC District. Developed by *Herb Miller*, the program, endeavors to prepare members to complete an "Estimate of Giving Card."

After completing cards during a service, members personally placed them into a chancel commitment box as an act of worship. Pastor Soltis preached a sermon titled, "No One Can Out Give God," as well as a children's message, "Share God's Money."

An increase of \$15,497 in contributions was indicated via the commitment cards compared to contributions for the last twelve months - a 23.5% increase!



### Grace Stewardship Planning Team (l to r)

Peg Indermaur, Jeannette Greve, John Huetter, Lucille Zabawski, Rev. Thomas Soltis, Linda Bowman

Members responded with the significant contribution increase on the basis of Biblical giving which entails proportionate (percentage of income), regular (weekly), and first-fruit (funding God first) giving. In charge of the program was a planning team consisting of **Linda Bowman, Jeannette Greve, Donna Hubany, Ted Sulak, Lucille Zabawski, John Huetter** (congregational president), and **Peg Indermaur**, (team chairperson). The team was responsible for mailings, dinner reservations, during worship service presentations, financial reporting, enlistment of church leaders and personal contacts.



# A MILESTONE IN LIFE AND SERVICE

June 13, 2004



## Rev. Albert Bielenberg

*Faith Viera Lutheran Church* in Rockledge, Florida will celebrate Pastor Al's fifty years in service of our Lord. After serving Redeemer & Bethany Lutheran Churches in Tennessee, and St. John's in Fayetteville, Arkansas, Pastor Al spent 15 years at Holy Nativity Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Maryland. He served as an interim Pastor in various Maryland churches before moving to Grace Lutheran Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where he spent twelve years. In retirement he assisted at St. Mark's in Hollywood, Florida and is presently assisting at Faith Viera. His special day will include a short video presentation of his life and a gourmet dinner. The banquet will also commemorate his wife, Phyllis, for her outstanding support of his life's mission.

## Rev. Joseph Fabry

*Concordia Lutheran Church* in Findlay, Ohio will join Pastor Fabry and his wife, Shirley, in celebration of God's goodness and the appreciation of God's Church for fifty years of service. After the service they will have a light meal and program to commemorate his Christ-centered ministry.

Pastor Fabry began his ministry at Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Gary, Indiana, moving then to St. Matthew's in Smithville, Ontario. He became Missionary at Large in Dunnville, Ontario and founded Faith Lutheran Church. Although he ended his ministry at Christ the King in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan, he has served as vacancy pastor in *many* churches in Ontario, Kentucky and Ohio.

## Rev. Dr. Albert Marcis

*Calvary Lutheran Church* in Parma, Ohio will honor Pastor Marcis, along with his wife Sylvia, for his fifty years in service of our Lord in worship services and at a buffet luncheon. Guest preacher for this event will be long-time friend, Rev. Luther Bajus. Pastor Marcis was installed as shepherd of Calvary's congregation in 1957 and served for 37 years until his retirement from pastoral ministry in 1994. [During this time he received his Doctor of Divinity degree at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1980.]

Pastor Marcis has served in numerous leadership roles, including 25 years as SELC District President; chairing the Council on Theology and Church Relations and the Task Force on Conflict Resolution; and is serving a sixth year on the Commission on Constitutional Matters as well as acting as current Chairman of The SELC District Ministerial Health Committee. This date also marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his marriage to Sylvia.

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This is your SELC newsletter!

Do you have news to share with your district Brothers and Sisters in Christ? What's happening in your groups? Share your activities and achievements and goals!

The Beacon will be sent to each church via email. [If we do not have your church email address please send it to [faithviera@bellsouth.net](mailto:faithviera@bellsouth.net)] We will also continue to mail a clean hard copy to each church.

**NOTE: Make sure all copy and email is sent directly to Faith Viera Lutheran Church. Glenn & I are leaving in our RV in mid-May for 5+ months of travel through some 30 of our states but will continue to produce *The Beacon* along the way. Perhaps we'll share a little of our travel as we explore this beautiful country of ours and, hopefully, will visit some of you.**

**Gail Peterson, Editor**

The SELC District rejoices that all our District requests for Vicars and Candidates were filled by the working of the Holy Spirit, through the Council of Presidents.

PLEASE ADD THESE TO YOUR DISTRICT DIRECTORY BOOKLET

## Eastern Circuit

**Zion, Clark NJ:** Was assigned Vicar Erik J. Iverson (Fort Wayne) of Sitka, Alaska. Erik has served as a Volunteer Missionary for the MCMS in Slovakia, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia. He is single and presently studying at Cambridge in England.



**St. John, Hazleton PA:** Candidate Joseph Weatherwell (St. Louis) was placed as Pastor. Joseph served his Vicarage at Zion, Clark NJ. His 17 year old son, Joseph, will move with him to Hazleton.

**Hope, Mullica Hill, NJ:** (new mission). Vicar Thomas Woodley (Fort Wayne) was placed as Missionary-at-Large for the SELC. Tom has been serving his vicarage as Mission Developer in the Mullica Hill, NJ area. He began worship services on Easter with 30+ in attendance.



Jerri & Thomas

**St. Luke, Oviedo FL:** Was assigned Christopher Patterson (Fort Wayne) of Bowling Green, OH as Vicar. Chris and his wife, Judy, have three children — Aaron, David, and Samuel.

**Holy Trinity, Yonkers, NY:** Received Candidate Rev. Leroy H. Leach Jr (Fort Wayne) of Cranston, RI. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church, Leroy became a Lutheran, entered Concordia Fort Wayne, received a MA in Systematics, and will be finishing his PhD work in Missiology, studying in France during July. Leroy and his wife, Deborah, have two adult sons and a ten year old daughter.

**Peace, Galloway, NJ:** Has issued a Call to Rev. Philip Matarazzo of Ewing, NJ.

**St. Paul, Greenwich, CT:** Has received a new call list.

## Central Circuit

**St. Peter, East Peoria, IL:** Has called Rev. Kurt Mews.

**Grace, Lakewood OH:** Called Rev. Bruce Kaltwasser, who returned the Call. They are now gathering names to be submitted for a new Call list.

## Western Circuit

**St. John, Cudahy WI:** Candidate Jon Bender (Fort Wayne) was placed as Assistant Pastor. [His father is an Associate Pastor at St. Lorenz of Frankenmuth, MI.] Jon served his Vicarage at Cudahy. He and his wife, Christina, are expecting their first child in October.

Matthew Gehrke (St. Louis) of Mondovi, WI was assigned as Vicar. Matthew will marry Emily Hoppe of Milwaukee on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Holy Trinity, Streator, IL:** Was assigned Gerald Heinecke (Fort Wayne) as Vicar. [He is the son of Rev. Bradley Heinecke of Sidney NE.] Gerald is married to Erica.



Christopher Patterson, Deborah & LeRoy Leach, Jr.  
President Carl H. Krueger, Gerald & Erica Heinecke

*Please pray for these and all other men assigned, placed, and considering Calls; as well as all congregations who are experiencing a Pastoral vacancy.*