



The Augustana Ministerium

A pastoral association formed to preserve and promote Lutheran pastors and a distinctively Lutheran Ministry of Word and Sacrament to Lutheran congregations.



Our Bursar's Call

[The Bursar of The Augustana Ministerium, the Rev. Gregory Schultz, has recently accepted a Call to serve a parish in New York. As this means a change to the address to which you send dues and donations for the Confraternity and Ministerium, we thought it would be a good time to highlight what goes through a pastor's mind in figuring out whether God wants him to remain where he is or to receive a new charge. Contrary to what some would lead us to believe, it's not a matter of the Holy Spirit somehow communicating His desires to the pastor apart from any means, but the pastor evaluating the situations the Lord has put before him, seeing where his service will best run in line with both the Commandments and the Gospel, so that both things of the Church and things pertaining to his other vocations (husband, father, son, etc.). Please see the outer page of this newsletter for the new address; if you've recently sent a donation to the old address, please allow an extra cycle before it appears on your bank statement.]

The last couple of years I had been enjoying the peace and quiet of serving my little country parish in Illinois. After fourteen years, and having been used by the Lord to outlast several who would not suffer the teaching of "the whole counsel of God," things were going along smoothly—so smoothly, in fact, that I had allowed myself to muse about the possibility of retiring here in another twelve years or so. My wife and I raised our three children here and we were really settled in to a nice routine.

I had not received a Divine Call in fourteen years...and then the Lord of the Church allowed another congregation to call me as her senior pastor. After fourteen years of shepherding my current flock, I have received and have now accepted a Divine Call to serve another parish.

The call process is nothing if not unnerving. It is a time, usually two to four weeks, of realizing, among other things, that sleep is highly overrated. There is the initial excitement and realization that, thanks be to God, I am indeed still wanted (not that my mug is plastered on the post office bulletin board). But when that excitement dies down, there

is the harsh reality of placing everything on the table of the decision-making process; I call it "Blender-Brain," the sound a blender makes when you press "Puree". It never stops, not even at night. It is a process that the Lord uses to sift you like wheat and bring you to your knees in prayer.

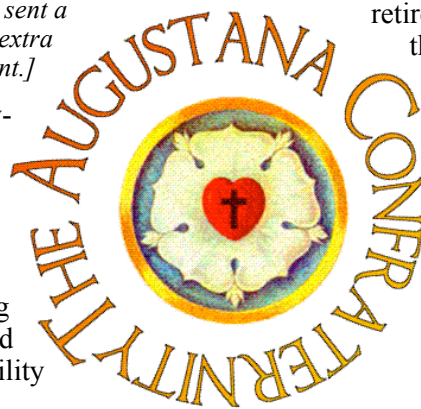
When I announced to my congregation that I had received a Call, there was shock and dismay—which is good, because it's better that they say, "Gosh, pastor, we really want you to stay" rather than "Great! He's outta here!" But, thanks be to God, all were supportive of whatever I would decide.

After a few days, I requested a conference call with the calling congregation's leadership to ask many questions: what is the communion practice, what is the status of the retired pastor, what about the Lutheran school, is the congregation planning to call a second pastor in due time (as I would be serving a group numbering about 1300 on paper and would certainly not last long without help)...so many questions to mull over and about which to pray...Have I mentioned that sleep is overrated?

I spoke with many of my current members and re-visited the past fourteen years. I examined and re-examined all the things I had been asked to do in my current congregation, as well as explored and gathered as much information about the calling congregation. The Call documents

contained information about the size and make up of the calling congregation, and, somewhat importantly, what they will pay. I asked myself, Can I really do this? Having three teen-aged children, I also had to consider to what degree their lives would be altered (or "ruined", as is possible with a 15-year-old daughter) if we moved. That we are a home-schooling family ensured us that we would be taking our school with us. But what about the son who is 650 miles away at college, and the fact that, if we move, he would now be 1000 miles away? What about the friend-

(cont. on Page 3)



**Confessional Lutheran Laity
Supporting Confessional Pastors**

A Reformation and All Saints Reflection

The Lutheran Reformation marks a renewal in the Church of emphasis on God's Word and Sacraments as means of grace by which the Holy Spirit forgives our sins, creates and sustains faith in Christ, and gives us eternal life with God the Father now and forever. All Saints' Day in the Lutheran Church is not only a commemoration and celebration of the lives of those officially bearing the title because the whole Church testifies to their having died in the faith, but of the sainthood of every baptized believer in Christ—every member of His holy Christian Church past, present, and future.

In this year of our Lord, 2009, Reformation and All Saints' Days marked significant events in the life of Trinity Lutheran Church of Layton, Utah in addition to their designation as feast days in the life of all Lutheran Christians. How appropriate it is that Trinity Lutheran would be reforming, in a sense, as an assembly of saints at a new location in this eventful time of the church calendar!

On October 25, in addition to celebrating the Reformation, the people of Trinity held their final service at their former property, and a week later on All Saints' Day, the first Divine Service in the new sanctuary at their new location on Fort Lane Boulevard in Layton.

Missouri Synod Lutherans first gathered for worship in Layton at the City Hall back in 1945 because of the diffi-

culty gas rationing posed for travel to the nearest established congregation, St. Paul, Ogden. From this humble beginning, Trinity Lutheran Church was incorporated on All Saints Day, 1948 under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Harold Brauer with twelve charter members.

The people of Trinity purchased land in 1954 and dedicated a converted army barracks as its original worship facility in March of 1955, moving to a new building across the street in November of 1964.

As the families and membership of Trinity grew through the 1970s and 80s, the congregation found themselves in need of more space. They expanded the facilities in 1971, and again in 1998 as there was a growing desire to establish a Lutheran elementary school.

Today, however, the people of Trinity Lutheran Church find themselves in a struggle to maintain their distinctive, Lutheran, Law and Gospel teaching and practice of the Christian faith. In a world of uncertainty and ambiguity, Trinity Lutheran Church exists to deliver the Good News of salvation and eternal life through the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. In the current climate of financial distress and spiritual potpourri in the United States, this collection of forgiven sinners and baptized saints of God called by the name of the Holy and Blessed Trinity has found it necessary to sell the property of their beloved church home in order to continue its ministry to the congregation and its surrounding

communities. Yet, as this sale provides the opportunity to do just that, they celebrate what these festival days bring.

The people of Trinity and I thank God for the gracious financial and fraternal support He provided through The Augustana Ministerium over the past year. You played a huge part in enabling me to continue to serve as pastor of Trinity and survive financially and emotionally despite those who left in search of various and sundry things other than that which the Lord has given us to offer here. Having navigated through those troubled waters with your help, Trinity Lutheran Church will continue to celebrate the Divine Service and hold Bible study every Sunday morning. Trinity Lutheran Preschool will continue (in its thirtieth year) to hold classes in which 3 and 4 year-olds from our congregation and the community will learn about Jesus and be taught skills that will prepare them for their further education and life in the Word and in the world.

By the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray this move from 385 West Golden Avenue to 74 North Fort Lane Boulevard in Layton will provide a sanctuary for the gathering of God's beloved people around the Word and Sacraments of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, for years and generations to come.

Your ever appreciative fellow servant of the Word,

Rev. Kurt Hering, Pastor
Trinity Lutheran Church
Layton, Utah.

Calling a Pastor, continued from back

that prevents the pastors of the Synod from providing such a service, whether on the local, district, or synodical level—though such a service is generally delegated to the DP as part of the duties of his office. Thus, if your District President does not comply with your request for information in a timely manner, (and, therefore, has not complied with the CCM's ruling of 3/9/97), he is abusing his office and should be rebuked for such abuse. He (and everyone else) must recognize that the duty and privilege of Calling pastors does not reside in the man-made office of District President,

but in Christ's holy Church as manifest in the local congregation. In carrying out this duty and privilege faithfully, you are not only synodically-mandated to seek the advice of the District President, but free to ask advice of anyone and everyone who might be of service to Christ's Church and Gospel.

Thus, if your parish is in the Call process, you should know your rights, so that your ability to receive a pastor who is faithful to God's Word is not infringed. Please feel free to call upon members of the Ministerium for such assistance.

ships the children have made and all their childhood memories? What about finding quality music instruction, good colleges, a house to live in, and the plethora of concerns that arise? How could we say good-bye to the many faithful and loving saints that had been a part of our lives for so long, and to a congregation that has the utmost respect for the Office of the Holy Ministry?

After two weeks our merciful Lord granted me peace of mind, and I announced that I had accepted the Call. Looking back, I admit that I knew right away that I would accept it, but went through my own pietistic gyrations of deliberation because I thought I had to. The fact that this congregation was only four miles from my parents and less than an hour from my wife was a large factor; my children only saw their grandparents barely once per year. My parents are in their 80's, my in-laws in their 70's, so I considered the Fourth Commandment as a contributing factor to accepting the Call so that, if need be, we would be able to take care of them in their old age.

Thanks be to God, literally everyone at my current congregation is happy for me and my family that we will have what they already treasure: family close by. And the calling congregation is quite happy to have a full-time pastor for the first time in almost two years.

And now the move... So many boxes, the desperate need to downsize: "Do I really want to move *that* and have it sit in the house untouched for *another fourteen years?*"

So, starting January 3, 2010, I will begin my duties as the pastor of a new congregation of God's people. As the Lord of the Church grants me breath and strength, I will do my God-given best to preach to them the pure Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and faithfully administer His Sacraments in accordance with His Word.

And I hope never to move again.

Rev. Gregory J. Schultz, Bursar
Pastor-Elect, St. Matthew, North Tonawanda, New York

5th Annual Theological Conference

The Fifth Annual Theological Conference and Plenary Session of The Augustana Ministerium will be held May 17-19, 2010, hosted by Charity Lutheran Church, 1101 S.W. Wilshire Blvd., Burlson, TX and her pastor, the Rev. Dr. Kent Heimbigner.

This year's conference theme, "Lives in the Balance," focuses on how Confessional Lutherans go about equipping people for the world's fight and the soul's salvation. From education to citizenship, apologetics to proper use of the Law and the Gospel to steer people away from both boredom and despair, the shape of the enemy's weapons and our response to them will be brought into view.

The theological portion of the program is open to members and non-members, clergy and laity alike. The Plenary Session of the Ministerium will be open to all attendees, except during an executive session, should one be called. The cost of the conference will be \$30. That cost is included in the paid 2010 dues for Ministerium and Confraternity members.

We have a fine slate of speakers for this conference:

1. "Reclaiming the Old Lutheran Axiom: We Teach Our Own—To Keep our Baptized Children Alive." Exploring the kind of education our children need today. What has happened to the priority of educating our own? What do our children need to become equipped for the spiritual warfare they will face in their world of today and tomorrow. Catechesis, yes...but more—what content and what kind of pedagogy is needed. Where is the responsibility of parents? Pastors? Our congregations? What about the classical model? Rev. Richard Sawyer, essayist
2. "Nurturing the Foundations of Faith: Equipping God's People to Defend Against the Reasoned Arguments of Unbelief." This topic would cover the importance and the needed focus for Christian Apologetics as a vital element of our equipping in the Gospel. For our youth? For our adults? For our pastors? Rev., Dr. Steven A. Hein, essayist
3. The Balanced Spiritual Diet of Full-Strength Law and Gospel, and the Deadly Signs of Imbalance (Boredom and Despair)." This is not to be simply a review of Law/Gospel 101, but rather, what are the common misunderstandings or failings we fall into here and what do we need to be clear on to keep them rightly divided and at full strength. Rev. Michael Henson, essayist
4. "Instilling Christian Citizenship: The Freedom of Grace and the Bondage of the Neighbor." What do your people need to understand, and at the earliest ages, about the character of faith and life in both kingdoms? What are the common failings we have, the common misunderstandings our people have, and how do we make it clear in our preaching and teaching. Rev. Mark Buetow, essayist
5. "The Seven Deadly Values of Contemporary Culture: The Shape of the Enemy's Weapons against Our People Today" If our people are face with challenges from the world, the flesh, and the Devil—what are the seven most deadly temptations and afflictions that our people must contend with in their contemporary world. How can they best be armed to defend against them? Bishop James Heiser, essayist

Rev. Dr. Steven A. Hein, Dean of Education
Director, Concordia Institute for Christian Studies
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Calling a Pastor:

The Rights and Privileges of a Congregation

While the work of The Augustana Ministerium is decidedly non-political, at times it is necessary to help pastors and parishes that are being mistreated by those who 'play politics' against them. This article, included for that purpose, is available on our website in an extended form (with the document mentioned in it included) in a format for reprinting as an insert in a congregation's bulletin.

There is much confusion in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod these days about just who it is that God has set in place as His means of determining which pastors should serve which congregations. In some districts of the LCMS, congregations have been given the impression that they may only choose a pastor with the approval of the District President (DP) or his emissary, and that all information concerning pastors under consideration must come from the District President's office, and if no information is

provided the congregation must drop such pastors from their Call List.

District Presidents, primarily, have been given the task of providing information on pastors as requested by calling congregations. However, they do not have the right to refuse such information or to impose artificial stipulations for obtaining it, such as a demonstration of prior experience with the candidate. The Bylaws of the LCMS only require that a District President be "consulted" and that his opinions be "considered." Beyond that, he has no right to dictate anything to the congregation other than what the conditions of membership in the LCMS Constitution and Bylaws indicate.

All District Presidents of the LCMS should understand this, yet a good number are not in compliance with the ruling of the LCMS Commission on Constitutional Matters rendered over a decade ago concerning this matter. As the CCM ruled, there is nothing in the Constitution or Bylaws of the LCMS

Donation Info

Make checks payable to:

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<http://www.augustanaministerium.org>

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