

DISTRICT NEWS

Glorify the Lord! Chosen as Convention Theme

COMMUNICATOR'S CORNER



by Edward A. Wright
International LLL
Communicator

Psalm 34.3 instructs us to *Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt His name together!*

This is the theme of the 89th Int'l Lutheran Laymen's League Convention to be held July 6-9 under the Big Sky of Billings, MT. The Convention Committee promises fun, fellowship, excitement and discovery. Can you imagine what the explorers Lewis and Clark must have seen during their trek across the vast wilderness of what is now Montana? It is said they were awed by the beauty and range of the territory. Now

you can capture a similar excitement for the sights, sounds and Gospel opportunities that range throughout the world.

While Lewis & Clark were commissioned by the President, every supporter of LHM can heed the call of the Lord's Great Commission as they are *'Bringing Christ to the Nations...and the Nations to the Church.'* The area offers many points of interest.

Past and Future at the 75th Banquet

A convention banquet on Saturday evening, July 8, will culminate the year-long celebration of the 75th Anniversary of *The Lutheran Hour*. Doctors Paul and Walter A. Maier, Jr. will reflect on their father's involvement as first

speaker. Other featured guests will provide us a glimpse of the future for the longest-running Christian outreach radio program in the world.

The convention will commence on Thursday, July 6, with a mid-afternoon communion service. On Friday, a message of Christ's grace will be presented by Dr. Dale Meyer, president of Concordia Seminary-St. Louis, at a special luncheon. During the luncheon, there will be a moment of reflection for our defenders in the Armed Forces and their families as the Canadian (July 1st) and U.S. Independence Days will have just been celebrated.

On Friday evening participants will encounter the "best in the West" through food and entertainment. Children and youth will have a 'servant event' by packing Global Care boxes for Uruguay on Thursday.

Friday they will venture out to the Beartooth Nature Center in the Beartooth Mountain foothills. On Saturday a trip to the Big Splash Water Park and a Montana Zoo program will take place... *Bring the Kids!*

On Saturday, the public is invited to join LLL members as they "Glorify the Lord" at a rally for *The Lutheran Hour*. *Lutheran Hour* Speaker Ken Klaus will deliver the message.

You can register for the Big Sky Event by using the Convention Registration Form and the Hotel Registration Form in the Pre-Convention issue of The

Lutheran Layman newspaper or you may go Online to www.lhm.org/convention. Three hotels are being utilized and unlike last year's Topeka convention, Billings does have a commercial airport serviced by several carriers. Our St. Louis building also houses AAA as a tenant and they offer fair-priced flights at the toll free 866-222-6600 number for your convenience or visit any of online travel companies or air-line company reservations. If you have never visited the northwest part of the U.S. now is your chance and you can 'Glorify the Lord!' □

Seminary Professors Respond to Gospel of Judas

Concordia Seminary-St. Louis, professors James Voelz and Jeffrey Kloha provided a response to the gospel of Judas for members of the Seminary community in a convocation on Monday, April 10.

Voelz and Kloha serve in the Seminary's department of exegetical theology and specialize in New Testament studies. In the convocation, they addressed four aspects of the gospel of Judas manuscript:

1. How the manuscript is portrayed in the media;
2. Basic features of the manuscript;
3. Gnosticism as a point of reference for the manuscript; and

4. The manuscript and canonicity.

"There is nothing of the historical Jesus, the Jesus that walked the earth, in this document," commented Kloha.

The gospel of Judas was featured in a National Geographic Society television documentary and has received a great deal of media attention. It is dramatically different from the four gospels contained within the New Testament and purports to provide a secret account of a revelation that Jesus spoke with the disciple Judas.

"Jesus is never described as 'the Christ' in this manuscript,"

said Kloha. "Instead, an individual named Seth is referenced as the Christ."

In describing the media's portrayal of the document, Voelz commented, "They are conveniently omitting a lot of information that would put the manuscript in a bad light. It is important for people to know how odd this document is."

An audio file of the convocation in mp3 format is available free of charge on the Seminary's Web site at www.csl.edu. □

Thrivent Grant Initiative Will Help Foster Charitable Gifting

The Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation is offering Lutheran organizations an opportunity to apply for a Charitable Gifting Initiative grant.

This initiative is a competitive grant program aimed at helping Lutheran organizations collaborate with a financial services organization to foster charitable gifting.

A total of \$5.5 million is available for charitable gifting projects in 2006.

Grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000 will be awarded to educate and motivate Lutherans in charitable gifting options and to generate potentially millions of dollars in new gifts. Last year 75 grants totaling more than \$4.9 million were awarded with the expectation of generating an estimated \$276 million in immediate or deferred monetary gifts to Lutheran institutions.

Eligible grant applicants include the following Lutheran groups: congregations, regional divisions of the three

largest church bodies, small church bodies, high schools, colleges, universities, seminaries, camps, campus ministries, social ministry organizations and other independent organizations or institutions. Interested Lutheran organizations can order grant application materials by visiting www.thrivent.com/fraternal/foundation/index.html.

The deadline to apply is September 15. Organizations that received a Charitable Gifting Initiative grant in 2004 or 2005 are not eligible.

The Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation is a private foundation funded by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. As a 501(c)(3) organization with its own board of trustees, the foundation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, religious, scientific, literary and educational purposes and makes grants and gifts to 501(c)(3) exempt organizations. The Foundation does not provide grants to individuals. □



LUTHERAN HOUR SUNDAY was celebrated at Forest Oaks Lutheran-Spring Hill, FL, on February 26. Shown here are Neil Finkenstadt; Pastor Milt Lehr; Ed Wright, Communications Coordinator and District Manager for the Lutheran Hour Ministries in Western Florida; and Pastor Glenn Fisher. Fisher and Lehr are the pastors of Forest Oaks Lutheran. □



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