

Thursday, May 6, 2010—12:00 noon

**Saint Luke Lutheran Church
9100 Colesville Road at Dale Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910**

“Life Together for Today’s Church”

**Bishop H. Gerard Knoche, Retired
Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA**

We welcome recently retired Bishop H. Gerard “Jerry” Knoche of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA as the speaker for our May luncheon. He will provide some reflections on *“Life Together for Today’s Church,”* based on a book by the same title by Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

A graduate of Harvard College and Yale Divinity School, our speaker completed a unit of clinical pastoral education at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington. Later he received his Master of Sacred Theology degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 1973

Bishop Knoche has a varied professional background. After his ordination in 1967 and his serving as an assistant pastor in Westminster, MD, Knoche became assistant and then associate chaplain at Gettysburg College. From there he moved to the University of Wisconsin, Madison when he became campus pastor with Lutheran Campus Ministry in 1974. In 1984, he was promoted to director of that program. During that time, he received both the award for Outstanding Campus Pastor in the United States and the Joseph Sittler Communication Award.

Knoche came home to Maryland in 1991, accepting a call to be pastor of New Hope Lutheran Church, a floundering young congregation in Columbia. When Knoche arrived, the congregation of 250 people was worshiping at a local elementary school cafeteria. During his nine-year tenure, he brought the congregation through two building programs and saw the membership grow to almost 1,100. The congregation was about to undertake a major capital fund drive when he was elected bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod on June 17, 2000, at the annual Synod Assembly in Westminster, MD.

Throughout his career, Knoche has been active in various church and community activities. He is also the author of two books. Concordia published *The Creative Task: Writing the Sermon*, in 1977. *The Gift of the Gospel*, Augsburg Fortress, 1984, summarized the Christian faith for adults.

As bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Knoche oversaw a professional staff of 14 full-time and part-time people. The synod serves some 90,000 Lutherans in 184 congregations across the two-state area. Bishop Knoche retired from active ministry this past October.

ATTENTION, RECIPIENTS OF THIS NEWSLETTER: Effective in June, the print edition of this Newsletter will be mailed only to dues-paying members of the Lutheran Lay Fellowship. Additional information is printed on the back cover of this newsletter.

We invite all Lutherans and their friends to join us for this luncheon meeting of **Lutheran Lay Fellowship**, scheduled for the first Thursday of each month from 12:00 noon till 2:00 p.m. at Saint Luke Lutheran Church, 9100 Colesville Road at Dale Drive in Silver Spring, one mile south of the Capitol Beltway at Exit 30. Ample off-street parking is available. Interested persons can make reservations for a delicious lunch by contacting **Vicki Porter at VICKI.PORTER@Longandfoster.com** or **301-229-9884** no later than 5:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, May 4**. The cost of the luncheon is \$9.00, payable at the door.

Upcoming Speakers

June 3	Dr. Terry Reynold, Chair, Department of Theology, Georgetown University
July 1	Sister Sally Hiller, Executive Director, Congregational Outreach, Southeastern District, LCMS

LLF Luncheon Minutes Thursday, April 1, 2010

Our meeting began with a devotional by our guest speaker, Kirk Betts. He spoke on the parable of the Good Samaritan from Luke and how the Samaritan lived out Christ's greatest commandment—to love your neighbor as yourself-- by stopping when the priest and Levite, who knew the Law well, didn't stop. Drawing on this parable, Kirk explained how Lutheran World Relief accompanies those it serves by not just responding to an immediate need, but by staying in the communities long term to help them work through the problems and solutions that they identify and to then help develop the resources to implement their solutions.

Announcements

April birthdays recognized included Bonnie Priebe, 29th and Mona Minnich, 25th. The visitors this month were Em Cole and Kirk Betts from Lutheran World Relief and Mona Minnich from Haiti. Kirk Betts celebrates his anniversary on April 13th.

President Bob Sargeant handed out a slate of nominations for the Fellowship Square Foundation corporate membership, Class of 2013, to be voted on. The slate was elected unanimously.

Dave Lambert passed out information on the new LLF website. He noted that only dues paying members will receive the paper copies effective June 2010.

Bob Sargeant emphasized the importance of Thrivent members voting on the 10 organizations to be supported so that Thrivent will donate even more funds. All churches should have received information on registering for Thrivent Cares under the new system. Thrivent members will get a letter with details on how to designate money. He is trying to get LLF registered as an organization.

Speaker Notes

“Haiti Relief from a Lutheran Perspective”

Kirk Betts is a lawyer and partner in Betts & Holt LLP, a law firm that focuses on helping clients develop more efficient energy use and to achieve lower energy costs. He served 12 years on the board of directors for Lutheran World Relief (LWR). He has traveled extensively in support of LWR's work. He represented the Rev. John Arthur Nunes, the President and CEO of LWR, who was originally the scheduled speaker but who had taken ill. LWR acts to end poverty and uphold human dignity by empowering the world's most impoverished communities to bring about the transformation they need in order to live healthy, safe and secure lives. Combining 65 years of experience, an uncompromising pursuit of excellence, faith and prayer, LWR works with partners in 35 countries to promote sustainable development and decrease human suffering.

In the wake of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti, considered the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, on January 12, LWR is working to meet the immediate and long-term needs of Haiti's underserved rural people. Out of a population of just over 9 million people, the quake killed an estimated 230,000 and left about 1.2 million homeless and in desperate need of shelter, water, food, sanitation, and other assistance. Our speaker reminded us that 78% of the population survives on less than a \$1.00 per day. In addition, already struggling rural communities are now coping with the mass migration of nearly a half million earthquake survivors. With over 14 years experience and expertise in rural Haiti, primarily working in sustainable rural development, LWR and its partners are at the forefront of the rural response to address the impact of this mass migration on the rural communities where resources were scarce before this mass migration. LWR has committed \$6 million to relief efforts.

To help ease the stress on rural communities, LWR is working with several partners to provide immediate relief that is integrated with a long-term response. With Partenariat pour le Développement Local (PLD), a local Haitian organization, LWR is helping communities in the regions north of Port-au-Prince where most displaced people are migrating. The emergency response focuses on food, water, temporary shelter and sanitation. Quilts, layettes, health kits, and other materials were dispatched quickly, some being rerouted from other regions. Kirk showed a short video that began with photos of people chipping away at slabs of concrete with small hand tools—the only sound being the

clinging sound of metal on concrete and message being the absence of resources to deal with the magnitude of the damage. It showed people collecting rebar and how it was being used to support tents, and brief clips of the living conditions in the tent communities. The video illustrated how essential quilts, layettes, school and sanitation kits are to the Haitian people now, and it also encouraged more contributions of these items because the need is great and LWR' material aid inventory is being depleted rapidly.

LWR's approach, however, recognizes that there is an immediate response to a natural disaster like this which draws in huge amounts of emergency resources but that these external resources usually disappear within 6-12 months. By contrast, LWR remains to address long-term recovery issues which, in Haiti's case, predated the quake. In fact, based upon the experience with the South Asian Tsunami where LWR committed to a 10-year redevelopment strategy, LWR has committed to a five year, \$6.0 million strategy in Haiti. Kirk discussed LWR's agriculture sustainability model, offering examples from his travels in Africa and El Salvador that includes working with farmers to produce crops, but also to produce high quality seeds and seed banks for the next growing season. He explained how developing small farmer cooperatives helped them gain purchasing power, access to credit, and the capacity to invest in storage for crops, among other things. In addition, he explained that LWR helps farmers develop marketing strategies, but also helps them find new markets for their products.

Kirk shared an example from Guachipilin, a village in El Salvador, where 7 out of 10 children died before the age of 5 and how, after only 28 months working together on a nutrition project that involved growing soybeans, producing soy cake and soymilk, and some medical intervention, the death rate dropped to fewer than 1 in 10 children. He shared the emotion-packed testimony of the village leader who explained that of all the aid that the village had ever received—a school and water storage tank—it was the Lutherans that caused the greatest change in their lives because, "My children won't have to watch their children die." Kirk testified that this community was so empowered by this experience that its residents began teaching other villages in the area about how to achieve the same results. It wasn't only life changing for Guachipilin, "literally seed money," according to Kirk, started changing many communities. This is the Lutheran perspective to relief and development.

Noting that malaria also exists in Haiti, Kirk shared some information about the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, an LWR-ELCA-LCMS commitment to eradicate the impact of malaria.

LWR works in concert with the two largest U.S. Lutheran church bodies, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Both pledged significant support for LWR's efforts in Haiti. The ELCA announced that it would provide \$150,000 to LWR to support the shipment of LWR quilts, health kits, school kits and layettes to Haiti, recognizing LWR's "proven expertise in mobilizing material aid in emergency situations," according to Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, the director of ELCA's Global Missions. The LCMS, through LCMS World Relief and Human Care, pledged \$200,000 to LWR to support LWR's overall effort "to bring the relief of Christ to this horrible situation," said the Rev. Matthew Harrison, executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

Kirk explained that he hoped his eye witness testimony to the value of our giving generously to "our neighbors" would encourage giving. To close, and just for fun, Kirk showed a video that LWR produced for LWR's gift catalogue. It showed a man trying to get on a plane with a goat that he wanted to deliver to a needy family in another country. As the gate agents tried to explain that he can't take a goat on a plane and then called security because, as one agent said, "We have a situation here." He explained how important a goat can be that family.

A lively Q&A session followed. One of the members asked about LWR's advocacy work. Kirk explained that LWR has two Washington staff focusing on public policy, most recently working to persuade the President and the Congress to provide funding for Haiti's long-term recovery, support for the peace process in Sudan, and support for international nutrition programs for women and children. He also encouraged the members of LLF to write personally to their representatives because they pay attention to constituent letters, according to members of Congress.

Kirk expressed appreciation on behalf of LWR and himself for the opportunity to be with LLF today.