

Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metropolitan Washington DC



LUNCHEON MEETING Thursday, November 6, 2014 – 12:00 noon

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

Opening Announcements

Bob Sargeant opened the meeting at 12:08 p.m. There were neither November birthdays nor anniversaries to celebrate. He made brief comments on the recent election results. He said he would update people on events happening in Richmond.

After lunch “Sarge” reminded that it is now time to renew memberships for 2015. Membership forms were available for pickup. Others will be mailed. There are several tax deductible contribution opportunities available as well.

Bulletins from the annual Reformation Service at the National Cathedral were made available. 279 people attended the service and ushers were provided by the Lutheran Lay Fellowship.

On October 30 there was an update event held in Reston. Several Corporate members attended. The Lake Anne property redevelopment project which was blocked by a Fairfax County Supervisor, and is now back at square one. They are now applying for another HUD grant that would cover existing numbers of residents. The deadline is at year end. It will extend the contract for 15 years, which will allow more extensive planning and redevelopment. He also reminded of the need for Holiday Gifts of bibles, and Giant or Safeway gift cards. Fellowship Square provides socialization opportunities for the residents, many of whom do not have family nearby. There will be a radio station holiday fund-raising drive in the next few weeks.

Bibles are available at Dollar Tree stores for \$1. Faye Coddling will also accept checks.

“Sarge” announced that former chief of Naval Chaplains, Ross Trower died last week his funeral is this Saturday morning at St. Mark’s in Springfield. St. Mark’s has called a new pastor who has a strong Spanish background.

Carolyn Sowinski announced that Gifts of Hope will be disbursing results of the recent fundraiser concert, some \$2,800. Gifts of Hope is also receiving several thousand dollars from the Christ Lutheran Church DC annual yard sale. She distributed the 2014 holiday drive information sheet. This program depends on congregational volunteers to publicize and handle donations.

Opening Devotion

Dave Lambert led devotions, focusing on Thanksgiving, giving a history of it's development as an official national holiday. He offered a prayer citing numerous reasons and people for which we give thanks. (*see attachment*)

Introduction of Speaker

John Graff is a retired attorney and association president, with a background that includes corporate law as a senior attorney for Marriott Corporation and a legislative counsel to the Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization of the United States Senate. He served on the Board of the former Lutheran Church of America and a member of the Committee appointed to conduct a study of Ministry for the ELCA. He is a member of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Springfield, Virginia. John has been married for 48 years to his wife, Kay, and have two grown children. He leads the adult education program at St. Mark and shares, with his wife, the organizing of the St. Mark homeless shelter program. His hobbies are reading and gardening.

Presentation

The Ministry of All God's People: Called to What?

The presentation focused on the Ministry in Daily Life movement.

Owing largely to the determined effort of one man, Lutheran layman Bill Diehl, the one-time Sales Manager for Bethlehem Steel, the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America contains specific language recognizing that all God's children — the laity as well as the ordained — are called to be ministers of the good news of the Gospel. The recognition was not meant to be just lip service to a noble idea. The offices of the Church are charged with the responsibility to develop forms and functions for the equipping of the laity for the tasks of living out that ministry. Some thirty years have gone by since that historic conclave acted. Some of the persons involved with Bill in this effort met recently to recognize his work and to undertake an assessment of where we are today. To the surprise of no one, it seems there is more work to be done.

Our speaker was active in the development of this movement, which has become somewhat moribund lately. The movement developed from a group who felt that the institutional church had neglected the call for the church to support the ministry of the laity in their daily lives' work.

The early movers of this movement focused on Luther's call to make ministry active in the world. A number of books were written to raise the issue and to point to examples of how people enliven the church in their daily work. Luther said all of us are called to follow Christ and spread the word of the Gospel, to be little Christs, to minister to others. He said the scrub woman is no different than the exalted priest.

Bill Diehl was a layman, sales manager at Bethlehem Steel Company, wrote Ministry in Daily Life – a rarity since it was written by a layperson. The book is now out of print. Bill has a strong track record of involvement with the institutional church, and believes that his critique is important for the very survival of the church as an institution.

John first met Bill in an effort to develop a weekend retreat aimed at raising awareness and creating a network of the Laity regionally and ultimately nationally. Bill eventually wrote five books on the subject. Two national ELCA staff persons provided some support to the network. John cited the chapter headings of the first book – ministry of aide, ministry of word, ministry of ethics, the change agent.

His last book It Ain't Over Till It's Over was written with his wife, Judith, and focuses on actions towards one's declining years. God's Frozen People by Mark Gibbs addresses how house churches can help bridge the disconnect to the institutional church. Bill succeeded in having written to the new constitution of the ELCA a mandate to support the Ministry in Daily Life movement. Budget problems resulted in diminishing support, so that currently nobody at ELCA headquarters knows anything about it.

Today's church decline in active membership might well be reversed if the faithful laity were to enliven it through a renewed understanding of our ministry in our daily work.

One suggestion was to write an article for The Lutheran to tell the story of this movement's history, featuring some of the pioneer leadership. Another was to try to get Fortress Press to re-publish these books.

Closing

Sarge concluded the meeting reflecting on the subject and its history within the institutional church. He wondered if there might be some interest in a local group trying to re-energize this movement. He noted that The Community of the Twelve in Kansas might be a resource for us.

Addendum, researched by the webmaster subsequent to the meeting:

- [Books by William E Diehl](#)
- [ELCA Ministry in Daily Life Ideas](#)
- [Equipping and Encouraging Laity](#)

November – Thanksgiving

HISTORY

The tradition of celebrating thanks dates back nearly 400 years to a three-day harvest festival celebrated in 1621 by the pilgrims and Native Americans at Plymouth, Mass.

President George Washington issued the first national Thanksgiving proclamation in 1789, the year of his inauguration, and again in 1795. On Oct. 3, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln declared a national day of Thanksgiving to be observed on the last Thursday in November, and every president after Lincoln followed suit. In 1941, a joint congressional resolution officially set the date as the fourth Thursday in November.

LET US PRAY

God of all blessings, source of all life, giver of all grace:

We thank you for the gift of life: for the breath that sustains life, for the food of this earth that nurtures life, for the love of family and friends without which there would be no life.

We thank you for the mystery of creation: for the beauty that the eye can see, for the joy that the ear may hear, for the unknown that we cannot behold filling the universe with wonder, for the expanse of space that draws us beyond the definitions of our selves.

We thank you for setting us in communities: for families who nurture our becoming, for friends who love us by choice, for companions at work, who share our burdens and daily tasks, for strangers who welcome us into their midst, for people from other lands who call us to grow in understanding, for children who lighten our moments with delight, for the unborn, who offer us hope for the future.

Bless this food and the hands that prepared it.

We give you thanks, eternal, loving God, through Jesus Christ we pray.

And all God's people said:

AMEN.

Sources:

<http://corporate.hallmark.com/Holiday/Thanksgiving>

<http://www.beliefnet.com/Prayers/Christian/Gratitude/Prayer-Of-Thanksgiving.aspx>

Books by William E. Diehl

It Ain't Over Till It's Over

A User's Guide to the Second Half of Life
by William E. Diehl, Judith Ruhe Diehl
Paperback, 192 Pages, Published 2003 by
Augsburg Fortress Publishers
ISBN-13: 978-0-8066-4448-6
ISBN: 0-8066-4448-6

The Monday Connection

On Being an Authentic Christian in a
Monday-Friday World
by William E. Diehl
Paperback, 208 Pages, Published 1992 by
Harperone
ISBN-13: 978-0-06-061860-5
ISBN: 0-06-061860-4

The Monday Connection (1st Edition)

A Spirituality of Competence, Affirmation,
and Support in the Workplace
by William E. Diehl, John W. Dixon
Hardcover, 200 Pages, Published 1991 by
Harpercollins
ISBN-13: 978-0-06-061925-1
ISBN: 0-06-061925-2

In Search of Faithfulness

Lessons from the Christian Community
by William E. Diehl
Paperback, 144 Pages, Published 1987 by
Fortress Pr
ISBN-13: 978-0-8006-2064-6
ISBN: 0-8006-2064-X

Ministry in Daily Life

A Practical Guide for Congregations
(Alban Institute Publication, No. 174)
by William E. Diehl
Paperback, 107 Pages, Published 1996 by
Alban Inst
ISBN-13: 978-1-56699-172-8
ISBN: 1-56699-172-2

In Search of Faithfulness

Lessons from the Christian Community
by William E. Diehl
Paperback, 127 Pages, Published 2001 by
Wipf & Stock
ISBN-13: 978-1-57910-683-6
ISBN: 1-57910-683-8

Christianity and Real Life

by William E. Diehl
Paperback, 120 Pages, Published 1976 by
Fortress Press
ISBN-13: 978-0-8006-1231-3
ISBN: 0-8006-1231-0

Thank God, It's Monday

(Laity Exchange Books)
by William E. Diehl
Paperback, 192 Pages, Published 1982 by
Fortress Pr
ISBN-13: 978-0-8006-1656-4, ISBN: 0-
8006-1656-1

The Monday Connection

On Being an Authentic Christian in a
Weekday World
by William E. Diehl
Paperback, Published 2012 by Wipf & Stock
Publishers
ISBN-13: 978-1-62032-054-9
ISBN: 1-62032-054-1

MINISTRY IN DAILY LIFE

Ideas from ELCA Congregations

Here are a number of ideas about ways congregations can nurture ministry in daily life, as reported in a survey conducted by the Division for Ministry of the ELCA.

These suggestions are not just theoretical. The congregations have used them in practice. they occur within existing congregational structures and programs (e.g., confirmation, worship, adult education) and are not "add-ons." For further information, contact Sally Simmel, division for Ministry, 8765 West Higgins road, Chicago IL 60631-4195, e-mail ssimmel@elca.org, phone 800-638-3522, etc. 2874.

1. Confirmation

- Have an ongoing mentoring program for confirmands that lasts throughout the confirmation period. Adult mentors are trained and they and their confirmand partners go into the mentor's workplace, to the confirmand's workplace, to a neonatal unit and to a cemetery. Sharing faith stories is central - e.g., police officer mentor talks with confirmands about "Thou shalt not steal." Mentor is part of confirmation service along with baptismal sponsor.
- Ask confirmands to make a confirmation stole, with 3 symbols of faith on one side, 3 symbols of activities in daily life on the other.

2. New Members

- Conduct interviews with all new members to discern their gifts, leading to specific "callings" to areas of ministry where they want to grow.
- Use "Monday's Ministers" by William Diehl in member classes to help new members recognize their callings to ministry in daily life.
- Offer "Discipleship education" for all new members, after which trained consultants sit down with graduates to discuss how and when they want to serve.
- Introduce new members to the congregation along with the location of their ministries in daily life.
- Set explicit expectations for new members, including ministry in daily life.

3. Worship

- Use material from workplace visits for examples in sermons.

- Have as a regular part of worship a "Mission Minute", a presentation (perhaps by video) of someone's ministry in daily life.
- Select a "minister of the week" who talks about his or her ministry during worship, and then that person's ministry is prayed for during the week. Include children as well as seniors.
- During Lenten services have members give talks about a connection between a beatitude and daily life or between a scriptural practice and daily life. This compels lay members to reflect on the intersections between their faith and daily life.
- On certain occasions during the year worship can center on an occupation which is recognized and affirmed - e.g., Festival of St. Luke might feature health care, or on Labor Day, members' occupations recognized - "love in work clothes."

4. Workplace Visits

- Have the pastor do regular workplace visits to affirm laity and link Sunday to the workplace.
- Some pastors who do workplace visits regularly say about them: "People listen more intently because they know I care." "As you get to know the people, you find out how important their work is, so it is natural to visit them at work." "I am intentional in touching 'everyday life' for people and not leaving them so along."

5. Vision, Mission, Logos (consciousness raising)

- Vision statements and stewardship emphasis can be vehicles for focus on ministry in daily life. Consider a year's theme of "Everyone a Minister," with banners, T-shirts, etc.
- Have a map of the community with pins showing where members spend their time - "Where in the world is St. Paul's Church?"
- Make a slide show of the daily life ministries of members.
- "Duck Award" - a duck head on a plunger is given monthly to someone who sticks his or her neck out in faith in some activity in the world.
- Begin meetings with "What exciting thing happened in your ministry this week?"
- Use "SPLASH" materials and "Connections: Faith and Life" (Augsburg-Fortress) with the congregation.

6. Structure

- Reflect ministry in daily life in the congregation's mission statement, e.g., "The Holy Spirit empowers us for ministry in daily life."
- Where possible have a Director of Member Ministries who helps people identify their gifts, visits workplaces and works with staff to emphasize MIDL in all the congregation's work.
- Have a Shared Ministries Committee to include all members in some area of extended ministry.
- Job descriptions of congregational staff and their evaluations should include focus on their support of members' ministries in the world.

Equipping and Encouraging Laity

by Nelvin L. Vos and Melvin D. George

This article appeared in Lutheran Partners(*) May / June 2002 • Volume 18 • Number 3

Congregations are finding ways to support the laity in their callings. Here are 23 ideas.

"Go in peace, serve the Lord."

With this, many Lutheran congregations end their services of worship, sending congregational members out into the world. During the next week, these Christians are living, working, making decisions, voting, and playing in an environment that some might consider thoroughly secular. Nevertheless, they are living in the world that "God so loved that he gave his only Son" for its redemption. But, aside from these formulaic end-of-worship phrases, how do our congregations actually support and honor the ministries of their members in the weekday world?

The Constitution of the ELCA states: "This Church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church."(7.11). Section 4.02 states the intent of the ELCA to "Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world" (emphasis authors'). Section 4.03 commits the ELCA to "encourage and equip all members...to fulfill their calling to serve God in the world." How (and how well) are our congregations doing these things?

What follows are 23 ideas which were gleaned from a survey, follow-up questionnaire, and telephone interviews (see sidebar). They occurred within existing congregational structures and programs (e.g., confirmation, worship, visitation, and adult education) and are not "add-on" activities to the congregational calendar.

Worship

1. During worship on a regular basis, present a "Mission Minute" (a talk or perhaps a video) of someone's ministry in daily life.
2. Select a "Minister of the Week" who talks about his or her ministry during worship, and then that person's ministry is prayed for during the week. Include children as well as seniors.
3. Use workplace examples in sermons, perhaps gathered through workplace visits.
4. During Lenten services, have members give talks about a connection between a Beatitude and daily life or between a spiritual practice and daily life. This compels lay members to reflect on the intersections between their faith and daily life.

5. On certain occasions throughout the year, worship can center on an occupation which is recognized and affirmed, e.g., the Festival of St. Luke might feature health care. Or, on Labor Day, recognize members' occupations.

Confirmation

1. Hold an ongoing mentoring program for confirmands that lasts throughout the period of confirmation instruction. Adult mentors are trained, and they and their confirmand partners can go into the mentor's workplace, to the confirmand's workplace (or school or home), to a neo-natal unit, or to a cemetery. Sharing faith stories is central (for example, a police officer/mentor talks with confirmands about the commandment "Thou shalt not steal"). The mentor also takes part in the service of confirmation, along with baptismal sponsor(s).
2. Ask confirmands to make a confirmation stole, with three symbols of faith on one side, and three symbols of activities in daily life on the other side.

Workplace visits

1. Do regular pastoral visits in workplaces, in order to affirm laity and link Sunday worship to the workplace. Some pastors who do regular workplace visits have said: "They (e.g., parishioners) listen more intently because they know I care." "As you get to know the people, you find out how important their work is, so it is natural to visit them at work."

Education

1. Conduct interviews with all new members to discern their gifts, leading to specific "callings" to areas of ministry where parishioners want to grow.
2. Introduce new members to the congregation, and add the location of their ministries in daily life.
3. Use books, such as *Ministry in Daily Life, a Practical Guide for Congregations*, by William Diehl (Bethesda, Maryland: The Alban Institute, Inc., 1996, \$15, ISBN no. 1-56699-172-2, phone 800-486-1318) in adult classes to help members recognize their callings.
4. Offer "discipleship education" for all new members, after which other trained members sit down with graduates to discuss how and where they are serving or want to serve in daily life in the community, as well as in the congregation.
5. Set explicit expectations for new members, including their ministry in daily life.

Congregational Structure

1. Reflect ministry in daily life in the congregation's mission statement, e.g., "The Holy Spirit empowers us for ministry in daily life."
2. Where possible, have a Director of Member Ministries who helps people identify their gifts, visits workplaces, and works with staff to emphasize ministry in daily life in all the congregation's work.
3. Have a Shared Ministries Committee to include all members in some area of extended ministry.
4. Job descriptions of congregational staff, and their evaluations, should include emphasis on ministry in daily life.

Consciousness Raising

1. Vision statements and stewardship emphasis can be vehicles for a focus on ministry in daily life. Consider a year's theme of "Everyone a Minister," which may include banners, T-shirts, and other paraphernalia.
2. Have a map of the community entitled "Where in the world is (name of church) Church?" with pins showing where members spend their time.
3. Make a slide show of the daily life ministries of members.
4. Present a "Duck Award." A duck head on a plunger is given monthly to someone who sticks his or her head out in faith in some activity in the world.
5. Use Splash materials and Connections (Augsburg Fortress) in the congregation. To order Splash, send a check for \$14 to Splash!, DM, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631. To order Connections, call the Augsburg Fortress Distribution Center at 800-328-4648 (\$45, complete leader package, order no. 6-0000-74050; individual items from the set can be ordered for \$5.75 each).
6. Begin meetings with "What exciting thing happened in your ministry this week?"

These ideas from a few ELCA congregations reflect various ways of honoring God's people in the world and nurturing the daily life ministries of members.

This is a short list. We recognize that there are many other congregations that have a commitment to nurturing the ministries of their members in daily life. Hence, we invite a broader dialog in the church about these and other ways of nurturing the laos, the people of God, as they go about their callings in the family, neighborhood, school, workplace, recreation, and civic responsibilities.

Go in peace; serve the Lord.

MIDL Survey, Interviews Conducted

This story's list of ideas on how to encourage the laity in their callings came from work conducted by an informal group of persons who advise the ELCA on Ministry in Daily Life (MIDL). Following a survey and questionnaire, 35 congregations from across the U.S. were selected for telephone interviews.

This effort is part of the continuing work through the ELCA Division for Ministry on a Study of Ministry mandated by the 1993 Churchwide Assembly.

At the 1995 Churchwide Assembly, the division had featured "A Call to Action" as a partial response to the charge to arrange for a two-year period of theological reflection and action-reflection on the ministry of the baptized in the world.

We encourage you to contact Sally Simmel, Division for Ministry, ELCA, at ssimmel@elca.org (or via regular mail at ELCA, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631) to request further information about our survey results, or to share additional ideas of how you and your congregation can strengthen ministry in daily life.

Finally, visit the ELCA web site on ministry in daily life at www.elca.org/dm/midl for further resources—

Nelvin L. Vos and Melvin D. George.

Nelvin L. Vos is a professor emeritus of English from Muhlenberg College and lives in Maxatawny, Pennsylvania. Melvin D. George, formerly president of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, currently lives in Columbia, Missouri.

(*) **Lutheran Partners**, now L Magazine – Empowering ELCA Leaders for Vital Ministry

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