



# The Lutheran Beacon

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

MARCH 2010

## Haitian Earthquake Response

Lutheran Haven has eleven employees of Haitian heritage whose relatives in Haiti were affected by the January earthquake. One entire family of relatives lost their life; others have relatives who lost their homes.

At their recent meeting, the Board of Trustees approved an expenditure of \$2,500.00 for direct support to help our employees' families. While there are many groups collecting gifts, the Board felt they wanted to do something that would directly help Haven employees' relatives. Haven residents have also responded and added to that gift. Our prayers are with our employees as they cope with the unimaginable hardships their relatives are experiencing.

## Entrance Fees Reduced

Lutheran Haven Board of Trustees reduced the entrance fees to the independent living cottages in the Retirement Center by 8.8%. The fee reduction will be offered until June 30th. This is great news for people who are thinking about moving to Lutheran Haven whose home values have suffered a loss because of the turmoil in the real estate market.

This special promotion means that a retirement cottage that was \$141,475 is now \$129,000 a savings of \$12,475 or a cottage that was \$118,650 is now \$108,200 a \$10,000+ savings. For more information about the reduced entrance fees call P.J. Summersgill at 1-800-272-5676.

## A Guest Cottage Program Expands

Wondering what life is like at the Haven or do you just need a break from the cold? We can take care of both. We just expanded our Guest House program! You can stay for just a night or now, up to six months. We have one and two bedroom furnished cottages. Nothing extra to pack when you come see us. Every thing from linens, knives and forks, pots and pans. We have it. Indulge yourself. Don't forget, we're close to all the major attractions and the beaches! And our rates are the same all year round. Make your reservation today. Call Debbie at (407) 365-5676. We'd love to show you around.



As we pause during this Lenten Season to reflect upon what Jesus did for us, let us remember those who so desperately need us. Donations to the Haiti relief efforts can be made through Lutheran World Relief at [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org) or Lutheran Church Charities at [www.lutheranchurchcharities.org](http://www.lutheranchurchcharities.org).

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by Donald Kovac  
Executive Director

# ON CONTENTMENT

by Rev. Dr. William Utech [condensed version by Rev. Thomas Soltis]

## A Root of Evil

There's a beaver living in the manhole of the storm sewer in my backyard. "Lucky", an English setter, is a bird-hunting machine. The aroma of a nearby beaver is both enticing and addictive - a sort of doggy crack cocaine, if you will. That beaver is on Lucky's mind all the time! She doesn't want to eat. She doesn't want to sleep. She doesn't even want to come inside to hang out with the family. She just wants to sit next to that manhole and smell that beaver. She is target-locked on it and life is passing her by. Sound



familiar? "People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." (1 Tim. 6:9-10) In this country and culture we are all at risk to be target-locked on money. It is precisely in a time of economic downturn that a sinful love of money can take hold.

**In this country and in this culture we have more than most, and the problem with that is that when fallen sinful people have more, they also tend to want more.**

We look at 401Ks and 403Bs and we see how much we've lost, and we're sick about it. It doesn't seem possible that a whole decade of hard work and disciplined planning for the future could disappear just like that! "It's not right, and it's not fair!" we say to ourselves. We feel cheated and put upon. But are we? In "Jesus Wants to Save Christians" Rob Bell offers some startling statistics about America's affluence:

- \* America, with less than 5 percent of the world population, owns a fifth of the world's wealth.
- \* Every seven seconds, somewhere in the world, a child under age five dies of hunger, while Americans throw away 14 percent of the food purchased.
- \* More than half of the world lives on less than two dollars a day, while the average American teenager spends nearly \$150 dollars a week.

- \* Americans spend more annually on trash bags than nearly half of the world does on all goods.

## Wanting More

All of us have this innate ability to be dissatisfied with what we have and to always want more. In a recent Christmas movie based on Dr. Seuss' book, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, the Grinch confronts all the Whovillians with their sinful need for more: "The avarice! The avarice never ends! 'I want golf clubs. I want diamonds. I want a pony so I can ride it twice, get bored, and sell it to make glue!'"

Just like my dog, Lucky, we get so focused, so obsessed, so target-focused on stuff, that it hardly occurs to us that the good life God wants for us may be passing us by. For example, the joy of being a son or daughter, a husband or a wife, a mother or a father, a friend and colleague, a part of a Christian Church, a child of God. Are you missing out on the real joys of life – on the joy of all your God-given vocations – because you want more stuff? And the answer, the antidote for all of this? It is, as St. Paul says in 1 Timothy, "the great gain of godliness with contentment."

## Everything We Need

Rom. 8:12 says: "He who did not spare His own Son, but gave him up for us all - how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?" You can wake up every day and say to God, "Good morning, Dad, it's me," and He absolutely loves it, because He absolutely loves you! Because He loves us, we won't get everything we want, but we will get everything we need. And that is all we really need to be content in times of economic uncertainty or all the days appointed for our earthly life.

Dr. William Utech is associate professor of practical theology and director of resident field education at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. A member of the SELC District, he currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Lutheran Haven. By permission, a condensation of his article on contentment was written by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director. The article appeared in the Nov., 2009 issue of *The Lutheran Witness*, a monthly publication of the Missouri Synod. Excellent articles of practical and current interest as well as historical and doctrinal nature may be found in the magazine. Individual or congregational subscriptions for distribution may be obtained by contacting Concordia Publishing House:

1-800-325-3381 [cphorder@cph.org](mailto:cphorder@cph.org)

# Men Regret Lost Fatherhood . . . Women Do Regret Abortion

by Rev. Gary Scharrer - St. Matthew LC, Wilkes-Barre PA

*I recently took a trip with my older sons Oscar and Simon to Washington DC. This was not a pleasure trip, though we did have fun on the trip, too, and saw a few sights while we were there. This trip was for a very important matter—a matter of life and death.*



We've encountered death recently in the news. Not as those in the nation of Haiti have encountered it, but we've had some small glimpse of the devastation they've experienced.

In the face of such agony, we wish that there had been some way we could have stopped this, but we can't. We offer our prayers and our monetary, physical and spiritual support through relief agencies like LCMS World Relief and Human Care--we try to help now, but we can't stop what already happened (at the time of my writing, I see that the estimated deaths from the earthquake in Haiti have reached 200,000 people). 200,000 people dead. If only we could have done something to prevent this.

We could not prevent Haiti's earthquake, but we can try to prevent an equivalent earthquake every season in our nation. **Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall . . . Each season in the United States more babies die from abortion than those who died in Haiti from the earthquake.**

Both in Haiti and in the US, both in the face of the earthquake and in the face of abortions, people are wounded, too. So many die, yet so many are wounded and grieving.

**Will you join me in opposing this devastation?** One simple, yet helpful way is by signing the Manhattan Declaration. In addition to life issues, marriage/family and conscience issues are also Biblically and compassionately addressed in the Manhattan Declaration. You may read and sign it at: <http://www.manhattandeclaration.org>. There are already well over 400,000 signatures in support of life, marriage, and conscience.



Simon & Oscar Scharrer



Unofficial estimates range from 250,000 to 400,000 pro-life marchers at the **March for Life**. You may view pictures on my congregation's website at <http://www.stmatthewwb.org/pastors-blog.html>. The sign visible in a couple of the pictures shows **Men Regret Lost Fatherhood**, and on the other side of each of those signs was **Women Do Regret Abortion**.

May God bless our witness, help those wounded by abortion, and save those whose lives have not yet been killed.

## Happening Around the SELC District



**Rev. Thomas Soltis & Family** . . . Mrs. Carolyn J. Soltis,, wife of Pastor Thomas Soltis, departed from this life to be with her Lord forever on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. A grave side committal service took place at Maple Hill Cemetery, Wilkes Barre, PA on Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> and a Memorial Service held at Holy Trinity LC, Parma, OH on Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>.

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### Call Submitted to COP:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Dr. Martin Luther, Chicago, IL has submitted their Call to the Council of Presidents for a Candidate to be Placed. DML Chicago has requested a winter graduate who is fluent in Spanish and who has a desire to work with "traditional" Lutherans in mission outreach to the surrounding Hispanic neighborhood. Call Day for Winter Placement is Thursday, February 25, 2010.

### Returned Call:

Rev. Daniel Grams, Holy Trinity, Garfield NJ has returned the Call he received from Divine Savior LC, Shepherdsville KY.

### Reminder to ALL Congregations:

Nominations for Synodical President, and the Vice-presidents are due by March 1, 2010. Every Congregation should have received ballots in December. These are to be sent to the Secretary of Synod. Rev. Dr. Ray Hartwig, 1333 S. Kirkwood Rd., St. Louis MO 63122-7295. If the Congregation does not have the official ballot available, please call Dr. Hartwig at 1-800-248-1930.

### Reminder for Candidate Calls and Vicarage Assignment Requests:

Deadline for application for a Spring Graduate Candidate or Vicar is March 1<sup>st</sup>. Call Documents for Candidates and Vicarage Applications are available on-line. Contact the SELC President for instructions. All Call Documents and Vicarage Applications are to be first sent to the District President, who "shepherds" the process through the Seminaries' Placement Committees and the Council of Presidents.

### Make Plans Now:

SELC General Pastoral Conference  
Monday Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Hosted by Zion Lutheran Church, Clark NJ

### A Century of God's Continuing Blessings and Mercies

by Jim Putt, Elder – St. Matthew LC

St. Matthew Evangelical LC, Norton, OH, announces it's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a congregation and the start of 2010 as a celebration of a Century of God's Continuing Blessings and Mercies.

The year-long celebration began on Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be highlighted with a special afternoon service on Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm, with guest speaker Rev. Dr. Carl H. Krueger, SELC District President. This special anniversary service will be followed by a 4:00 luncheon at the Slovene Center in Barberton. For further information call the church office 330-825-4100 or e-mail [stmatthew@aex.com](mailto:stmatthew@aex.com).

This is your newsletter . . . Articles & Photos are welcome! Send submissions to:

The Lutheran Beacon  
c/o Gail Peterson:  
1210 Ambra Dr. – Viera, FL 32940-6755  
email: [gailmail37-beacon@yahoo.com](mailto:gailmail37-beacon@yahoo.com)

Please submit articles as separate attachments in the program you write in. [e.g. Word Perfect, Word, etc.], NOT as part of your e-mail.

Photos must be submitted as separate attachments [NOT as part of your article–JPEG format preferred.]

When sent by snail mail, photos must be received by the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month. If you want them returned please attach a note and send a self-addressed stamped envelope.

**DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL ISSUE  
IS MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup>**

## SELC District LWML Convention

As For Me and For My House, We will Serve the Lord

by Sharon Roegge, SELC District LWML President



The Twelfth Convention of the SELC District LWML will be held May 14–16th, 2010. The theme for the convention is ***As for Me and for My House, We Will Serve the Lord*** from Joshua 24:15. Friday's activities will include an executive committee meeting, supper provided by the Zion ladies, and a worship service led by Pastor Luther Bajus at Zion LC in Norridge, Illinois. From Zion we will travel to Concordia University Chicago in River Forest for housing. Saturday will include:

Opening devotion  
Bible study by Pastor Jon Bender, St. John in Cudahy, WI  
An overview of LWML by LWML Treasurer, Helen Miller  
A tour of the campus  
Election of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer  
and a Pastoral Counselor  
Selection of Mission Grants,  
By-law changes,  
Group photo  
Our evening banquet with Installation of officers  
Followed by Shari LeMonnier, a Christian Artist



All of Saturday and Sunday's events will be held at the Koehneke Community Center in the Oak Park River Forest room. Sunday will include Bible Study with Pastor Andy Dzurovcik of Zion in Clark, NJ, worship service at the chapel, brunch, and an optional tour of Frank Lloyd Wright Homes.

***Watch for registration forms to be coming soon.***



**Also mark your calendars for the 34th Biennial Convention to be held in Peoria, Illinois June 23-26, 2011.** The theme is ***Being with Jesus – Living on the Edge*** with the scripture Acts 4: 13b and 20 (NKJV). *And they realized they had been with Jesus. For we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.*

It will be good for as many of us as possible to go, since we will be working at the convention in 2013.

Please send in your mite donations to Kathleen Vollrath as soon as possible.

Our fiscal year ends on March 31, 2010.

## Helping Children Today!

by Robin Paris, Gift Planning Counselor  
Lutheran Haven Foundation & the SELC District

When children are in their 30's and 40's, they frequently are starting a new career or beginning a family. Many are still paying off school debts. For these reasons, they could benefit from some additional help. If parents have appreciated property, a special trust that helps children could be very beneficial. The parents will substantial tax savings, while the children benefit from 20 years of income from the trust. Here's an example.

Roy and Jill have raised three children. When the children were young, Roy and Jill did what many parents do in their mid-40's – they bought a new home. However, rather than selling their old home, they turned it into a rental unit and kept the property.

After renting that home for 20 years, Roy and Jill are now 65. Their three children have all moved out and are starting families. Roy and Jill own their current home, have recently sold their business and enjoy good retirement income.

Their oldest child is a daughter with two children. The middle son is married with three children and their younger son has two children. Roy and Jill especially enjoy visiting their seven grandchildren. As they consider their situation, Roy and Jill have come to the decision they would like to help their children. However, it would also be desirable to save taxes. The rental home was initially purchased for \$200,000. Their CPA has taken depreciation during the time they have owned it. In today's real estate market, it is worth about \$400,000. Roy and Jill are now ready to move on with life.

### *So they sat down to discuss options with their CPA, Sam.*

**Roy:** *Sam, you know that we bought the new house when we were both 45 and we kept this as a rental. Now after 20 years, we're tired of tenants and ready to move on. Jill wants to spend our time visiting the grandchildren and doing some traveling. But I know that this home is now worth much more today and so there would be a big tax if we were to sell. Is there a way we can help the children without paying tax?*

**Sam:** *I understand that it's now time to consider moving on. Your retirement income is good, you own your home and have no debt. You are well positioned to do something to help your children.*

*It would also be great if we could reduce your income taxes for the next five years. That would provide additional ability for you to save and invest more for the future.*

**Jill:** *Yes, we are in good shape but our children are now trying to start families. They need some extra help. With the cost of education, clothes and other items for our grandchildren, we would like to give them some assistance.*

**Sam:** *You could set up a special trust that allows you to sell this property tax-free. That would leave the full value available to earn income for your children. I could run an illustration that shows how we could set that trust up for 20 years and sell without tax. In addition, you get a charitable deduction of approximately \$150,000. We probably would spread that over about five years. Each year you could cut your personal income taxes by over a third with that deduction.*

**Roy:** *That's the ticket - helping children and saving tax at the same time. How much income would we transfer to the children?*

**Sam:** *It looks like that trust would pay over \$500,000 to the children over the 20 years. That's quite a bit of education and clothes!*

**Jill:** *And after the 20 years of payments to children—can we then pick the charities that will receive the trust property?*

**Sam:** *Yes. You can select one or more charities that will receive a very nice gift.*

**Roy:** *But who will manage the property? We're going to start traveling and we don't want to have management responsibilities.*

**Sam:** *We can talk to a charity (we recommend the LCMS Foundation) to serve as trustee. A trustee will invest the proceeds after the property is sold and pay the income to your three children. If you would like, I will make contacts and we can get the process started.*

**Jill:** *I think it is time to move forward, so let's go ahead and set up this plan.*

## Happening Around the LC-MS

Baltimore, Feb. 11, 2010 — **Lutheran World Relief today increased its financial commitment to Haiti relief efforts** to \$4 million, up from an earlier increased pledge of \$2.25 million. Rev. John Nunes, LWR's Pres. & CEO, said the increase "will help meet the needs of overwhelmed and under-served rural communities in Haiti."

LWR increased the commitment for a second time based on fund-raising returns, including generous donations from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and its members and pledges of support from both the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

**FORT WAYNE, IN (CTS)—Studying at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne , Indiana , affords scholars incredible opportunities to learn from some of the finest theologians in the world. But, unfortunately, not everyone is able to make the trek to Fort Wayne. Because of that, many of our professors will be leading courses in locations from California to New York during the summer of 2010.**

These courses are offered to professional church workers in an effort to assist them as they strive to grow in their knowledge and, in turn, share that knowledge with others. Professional church workers may also earn Continuing Education Units (CEU) when participating in these courses.

The complete list of locations and topics is listed below. For a more detailed description of courses, to download a brochure or to register online, visit [www.ctsfw.edu/continuinged](http://www.ctsfw.edu/continuinged). If you have additional questions, please e-mail [ContinuingEd@ctsfw.edu](mailto:ContinuingEd@ctsfw.edu) or phone 260-452-2279.

Albuquerque, NM  
August 2–6, 2010  
The Lord's Supper  
Dr. John Stephenson, Ph.D.

Wichita, KS  
May 24–25, 2010  
The Gospel of Mark:  
The Mystery of Jesus  
Dr. Peter Scaer, Ph.D.

Oviedo, FL  
July 28–30, 2010  
Contending for the Faith  
in the 21st Century  
Dr. Adam Francisco, Ph.D.

Amityville, NY  
June 7–9, 2010  
Luke and the Formation of the New  
Testament Church  
Dr. Peter Scaer, Ph.D.

Flathead Lake, MT  
August 2–6, 2010  
Relationship Between Jesus and the  
Spirit  
Dr. Leo Sanchez, Ph.D.

Port Charlotte, FL  
August 2–4, 2010  
Contending for the Faith  
in the 21st Century  
Dr. Adam Francisco, Ph.D.

Austin, TX  
August 3–5, 2010  
Theology and Church Music  
Prof. Richard Resch

Grand Rapids, MI  
June 28–July 2, 2010  
Amos: Restore the Roar!  
Dr. Reed Lessing, S.T.M., Ph.D.

Seattle, WA  
August 16–20, 2010  
History & Theology of the LCMS  
Dr. Lawrence Rast, Jr., Ph.D.

Camp Okoboji, IA  
May 24–26, 2010  
The Powerful Portraits of Christ in the  
Book of Revelation  
Dr. Charles Gieschen, Ph.D.

Holy Hill, Hubertus , WI  
June 10–12, 2010  
Philemon  
Dr. John Nordling, Ph.D.

Shawano, WI  
June 28–30, 2010  
Today's Options in Sermon Form  
Dr. Carl Fickenscher II, Ph.D.

Charleston, SC  
June 7–9, 2010  
Lutheran Ethics Today  
Prof. John Pless, M.Div.

Jackson, WY  
May 26–28, 2010  
Theological Ethics  
Dr. Detlev Schulz, Th.D.

St. Cloud, MN  
May 24–27, 2010  
Lutheranism in America Since 1970  
Dr. Lawrence Rast, Jr., Ph.D.

Concordia, MO  
June 28–30, 2010  
All the World: The Missiological  
Foundations of the Old Testament  
Prof. Jeffrey Pulse, S.T.M.

Kearney, NE  
June 21–25, 2010  
Lutheran Missiology  
Dr. Detlev Schulz, Th.D.

Wheaton, IL  
May 11–13, 2010  
Eucharistic Themes in Gospels  
Dr. David Scaer, Th.D.

**FORT WAYNE, IN (CTS)—Do you have questions about the possibility of serving in The LC–MS? Would you like more information on the possibility of serving as a pastor or deaconess? Then attending the spring Prayerfully Consider Campus Visit, March 24-27, on the campus of CTS Fort Wayne is the place to start. There is no fee for the visit. On-campus meals and housing are also provided free of charge. For additional info or to register online, please go to [www.ctsfw.edu/pcv](http://www.ctsfw.edu/pcv).**

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Choir members at a  
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While the repertoire of Johann Sebastian Bach is basic to any celebration of Lutheran musical heritage, the program also includes the arrangements of Vaughn Williams and F. Melius Christensen and the works of respected contemporary composers.

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