

Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metropolitan Washington DC



LUNCHEON MEETING Thursday, August 6, 2015 – 12:00 noon

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

Opening Announcements

President Bob Sargeant opened the meeting at 12:05. There was one birthday, Helen ? Dot Aldridge from Ascension, Towson; Eleanor Bartlett from St. Luke, Silver Spring, and Judith Niebeling from Ascension, Landover Hills, were first time visitors. Nelvin and Beverly Vos celebrate their anniversary this month.

After lunch, Sarge shared that we have received a thank-you letter from one of our LLF Scholarship awardees, Ben Crookshank, in which he updated us on what he has been doing since graduation. He has been shadowing medical personnel in preparation for his career development.

Sarge called to our attention the fact that Bishop Eaton, the ELCA Bishop, is conducting a webinar tonight on racism. Both the perpetrator and one of the victims of the Charleston, SC massacre had Lutheran connections. He provided handouts for each table regarding AARP proposed legislation on family caregivers.

Carolyn Sowinski, Gifts of Hope Coordinator, is doing its third annual benefit concert in October 18 at First Trinity, D.C. The 18th Street Singers, which rehearses at First Trinity, is performing *gratis*. A free-will offering will be gathered.

Bonnie Priebe is going on a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land in December, 28.

A sympathy card was available for signing for our caterer, whose mother recently died.

Dave Lambert announced that Christ Lutheran Church, Bethesda, is embarking on a major construction project , for a “community café” in downtown Bethesda about which we will be hearing more in October.

Opening Devotion

Ourt speaker for the day, Dr. Nelvin Vos, led devotions focusing on Christ's "coming not to be served but to serve." Christ responded to need. On the cross he gave his all. When he departed, he left the world in the hands of people such as us. God's work comes through our hands. Dr. Vos offered a Benedictine prayer in conclusion to the devotions. He then distributed a hand-out to get attendees thinking about what they were doing at a given time during the past week. (*see attachment*) This was to focus our thinking while dining and before the presentation portion of the meeting.

Introduction of Speaker

Dr. Nelvin Vos, was introduced by Barbara Solt, a long time friend. She also introduced his wife, Beverly, who was also a member of the "Channel 2" house church, an intergenerational small group expression of St. John Lutheran Church, Allentown, PA. Barbara presented Dr. Vos's formal resume as well as extensive volunteer involvement. Dr. Vos began his tenure at Muhlenberg College in 1965, ending his career there in the newly designated role of Provost. During that time he collaborated with Bill Diehl in the development of the Ministry of the Laity movement. He developed a curriculum called "Connections" for the ELCA, and served as President of the board of Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital in Allentown, as well as President of Mount Airy Seminary in Philadelphia, now known as Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. He has published widely in church-related and educational journals, and authored many books on a variety of subjects.

Presentation

Dr. Vols began by addressing his work with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) movement network, focusing on "abilities as well as disabilities." He said he was glad that we opened by focusing on anniversaries – as a marker to denote the past, and look to the future. He reminded that shortly we celebrate the 500 year anniversary of Luther's posting of his 95 Theses, and its influence on the world. We can remind ourselves of Luther's themes in those Theses – the role of the laity in the church and the world.

Dr. Vos noted that he is a layperson, not a pastor, but a minister like others. The Laos in Ministry movement began with just a handful of people, who began a strategy for moving the national church in a new direction. He then focused his presentation on several of Luther's "theses."

On Baptism: Luther said, "when you wash your face remember your baptism." Throughout the day we "walk wet." We are washed clean in God's presence. Lutheran theologian Robert Jensen wrote that baptism is the beginning of our ministry. We are to bear God's redemption of us into the world.

On The Priesthood of All Believers: At Wittenberg, Martin said he wasn't *eliminating* priests, but *multiplying* them. To be a priest is to mediate and to reconcile, to mend that which is broken.

He asked us to think of our own lives. Think of being an "encourager," a "comforter," "by simply listening," "by speaking of God's word of forgiveness," and by praying. Each of us serves as an intercessor between God and others.

On Vocation: We ask, what in the world are we doing here? We are called by the Holy Spirit, enlightened, sanctified, and kept. Vocation and calling are umbrella words – not simply equated by occupation (what occupies our time). Not simply what we do, but all that we are. We uncover our vocation; they don't come all gift-wrapped. Luther said, "how is it possible that you are not called?" Luther then enumerated several roles. Son, husband, grandfather, neighbor, voter, church member, theater-goer, theater-goer, a sexual being, no matter what age,

It is something we do as we go. We are called to be "a little Christ" according to Luther.

On Man Between God and the Devil: Where is (your church) at 11 on Sunday morning? But from there the people of God for 99% of their time are in another place – where their vocation is manifested. The World is the Arena of God's Ministry. One man said, "I knew in the world to go to church. Now I know that I am in the world to be the church." Our works are not done in order to gain heaven but in order to serve the world around us.

He then underlined four verbs:

- *To recognize* that daily life is where we exercise what our faith means.
- *To affirm* the variety and richness of God's gifts.
- *To equip* one another.
- *To support* one another.

Jesus said. "I am the way." And that's the way it is.

Dr. Vos then turned our attention to the handout, allowing more time for reflection on what we were doing at various points during days of this week. He emphasized that this is the most important part of our time together here. In the discussion words of note were "rest," "doing," "let go," "doing volunteer work."

Bonnie recommended the book, One Thousand Gifts. It helps one notice things that are blessings from God. Ida reminded that we work and God works in the secular world.

Dr. Vos concluded by thanking the group. Sarge thanked him for an excellent presentation

Closing Remarks

Sarge then announced that a message will be coming to us via computer that as a result of a year-long study, two possible courses will be presented for the future of LLF. One, dissolving, another, sponsoring programs in the future. Either proposal would have meetings at least through the end of the year. In October, Dave Lambert will present on the Community Café concept, in November there will be a celebration of the LLF founding. December will be our annual Christmas celebration, with gifts for the people of Fellowship Square Foundation.

WHERE WAS I? WHERE WAS GOD?

	Monday 9 a.m.	Friday 8 p.m.	Sunday 11 a.m.
Where was I?			
What was I doing?			
What was God doing in that place?			