

## BOARD REPORT

## Board Considers Future Mission, Funding, Structure for District



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John List  
Communications  
Director

The Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors opened its September 14-15 meeting in a joint morning session with the Circuit Counselors to hear and respond to a presentation by the Futures Committee.

This eight-member committee was appointed by District President Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael Jr. in 2006 to help Florida-Georgia strategize for its future. Their presentation at the Board meeting summarized their work to date and offered Board members the opportunity to provide input and feedback.

Board Chairman Jim Guelzow opened the meeting's afternoon

session with a devotion. One of the Board's first order of business was to elect Rev. Stephen Wipperman as Region IV representation, replacing Rev. Henry Drummond who resigned from the position. Wipperman is pastor of Our Savior-Lake Worth, FL, the congregation left without a sanctuary after Hurricane Wilma's 2005 visit.

Highlights from The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod's recent convention were offered by Guelzow; Rev. Wayne Wilke, executive director of the Concordia House of Studies; John List, District Communications; Jim Ingersoll, District treasurer; Rev. Jim Guelzow, Region III Board representative; and President Michael. All five men had been at the Convention as voting or advisory delegates.

#### Following in Faith

Board members were introduced to the *Following in Faith* theme for the District's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2008. Events for the celebration will include church worker Sunday (January 27); commemoration Sunday (February 17); and Circuit Convocations (April 5 - May 4).

More information will be sent to congregations and included in upcoming issues of *Lutheran LIFE*.

#### Church Leaders

Stuart Craig joined the LCMS Foundation earlier this year as a Gift Planning Counselor and has been assigned to Florida-Georgia. Craig has served on the Foundation staff as a gift planner and most recently as Assistant to the President of the Pacific Southwest District.

Craig and his wife, Nancy, relocated to Central Florida in mid-August.

Four DCE interns are serving District congregations this year: Jamie Bass at Faith-Marietta, GA; Jared Juszcak at Grace-Winter Haven, FL; Kelly Sevin at Hope-Bonita Springs, FL; and Andy Stumpf at Bethel-Clearwater, FL.

#### Funding the Mission

Plans are to complete all contacts and efforts for *Forward Together - Servants in His Mission* by the District's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in February. More information on this \$10-million capital campaign is featured on the front page of this issue.

Progress is being made toward the *Servants for the Future* endowment fund's \$1 million goal. As of the Board meeting date, 61 pastors and 20 commissioned ministers had responded with pledges and gifts. A \$100,000 commitment was made by William Kemp of Key West, FL, in honor of his mother, Marge, a veteran missionary.

Richard Neubauer, vice president Lutheran Church Extension Fund and Administration, reported that seven LCEF loans had been approved since the previous Board meeting. "The demand for loan dollars continues to be strong," he noted.

#### Lutheran Schools

Four Florida-Georgia schools earned their National Lutheran School Accreditation recently: St. Paul-Boca Raton, FL; Faith-Eustis, FL; St. Mark's-Hollywood, FL; and Trinity-Holly Hill, FL.

Four Florida congregations began their first full year of school ministry this fall, all with early childhood programs: Zion-Fort Myers; First-Gainesville; Grace-Merritt Island; and Christ the King; Largo.

This year's Educators Conference was held in Orlando from September 19-21 under the theme "With All Your Heart." A report on this conference will be featured in next month's *Lutheran LIFE*.

The District's 2007 Hearts for Jesus project generated more than \$61,000 from students in Florida-Georgia to Mission India. Thrivent Financial for Lutherans contributed to the gift with a \$10,000 matching gift.

"In four short years, the amount of contributions from children's chapel offerings has grown from under \$20,000

to more than \$60,000," noted Mark Brink, Executive for School Ministries.

#### Multi-Cultural Outreach

Rev. Doug Kallesen, Executive for Outreach, reported on the wide range of District events and activities to share the Gospel with at least 2 million people by 2017.

New mission start activity is under way at nine locations in the District. Some of these starts are already worshipping, while others are working on forming launch teams and building small groups.

Ten District congregations are currently involved in consultations to strengthen their work in carrying out their God-given mission and purpose. The need for this service is "enormous, especially as we hear of statistics that say that up to 85% of our congregations have plateaued or have declined," Pastor Kallesen emphasized.

#### Human Care

The Florida-Georgia District helps support four outreach organizations in the two-state region: Lutheran Services Georgia; Lutheran Services Florida; Lutheran Social Services of Northeast Florida; and Lutheran Social Services of North Florida.

The next board meeting is scheduled for November. □

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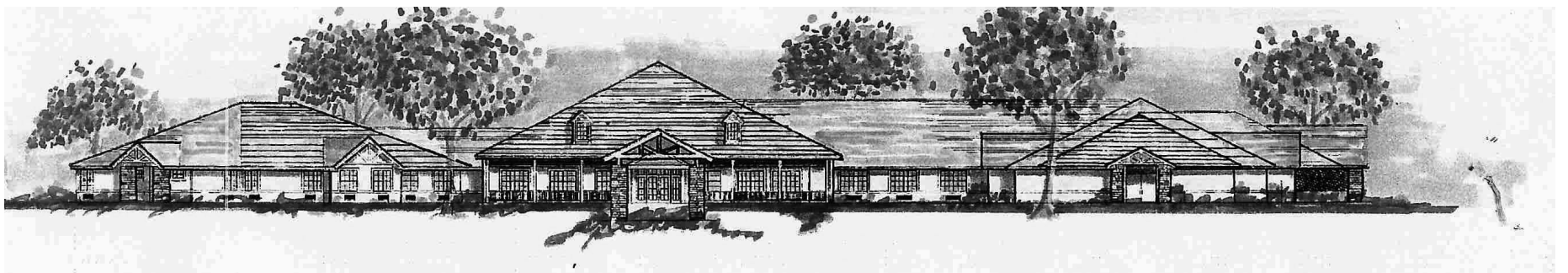
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