



The Lutheran Beacon



Let your light shine . . .

WWW.SELC.LCMS.ORG

Published by the SELC District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

MAY 2019

Good News for Pastors and Church Workers Who Own Their Own Homes!

In 2017, a federal judge in Wisconsin struck down as unconstitutional a law that gives clergy tax-free housing allowances. The federal law passed in 1954, allowed a "minister of the gospel" to not pay income taxes on compensation that is designated part of a housing allowance. The Freedom From Religion Foundation, based in Madison, argued that the law discriminates against secular employees.

See the entire article at:

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/midwest/indiana/ct-tax-free-housing-clergy-20171009-story.html>

The good news is that on March 15, 2019, the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit has ruled in favor of the constitutionality of the clergy housing allowance.

Freedom From Religion Foundation claims § 107(2) [the clergy housing allowance] renders unto God that which is Caesar's. But this tax provision falls into the play between the joints of the Free Exercise Clause and the Establishment Clause: neither commanded by the former, nor proscribed by the latter. We conclude § 107(2) is constitutional. The judgment of the district court is REVERSED.

2018 Congregation Statistics Report – Online

Deadline Extended

Based on current return rates and congregations' increasingly busy Easter schedules, the deadline for congregation statistics reporting is being extended until April 30, 2019. The online entry system for congregations, LCMS Information Support Network (LISN), is open to all LCMS member congregations and new church starts. You should have received login information in February. If you have not received your login information or have questions, email roster.stats@lcms.org or call the LCMS Church Information Center at 888-843-5267.

SELC Long Range Planning

As part of the new SELC District long-range plan, we are updating all our district communications: newsletter, website, social media, etc. Feel free to share it with the leadership of your congregation.

PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTES THIS WEEKEND TO COMPLETE THE ATTACHED SELC COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY. <https://forms.gle/5vMz7nTA55NpGYim8>

SELC District Conference

2019 PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS CONFERENCE

Registrations are coming in for the SELC District Professional Church Workers' Conference, May 6-7 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Parma, Ohio! Register at www.selc2019pcwc.strikingly.com. The conference registration fee is now \$125. The room block has expired, so we can't promise that you'll get a room at the \$114 rate.

CARPOOLING at the PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCE

If you indicated on your registration form that you were flying to Cleveland and not renting a car, have no fear! There is a complimentary hotel shuttle (last shuttle every day is at 10:30 PM at the airport) between the airport and the hotel, and carpooling will be available with other conference participants between the hotel and the church during the conference. NO NEED TO CALL AN UBER! After Easter, we'll email all the drivers and potential riders your contact information, and ask you to connect directly with one another so there's no confusion on Monday morning! How's that sound?

SPECIAL OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES for FLOOD DISASTER RELIEF

At our evening worship service on Monday, the plate offering will be designated for LCMS Disaster / Flood Relief work through the HARP Mission in Caldwell, Ohio (here's their website), the central clearing-house for disaster relief for LCMS congregations in Ohio (Ohio District, as well as English and SELC). HARP Director Mary Bates will also join us for the conference, and bring along a trailer for a "Stuff-the-Trailer" project at the conference.

IF YOU'LL HAVE ROOM IN YOUR CAR, encourage your congregation members to gather some of the following items for you to bring to the conference and "Stuff-the-Trailer" for flood relief in Nebraska and other devastated areas of the Upper Midwest:

Bibles (large print)

Baby diapers (all sizes)

Quilts

Health Care Kits

(model at <https://lwr.org/personalcarekits>)

Baby Care Kits (aka "Layettes")

(model at <https://lwr.org/make-baby-care-kits>)

Flood Buckets- each Flood Bucket contains

One 3 or 5 gallon bucket (with lid, preferably)

Large contractor-size trash bags

Comet or scouring cleanser

Pinesol or liquid floor cleaner

Scrub Brush

Dust Mask (N-95 recommended)

Rubber Gloves (Playtex or stronger)

Attendees at our SELC District's Professional Church Workers Conference, may pick up one or more copies of the latest edition of missionary David Schneider's *Arrows of Light* to read or share with their home parish or some other area of ministry from Pastor Ken or Lois Ballas.

The Story of the Synodical Chalice

by Pastor George Plvan

the story of the Synodical Chalice begins at the beginning . . .

The Rev. D. Z. Laucek was the first president of The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church. On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of his ordination, his brothers in the ministry presented him with a golden chalice. President Laucek in turn presented the chalice as his gift to the church.

It became customary for the chalice to be used at the Holy Communion Divine Service each time the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church met in convention.

When Rev. Laucek was succeeded in office he passed the chalice on to the next president of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church. It became customary for each retiring synodical president to be the caretaker of the chalice and to pass the chalice on to the one who became the next president. This pattern was followed down through the years.

At the convention of the Synod in 1969 at Zion Lutheran Church in Clark, NJ, Rev. John Kovac, the caretaker of the chalice completed his years as president of the Synod and was succeeded by Rev. Milan Ontko. For some reason, the chalice was not passed on from Rev. John Kovac to Rev. Milan Ontko. So at the next convention the chalice was not available. And it was not used at conventions in the following years. The Synodical Chalice was nowhere to be found.

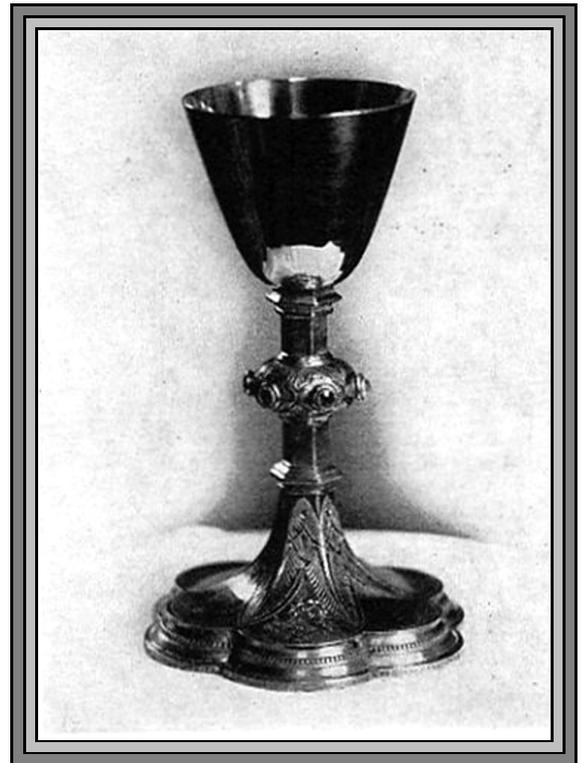
An effort was made to find the chalice but no one seemed to know of its location.

Finally, in March of 2019 Rev. George Plvan, thinking that the chalice might be in one of the SELC sealed boxes in the Concordia Historical Society in St. Louis, MO., contacted Mr. Phillip Miksad, a resident of St. Louis, and asked if he would visit the Concordia Historical Institute and search the boxes for the chalice.

Mr. Miksad, a member of St. Lucas Lutheran Church of St. Louis, agreed to help locate the chalice. He, in turn contacted Mr. Steve Kulifay, a member and archivist of St. Lucas congregation for assistance. Mr. Kulifay informed Mr. Miksad that there was a chalice in a plexiglass container stored at St. Lucas Lutheran Church. When the gentlemen went to check they discovered that this chalice was indeed the Synodical Chalice that had been donated to the church by Rev. Laucek.

It can be assumed that Rev. John Kovac, retiring from the presidency of the Synod, returned to his congregation, St. Lucas Lutheran Church in St. Louis, MO with the chalice since it was not passed on to the next president, Rev. Milan Ontko. It was placed into its plexiglass display case. And there it rests to this day.

The Synodical Chalice is now available for use at conventions of the SELC District. It can be placed into the care of the district president or it can remain where it is until needed. It will be up to the Board of Directors of the SELC District to make this decision.



The Pro-life Abortion War

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

Stewards of Motherhood

Mother's Day is a good time for Christian stewards of motherhood to make a determined decision to vigorously support Pro-life efforts

GOOD NEWS

▲ Ohio Funding for Planned Parenthood Ends.

On March 12, 2019, the 6th Court of Appeals in Cincinnati ruled 11-6 to reverse a federal judge's decision that a 2016 Ohio anti-abortion law was unconstitutional. The law stands. State funds for Planned Parenthood will end.

▲ **Texas & Planned Parenthood.** The Center for Medical Progress, headed by David Daleiden, recorded videos of Planned Parenthood's illegal activities, including the selling of fetal organs. When state funding was cut, Planned Parenthood sued and won, claiming the sting videos were misleadingly edited. In January, 2019, the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the lower court's decision and ruled the tapes were not misleadingly edited. Planned Parenthood state funding was cut.

▲ **Mississippi, Kentucky & Georgia** passed laws banning abortions once a fetal heart beat can be detected (about 6 weeks into pregnancy). The Civil Liberties Union is planning to sue.

▲ **Tennessee & Iowa** are among other states favoring anti-abortion legislation.

BAD NEWS

▼ **New York Passes Pro-abortion Law** - On Jan. 22, 2019, New York State passed a law, proposed by governor Andrew Cuomo, permitting "abortion on demand" up through 24 weeks (the point of viability). Full term babies will now be allowed to be aborted.

▼ **Illinois Favors Abortion** - Gov. J. B. Pritzker of Illinois signed an executive order that will allow tax payer money to be used to pay for abortions through state insurance programs. He vowed his strong support for women's reproductive rights.

LCMS LUTHERANS AT WAR

On Jan. 18, 2019, LCMS President Matthew Harrison lead the annual "Lutheran March for Life" in Washington, D.C. He also prepared an "Abortion Statement" which was signed by all LCMS district presidents. (The statement appeared in full in the March, 2019, Beacon issue).

Abortion Statement Quote

"We are bound by our conscience to speak against those laws that are unjust and especially those that violate God's law and the natural law that binds all mankind."

JOIN THE WAR

Contact: "Lutherans for Life"

www.lutheransforlife.org - 1-888-364-5433

BIBLICAL TALKING POINTS

Pre-natal life is greatly valued by God

Ex. 21:22-24 Job 10:8-12 Ps. 127:3
Ps. 139:13-16 Eccl. 11:5 Is. 49:1 & 5
Jer. 1:5 Luke 1:15 Luke: 41-44

SCIENTIFIC TALKING POINTS

- Prof. Rita L. Gitchell, in a treatise for the DePaul University Journal of Health Care Law, writes that the law should recognize life in *vitro* (in glass) or *in vivo* (iutero) as human beings to be protected.
- Maureen Conic, a Berkeley neuro-biologist, asserts that human life begins at fertilization, claiming the youngest one cell embryo, a zygote, has all the properties of a complete human being.
- Attorney Bruce Taubman will represent Wendy & Rick Penniman in a lawsuit against University Hospital, Cleveland, OH, for the death of their frozen embryos after a freezer malfunction. He will argue the embryos are living persons not pieces of property.
- At 12 weeks, a baby, the size of your thumb, has all organ systems functioning, including the brain, with nothing else to do but grow.



8 month old baby in womb sucking thumb

RELATED RESOURCES

www.selc,lcms.org - Personal Stewardship

Government: *Stewards of the Unborn Sanctity of Life*"

Family: *Be My Mother* (a poem)

Blessed Ironies of the Passion/Easter Season

by Pastor Ken Ballas, EM

When in Luke 9:51 the evangelist relates that with flint-like determination our Lord “set His face to go to Jerusalem,” our Brother-Savior was already “setting the bar” for our salvation at the highest level of sacrificial love imaginable.

Easily overlooked in the NT Gospel records is Mark 11:11 where we are told that Jesus left Jerusalem on Palm Sunday night with His disciples for the neighboring village of Bethany (doing so perhaps more than once at the beginning of Holy Week).

Knowing full well what awaited Him in the “Holy City” but a few days later, imagine the degree of determination it took for our Lord to return to Jerusalem where our supremely Good Shepherd voluntarily laid down His life for us His helpless sheep!

Would any of us remotely have the will or courage in approximating the love our blessed Savior displayed in Gethsemane or on “Skull-Hill” (Golgotha)? What wondrous love indeed that prompts the Church to “sing on and on” no matter the circumstances!

Even though our Brother-Savior did indeed die on Calvary's cross, as one of our SELC District pastors reminded us in a recent parish newsletter, we should not regard the events of Good Friday as culminating in Jesus' funeral. Rather, our risen Lord's apostle Paul (as well as our Christian creeds) clearly indicate that Christ's burial serves as the bridge or “hinge” between His vicarious sinless death on Good Friday and promised rising from death and grave on Resurrection Sunday (see 1 Cor. 15:3-4).

Sometimes overlooked regarding Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead on the fourth day, instead of

rejoicing at this amazing display of God's loving power, prolonged hatred for God's incarnate Son is exemplified in a failed plot to murder Lazarus (John 12:10).

Better known perhaps is the statement of the Jewish high priest, Caiaphas, who little realized the truth of his statement that it would be expedient that One Man should die for the people (John 11:50).

How profoundly (yet necessarily) ironic it is that our supremely Good Shepherd Jesus Christ also be the sacrificial paschal Lamb of God! (John 1:29, 36; 10:11, 14; Hebrews 9:22b; Revelation 7:9-17).

How ironic also that early Easter Sunday morning we are informed about the grieving womens' having with them needlessly store-bought spices for final burial of One no longer dead (Mark 16:1).

Consider also perhaps restored former denier disciple-become-apostle, Simon Peter, seeing a second charcoal fire in a totally new light as part of what the evangelist, John, describes as a memorable Easter season breakfast on the beach (John 18:18; 21:9).

Finally, our Brother-Savior's institution of His Holy Supper only hours before our Lord's self-giving “exodus” (or departure in His self-giving death) is not only “a memorial meal in our remembrance of Him” but, above all, His everlasting remembrance of US! (Luke 9:31; 22:18-19; John 1:17).

Whether we regard this brief sampling of biblical examples as irony or some other literary figure of speech, these are the ways of our powerfully loving and gracious God! ALLELUIA!

CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!

Asleep in Jesus ... We mourn with the family of Rev. Dr. Dusan Toth at the sudden death of his wife, Valika, on April 5th. Services held on April 13th at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Toronto, Ontario.

*Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his saints.*

Psalm 116:15

Happening at the Haven!

by Diane Leining



With so many new residents moving into the Haven, particularly into our new apartment villas – The Landings, we wanted to make sure everyone knew what activities we have to offer, so we held an Activities' Expo in our Fellowship Hall. The facilitators of the different activities were available to explain and invite residents to join in the fun! Our ceramics group, quilters, jewelry makers, card and game players, volunteers, music ministry, art club, LWML, coloring folks, other miscellaneous groups and many, many more were represented and at the end of the day – our residents were more informed of the things to do here at the Haven and off campus.

One of the many “miscellaneous” things we offer to the residents is help with their taxes. A wonderful group of volunteers from AARP come for a day to prepare and submit tax returns answering hundreds of questions and making that *not so fun* chore easier for our residents.

We also bring in several speakers on topics of interest to our folks. We recently had a technical guru come in and talk about the basics of computers, laptops, tablets, printers, cell phones and anything digital. Kittie comes in about four times a year to help answer questions in a down to earth, easy to understand

manner. She alerts us of current scams and things to look out for in our digital world! She is also available to help residents at their home with any particular problem they may have for a minimal fee.

Recently, a group of residents took the Haven bus to Melbourne, FL to go to the Brevard Zoo. We could not have asked for a more beautiful day and all the animals were out and about making it more enjoyable for everyone. Brevard Zoo is set up so that you don't feel like the animals are caged up and put out there for show. We of course had lunch at the zoo and the bus ride home was peaceful!!



As I am typing this article, we are preparing for our Spring Flea Market hosted by the Lutheran Haven Auxiliary. This twice a year event generates approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000 which goes to items needed for our friends and neighbors in our nursing home, assisted living and memory care facilities. The residents work all year getting ready for these sales. A lot of time and energy spent to make our brothers and sisters in Christ more comfortable!

All the residents and staff at Lutheran Haven wish you a Blessed Easter!!

He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Luther League Scholarship Application Deadline June 1st, 2019

by Tim Hasko

Reminder to all district youth: Deadline to apply for a Luther League scholarship is June 1st! Applications can be found on the Luther League website www.lutherleague.com. Applications must be received by June 1st but transcripts can be sent in later as many final transcripts may not be available on June 1st.

In 1953, the Luther League – the official youth organization of the SELC District – began a scholarship fund to encourage higher education for SELC youth with leadership potential. Thanks to generous donations from our SELC youth groups, scholarship alumni, and friends, the Luther League has awarded over 140 scholarships in the last 66 years!

Recipients over the last three years include:

Grant Barclay – Pentecost, Racine WI (2018)
Cameron Wagner – Pentecost, Racine WI (2017)
Noah Balla – Zion, Clark NJ (2016)
Alexis Linback – Resurrection, Crown Pt. IN (2016)
Steven Steingass – Calvary, Parma OH (2016)

If you would like to help support more young people like those mentioned above, please consider a gift to the Luther League Scholarship Fund. Special thanks to all of our donors from last year!

Checks can be made out to: SELC District Luther League

and mailed to: Pentecost Lutheran Church

Attn: Luther League Scholarship Fund

2213 Coolidge Avenue

Racine, WI 53403

or you can contribute online through the Luther League website: www.lutherleague.com



**Gathering together
to help, learn
and have fun**



10 Blessings of Large Families

By Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life February 28, 2019

God loves children — and God loves having lots of children. He doesn't demand an abundance of children from every human family, however. Even little families and only children are great treasures. But our culture seems to have developed a particular disdain for big households.

"Are those all yours?"

"You know how that happens, right?"

"Can you really afford another baby?"

"You sure have your hands full!"

Large families come with unique benefits. I surveyed my Facebook network about it recently. "My friends who have four or more children — or who have three or more siblings — what special blessings does living in a large family bring?" They had lots of positive responses.

Here are the top ten:

1. Guaranteed friends, even into adulthood.
2. Ready-made laboratory for learning people skills like taking turns and getting along.
3. MORE HUGS, MORE CUDDLES, MORE GIGGLES!
4. What one forgets, another one remembers.
5. Less housework for Mom and Dad.
6. Free babysitting (also, no need to save for retirement—just live with one of them).
7. MORE GRANDBABIES!
8. God's unconditional love on every face.
9. Increases chances for Christians to take over the world.
10. Foretaste of the feast to come (Revelation 7:9)!

We're Taking A Break

NOTE: It's that time of the year when our Beacon becomes a two month issue.

June & July and August & September will be combined.

Send submissions to: Email: gailpete37@yahoo.com

Deadlines

June/July issue — May 12th

August/September issue — July 12th

Balance of the year — the 12th of each month



2019 KALEIDOSCOPE FUND

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm delighted to announce that the 2019 Kaleidoscope Fund grant process is now open, and we encourage you to share your creative ideas with us.

Because Lutheran Church Extension Fund has been blessed with faithful Lutheran investors, we are always looking for opportunities to support the Church in fulfilling its mission of sharing the Gospel.

This year, we have made some exciting adjustments. For 2019 grants, eligibility is limited to **LCMS K-8 elementary schools** like yours. Schools that are RSOs are not eligible.*

Lutheran Church Extension Fund invites you to dream about programs and projects that improve and expand the reach and impact of their school. We are focusing on four categories: **faculty enrichment**, **curriculum development**, **facility improvements** and, through a partnership with the LCMS Foundation, **endowment creation**.

The Kaleidoscope Fund grant process begins with a proposal summary. The deadline for proposal submissions is May 31, 2019. The committee will then select ministries from these proposals to apply for a grant. Funds will be granted in amounts between \$15,000 and \$75,000.

Visit lcef.org/kaleidoscope for instructions on starting the process.

We are looking forward to loving and laboring boldly alongside you in your joyful and profound work, set in place by a gracious heavenly Father.

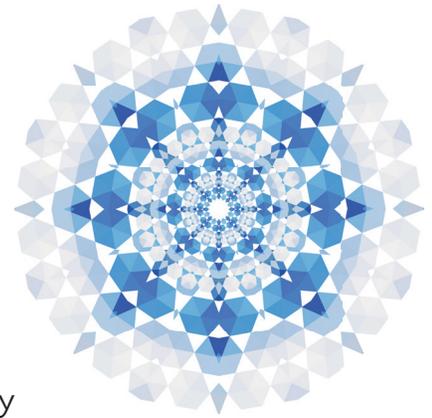
May you be blessed in the name of Christ.

Peace,



Rev. Bart Day
President and CEO
Lutheran Church Extension Fund

*Due to LCEF Articles of Incorporation and Synod Bylaws, schools that are RSOs are not eligible.





It's time to register for the 2019 Church Interpreter Training Institute (CITI) program!

CITI is a distinctive program, teaching students to interpret the Word of God accurately, which is God's means of life and salvation for His people.

June 13–16, 2019

Concordia Theological Seminary,
6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, Ind.

RID CEUs available

Cost: \$200 (commuters) & \$350 (residential)

Registration & Scholarship info: lutheranfriendsofthedeaf.org/citi
(Limited scholarships available. Contact your church or district to help offset the cost.)



Lutheran Friends of the Deaf

Founding Member of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations
Contact: Deaconess Heidi Sias (hsias@millneck.org) Registration **Deadline: May 24, 2019**