



# LUTHERAN LIFE

*Abhaze!*  
Igniting the World with Christ's Love

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## Church Worker Shortage Presents Challenge

January 27 is "Church Worker Recruitment Sunday" for the Florida-Georgia District. Resources for worship, prayer and Bible study are available to congregations under the theme "Servants for the Future."

"The goal is to focus on the need to intentionally recruit full-time church workers and to raise endowment funds to support their education," said Rev. Dr. Wayne Wilke, Concordia House of Studies Executive Director.

"The challenge is daunting: by the power of the Holy Spirit, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and its worldwide partners intend to share the Gospel

"At the current pace, the number of graduates will fall short of the replacement of retiring pastors at the rate of about 100 per year," Wilke said.

goal: to provide support for student aid and scholarships for church work students, for the Concordia House of Studies; and for expanding campus ministry. Pastors, teachers and other church workers have been challenged to give \$100,000 toward

the initial \$1-million goal, with the remainder to come from individual gifts.

*NOTE: An update on gifts to 'Servants for the Future' received through December 31, 2007, is on page 7 of this issue. □*

**The challenge is daunting: by the power of the Holy Spirit, the LCMS and its worldwide partners intend to share the Gospel with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people, including 50 million in the U.S., by 2017.**

with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people, including 50 million in the United States, by 2017," Wilke continued.

Another *Abhaze!* goal is to plant 5,000 congregations worldwide, with 2,000 nationally. An additional LCMS World Mission goal is to help revitalize 2,000 U.S. congregations.

As its share of the ministry, the Florida-Georgia District has committed to share the Gospel with 2 million people; start 200 or more missions; and revitalize 22 or more congregations.

### Critical Need

Projections show that the number of pastors serving in the LCMS will decline in the years ahead. Statistics indicate that 300-350 pastors will retire or leave active parish ministry annually between 2006 and 2016. Last year, 250 seminarians were placed and about 240 are expected to graduate in 2008.

This looming shortage is one of the challenges the District's Advisory Council on Church Worker Recruitment hopes to address with the January 27 focus.

"The overarching goal of this special Sunday is to respond to our Lord's call," Wilke emphasized. "In Matthew 9:37, Jesus said, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send our laborers into his harvest.'"

Each District congregation is challenged to become a SENDING congregation. SENDING includes intentionally seeking and identifying those with gifts for ministry; praying for them; equipping them in the congregation; and supporting them with prayer and financial resources.

"Servants for the Future" is an effort to create an endowment fund with a three-fold

## Dr. Samuel Hoard Remembered as "Poignant" Community Voice

Longtime Missouri Synod pastor, military chaplain and social activist Dr. Samuel L. Hoard died of cancer November 30, 2007, in Orlando. He was 80.

In a December 4 *Orlando Sentinel* editorial, Hoard was lauded as a "tenacious and compassionate ... a poignant voice in this community since moving here in 1972."

Hoard, retired pastor of Our Savior-Orlando, "showed this community what the true spirit of activism is all about," according to the editorial.

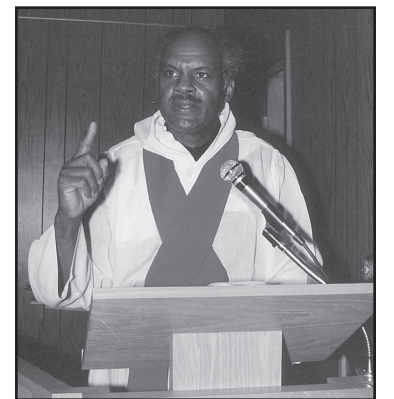
Raised in St. Louis, Hoard was the second African American to be admitted to Concordia Seminary there. A 1957 Seminary graduate, Hoard wrote about his struggles with racism in the 1950s in the community and in the church in his 2004 autobiography, *The Truth Will Set You Free*.

Hoard's 27-year stint as a U.S. Army chaplain included a tour in Vietnam where he

earned the Silver Star Award for "ministering to troops under intense enemy fire." He was also awarded the Servant of Christ Award from Concordia College-Bronxville and the Martin of Tours Medal from the Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces.

Prior to moving to Orlando, he had served as pastor to congregations in New York City and Kansas City, MO.

Hoard is survived by his wife, Mary Jo, and sons Samuel L. Hoard Jr. and Joel Alan Hoard, all of Orlando. □



## Inside this Issue

President Michael reflects on 60th celebration — **Page 2**

St. John-Ocala brother/sister top area golfers — **Page 4**

CHS announces Spring 2008 schedule — **Page 5**

60th Anniversary news and calendar notes — **Pages 6-7**

Woodlands campaign funds reallocated — **Page 8**

Congregations celebrate milestones — **Page 10**

LSF Honors District Good Samaritans — **Page 11**

## LCEF Honors Richard Neubauer

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund honored Richard Neubauer with its prestigious Arthur C. Haake Leadership Award late last year during its annual conference.

"The Arthur C. Haake Leadership Award honors a past or present staff person for service to LCEF," said LCEF President Merle Freitag. "Recipients reflect the dedication, spirit, and love that the late Art Haake [a past LCEF president] had for the ministry of church extension."

Neubauer has worked for the Florida-Georgia District Church Extension Fund for more than 23 years. He serves as the LCEF Vice President and is one of five LCEF Regional Vice Presidents.

In nominating Neubauer, Florida-Georgia District President Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael Jr. wrote, "Richard's commitment to the church's mission is obvious. He engages his responsibilities with integrity, treats people with

respect and concern, and does his decision making not only with fairness and good judgment, but also and especially, with a deep commitment to God's mission."

Other nominations cited Neubauer's mentoring and leadership skills, describing them as "an encouragement to those he advises to provide guidance in reaching goals and objectives."

Larry Jung, Indiana District LCEF Vice President and past Haake Award recipient, wrote, "Rich's commitment to this work is second to none, and his achievements in meeting the goals he sets for the District are an example that many district vice presidents try to emulate."

According to Mary Byrd, Florida-Georgia LCEF Promotion Manager, "Everyone who works with Richard comes away a better person as he shares his knowledge of LCEF and about his faith. He 'walks the walk'

and 'talks the talk' and has truly made a difference."

Haake Award recipients receive a statuette of a miniature eagle, which is a replica of the three-and-one-half-foot sculpture in the LCEF national office in St. Louis that is a memorial to Haake's leadership.

With this honor, Neubauer becomes a member of the LCEF "Silver Eagles," an advisory group that includes past

Fund presidents, former board chairmen and previous Haake Leadership Award recipients.

LCEF is a not-for-profit organization that provides low-cost loans and facility-planning services to churches, schools and rostered church workers of the LCMS through the investment support of church members. For more information, call 800-843-5233 or visit [www.lcef.org](http://www.lcef.org). □



Shown at the LCEF 2007 fall conference are (l-r) LCEF President Merle Freitag, Florida-Georgia District LCEF Vice President and Arthur C. Haake Leadership Award recipient Richard Neubauer, Florida-Georgia District President Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael and LCEF Board Chairman Rev. David Belasic

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