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Two Congregations Unite in Downtown Seattle

The following is a reprint from LCMC "By The Word" "By The Word" is the LCMC E-Newsletter - Spring 2013



Dr. Paul Braafladt - May 13, 2013

There came a day when the Apostle Paul stiffened his back and said, "No!" His "no" was hurled at Barnabas, his partner, who wanted to take Mark along with them on the second journey to build up new infant congregations. (Acts 15:35-41). Paul could not dismiss the fact that Mark had bailed out in a previous mission effort. Verse 39 puts it succinctly, "And there arose a sharp contention, so that they separated from each other...Barnabas took Mark...Paul chose Silas and departed."

Church Bodies throughout the world. That painful fact makes it all the more joyous and glorious when our Lord brings blessing upon blessing to congregations and pastors that seek His will and follow it. This is happening in downtown Seattle. It involves two small congregations. One is Denny Park Lutheran Church (DPLC), Douglas Lindsay, Pastor. The other is Lutheran Church of the Resurrection (LCR), Phil Lee, Pastor. Here are some snatches from the story. I'll begin with DPLC.

Denny Park Lutheran congregation goes way back, almost as far back as Seattle. Their birthday is April 19, 1888. They came together as Norwegian Immigrants. Through the 125 years of their history they have had their ups and downs. In recent decades they have seen their neighborhood move away and give way to urban inner city realities, not least to apartment and condo dwellers who live within the enforced privacy of gated surroundings.

RSV Conflict is no stranger to Christians, Christian congregations and Christian

....Continued on page 2

Fellow Pastors and Congregations of the Northwest District LCMC:

Greetings from your LCMC Northwest District Chair.

Welcome to our email newsletter of the LCMC Northwest District: "The Happenings". We have received many great comments about the flow of information being provided to all church's and individual members within the LCMC Northwest District (Montana, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Alaska) and to what resources are available to you at the local level.

Many benefits come with your FREE membership to the LCMC Northwest District. Not only do you have access to our website: www.lcmc-nw.com, but you can update information (rent, Lent, Easter, summer schedule) to your congregation web page. If your church is not already a member of the Northwest District, simply apply for membership at www.lcmc-nw.com/application-congregational-membership/; www.lcmc-nw.com/application-individual-

Rev. Dr. Paul L. Spaulding to Retire

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Rev. Dr. Paul L. Spaulding - August 15, 2013 LCMC

I thank God for the privilege of serving LCMC as Pastoral Certification Coordinator since 2009.

I am announcing my retirement from this position effective, December 31, 2013. I have had the joy of being involved in the process for hundreds of pastors coming to LCMC.

Lord and to ministry. My prayer is that they, and LCMC's congregations, will not settle back, but will follow their Lord and His Spirit into the challenging mission field of 21st Century America.

--Rev. Dr. Paul L. Spaulding

LCMC is blessed with pastors committed to their

Two Congregations Unite in Downtown Seattle, *continued from page 1...*

Pastor Lindsay described some of their recent dilemma by saying, "We were \$10,000 in the hole, and wondering how we could continue. We even had to borrow from our mission funds to pay our bills. We had no young people. And if you don't have young people, it's hard to get young people."

But DPLC moved forward in three important ways. They voted to join LCMC three years ago. After several years in the discussion stage, they decided to sell a small slice of their property for the construction of a seven story low-income apartment building with assured underground parking for church members. Thirdly, they accepted a proposal to rent worship and education space, of which they have plenty, to LCR.

Meanwhile, LCR had a vastly different history. It was only three years old, a break-away congregation from Magnolia Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Seattle. Their first Service was held on Easter Sunday 2010. Their pastor, however, was soon on his way to an LCMC congregation in California. That left them with the need to call a new pastor without delay. Somehow they did. They called Pastor Phil Lee who began his ministry in August, 2010.

It took little time to find a temporary church [home](#) at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Ballard, a Seattle neighborhood. They continued there for almost two years. But it was not ideal, especially for education space. When the rent was about to be raised, they began looking for new space. It was discouraging. They were turned down by church after church. To build from scratch in Seattle was far too expensive.

While they had inquired earlier about DPLC's facilities, it took a second more formal proposal (in [writing](#)) to spark genuine interest. The proposal was to rent space and to worship at a

different time than the DPLC. But this arrangement lasted only from November 2011 until June 2012. By then both congregations were asking, "Why should we be worshiping separately?" They soon learned that they were cut from the same theological cloth. By that summer they joined hands and spirits and worshiped together!

The two pastors led the way in their trust and respect for each other. Sunday by Sunday they traded roles in their preaching and conducting the Sunday Service. As Pastor Lee put it, "Each congregation got to know the other, including each pastor." It didn't take long for both churches to ask the obvious question about their future. And since last fall they engaged in serious discussions that led to the Sunday of April 7, 2013.

Each congregation met separately after their Sunday Service on that day. They addressed one major question. Shall we unite with the other congregation effective today? The vote was remarkable, some would say "Miraculous!" There was not a "No" to be seen or heard anywhere in these two congregational meetings! God be praised!

It was understood by both DPLC and LCR that, if the motion passed, both pastors would receive a new Call. Pastor Lindsay, however had announced that his retirement from active ministry would take effect at the end of this year. Pastor Lee would obviously continue. It was also understood (a non-negotiable) that a "yes" vote would also mean that both the church facilities and DPLC's urban ministries would also continue into the future, not least an anticipated ministry to the low income people who would live next door in the expected new apartment building. Pastor Lee captured this thought when we said, "Ahead of us is choosing a new name and a new constitution that makes clear our need to be externally focused on the urban needs that

surround us rather than be internally focused on ourselves. My hope is that this fall we can launch into a visioning process for just this reason."

There are several important decisions ahead for this new congregation. They include not only a new name and a new constitution but the election of a new church council, and issuing new Calls to each pastor. Their goal is to make decisions on as many of these factors as possible on June 16th.

In closing let me offer a personal observation. I have worked with both congregations in various ways again and again in recent years in behalf of LCMC. I have interviewed and certified both pastors for pastoral ministry in LCMC. If ever I have seen the hand of God at work among His flock with blessing upon blessing, it is here in the midst of this urban jungle we call "downtown Seattle", just across the street from a two-square-block plot of walkways, trees, grass and benches called Denny Park.

--Rev. Dr. Paul Braafladt, Seattle

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LCMC NWD 2013 Northwest District Gathering—Spokane Valley, WA



Give Away

Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart...



Have you invited Him in?



Zion Lutheran Church - Deary Idaho has a **FREE** Organ they are giving away. "Contact Pastor Murray Stanton at 208-877-1248 (church) or email at stantonfarmdeary@gmail.com; as soon as possible if interested.

LCMC Northwest District 2014 Gathering

For those who missed the 2013 Gathering in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Spokane Valley WA in April 2013 – **MARK YOUR CALENDAR'S** - now for the 2014 Gathering being held April 4th and April 5th at Peace Lutheran Church in Post Falls, Idaho – further information will be posted in the next "The Happenings" newsletter.



The Happenings" Newsletter

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"For it is by grace you have been saved through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one

2013 ANNUAL GATHERING

The Grace of Giving

Date: **October 6-9, 2013**

Location: Adoba Hotel— Dearborn, Michigan

More Info: **www.lcmc.net**

Click on **Events**, then on **Annual Gathering**

Join with other pastors, leaders and church members from all over the world as Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ celebrates its 13th Annual Gathering in historic Dearborn, MI.

Keynote speakers include:

Pr Kyle Idelman, author of the book, **Not a Fan**

Mr Chuck Bentley, CEO of Crown Financial Ministries

Pr Enrique Estrada, Executive Director of Mission Mexico International and member of the LCMC Board of Trustees.



YOUR NORTHWEST DISTRICT COUNCIL:

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LON ROBERTS

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**Pat Woods, Chair
LCMC Northwest District**

If you or your church would like to have information added to the next LCMC Northwest District "The Happenings" please submit to: lcmc-nw.com/contact/

MAUREEN (MOE) BESSEY—DISTRICT COORDINATOR