



LUTHERAN LIFE

Ablaze!
Igniting the World with Christ's Love

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President's Convocation Strengthens Workers for Outreach

Nearly 1,000 Florida-Georgia District professional church workers and congregational leaders gathered in Orlando from September 28-30 for the 2005 President's Convocation.

Bible study, workshops, worship and keynote addresses during the three-day event focused on the theme Rooted in Christ, taken from Colossians 2:6-7: *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

Florida-Georgia District President Gerhard Michael Jr. described the Convocation theme as "greatly encouraging . . . for it focuses our attention on the One who not only gives us direction for our ministry, but also the power for carrying it out with grace and effectiveness."

Added Convocation Chairman Rev. Tim Hartner, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran-Weston, FL, "Being deeply rooted and intertwined in Christ and one another is just what we church workers in Florida and Georgia

need to find joy in our ministries and 'hold fast!'

"From the outset, that was the committee's goal for our gathering — to leave the Convocation more faithful, vital and joyful . . . thankful that we

said 'Yes!' to God's calling to serve Him."

Rev. Victor Belton, pastor of Peace-Decatur, GA, served as the Bible study and devotional leader for the Convocation. Rev. Chris Bodley, pastor of Our Savior-Orlando, was the Convocation chaplain. David Ludwig, Jr., of Orlando, led the Convocation in song and offered special music throughout the three days.

A highlight of the Convocation was the Thursday evening communion service, which featured President Michael as the preacher and included festive music.



Florida-Georgia District President Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael Jr. (right) led a panel discussion with keynoters (left to right) Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, Dr. Marva Dawn and Dr. William Willimon.

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Outreach Summits will Uplift, Inspire, Empower District Members

Hundreds of Florida-Georgia District members will gather early next year in Ocala and Boca Raton, FL, and Marietta, GA, for inspiration and training in fulfilling their roles in Christ's mission.

with registration and a kick-off celebration under the theme "Ignite the Flame." On Friday, the focus will be on "Fanning the Flame" with devotions, Bible study, a keynote address, workshops, a strategic planning dinner that will provide an opportunity for congregations to set goals and a worship service with Holy Communion. Saturday's morning session will encourage Summit participants to "Carry the Torch" as the

Faith Lutheran-Marietta, GA, February 23-25.

Summit leaders

Keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Charles Mueller began his ministry career in 1953 as pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church-Jacksonville Beach, FL. In 1957, he accepted a call to St. Andrew Lutheran Church-Silver Spring, MD, where he served until 1970 when he was elected to the first of two terms as president of the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Mueller returned to parish ministry in 1978, accepting a call to Trinity Lutheran Church-Roselle, IL, where he served until his retirement in 1992.

Florida-Georgia President Rev. Dr. Gerhard Michael Jr. will lead the Outreach Summit Bible studies. Now serving his third term as District president, Michael is a former missionary to Japan who has been serving in Florida-Georgia since 1984. He was the pastor of Mount Calvary-Warner Robins, GA, for 13 years and served as a District vice president and a member of the Board of Directors. He has written various Bible studies — including *God's Trustees*, co-authored with Rev. David S. Belasic, available through the Florida-Georgia District web site.

Wide-ranging workshop topics

Four workshop sessions are planned, with individual settings addressing partnership and outreach issues including:

- connecting your church with the community;
- enhancing pastor-people partnership;
- igniting the youth in your church and community;
- reaching families in today's fragmented society;
- reaching today's seniors;
- using Lutheran schools for effective outreach;
- reaching across cultural lines;
- using technology in effective outreach.

Registration

Registration is \$60 per person for an individual; \$50 per person for groups of five-nine; \$40 per person for groups of 10-19; and \$30 per person for groups of 20 or more. This fee covers all sessions and two meals on Friday. Hotel information and site maps are on the District website, www.flga-lcms.org.

Online registration opened October 17.

The Outreach Summits are sponsored by the Florida-Georgia District and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. □



The trio of Outreach Summits are planned under the theme *Ablaze! Partnering in Christ*, designed for professional church workers, congregational leaders and all members interested in reaching their communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Each Summit will incorporate dedicated Bible study, inspiring worship, relevant workshops, meaningful work plans and uplifting fellowship.

Planned as three-day events, the Outreach Summits will open on a Thursday evening

event closes with devotions, workshops, Bible study, goal collection and a commissioning service for "Igniting the Mission Field."

Hosting the Outreach Summits will be:

- St. John Lutheran-Ocala, February 2-4;
- St. Paul Lutheran-Boca Raton, February 9-11;

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