

LUTHERAN LAY FELLOWSHIP

Thursday, June 3, 2010—12:00 noon

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

“Religious Diversity, Christian Uniqueness and the Question of Salvation”

The Rev. Dr. Terrence Reynolds
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Theology, Georgetown University

The Rev. Dr. Terrence Reynolds was born in New York City. He received degrees from Queens College (B.A.), Concordia Theological Seminary (M.Div.), Princeton Theological Seminary (Th.M.), and Brown University (Ph.D.). Before coming to Georgetown in 1991, he taught at Brown, Connecticut College, and the United States Coast Guard Academy. His research interests focus on the meaning, truth, and justification of theological and moral claims, as well as the ways in which faith-based convictions can play a role in the public square.

In addition to serving as Chair of the Main Campus Executive Faculty (2001–2005 and 2009– present), Reynolds has been Chair of the Department of Theology since 2006 and Chair of the Core Faculty of the Liberal Studies Program since 2002; he is also the current Director of Doctoral Studies in the Liberal Studies Program. He has been the recipient of both the Distinguished Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence in the Liberal Studies Program and the College Dean’s Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Dr. Reynolds theme for his June 3 presentation will be, *“Religious Diversity, Christian Uniqueness and the Question of Salvation.”*

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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 sending your RSVP to luncheon@lutheranlayfellowship.org or by contacting **Vicki Porter at 301-229-9884** no later than 5:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, June 1**. The cost of the luncheon is \$9.00, payable at the door.

Upcoming Speakers

July 1

Sister Sally Hiller, Executive Director, Congregational Outreach, Southeastern District, LCMS on, *“Evangelism Is Not a Four-Letter Word”*

LLF Scholarship Announcement

Dan Bella announces the availability of LLF scholarships for 2010. Consideration for the award will be weighted toward a needy, promising, applicant planning to enter a career which would enable him / her to help those who are in need of spiritual and / or material assistance, either at home or abroad.

This year's scholarship award is \$1,500. The application deadline is June 15. For further information, contact Dan Bella at 3205 Janet Road, Silver Spring, MD 20906-4041 or at 301-949-5317.

LLF Luncheon Minutes Thursday, May 6, 2010—12:00 noon

Our meeting began with a devotional by Rev. Larry Schmidt in memoriam to Dr. Roy Enquist. He discussed the wonderful service at the National Cathedral which Roy had planned himself so that his family would not be burdened (and also wanted to make sure it was right). They were seated up in the choir loft and it was truly a blessed experience and a touch of heaven. He went through the service including some songs. He touched on Roy's book that he had autographed at the March meeting for him focusing on Roy's childhood and the positive effect of his faith and belief at that age. Roy stressed the importance of giving every child that experience so they wouldn't grow up afraid in this scary world. He noted how Roy shared himself and his zest for life with so many in this area.

Announcements

President Robert Sargeant again encouraged Thrivent members to vote for their charities to receive funding. He noted that local charities need to go on line and register to receive funding, if designated.

Fellowship Square had its annual meeting at which Sarge presented \$1,120 from LLF. Next month there will be an informal meeting prior to the luncheon to decide how we can express our continued support on FSF's 50th anniversary. Judy Koucky received a special volunteer award.

Members must sign up for a hard copy of our monthly newsletter or they will get only an e-copy starting in June.

RSVP for the lunch at luncheon@lutheranlayfellowship.org.

Betty Fredericks provided the list of nominees for our chapter officers to be voted on next month and encouraged anyone else who would like to run to let her know: President, Robert Sargeant; VP for Programs, Rev. David G. Berg; VP for Public Relations & Membership, Ellie Wegener; VP for Special Arrangements, Betty Fredericks; Chaplain, Rev. Larry Schmidt; Treasurer, John Priebe; Assistant Treasurer-Linda Everett and Vicki Porter; Secretaries: Sue Schmidt for board meetings, Assistant Secretary for Board Meetings, Bonnie Priebe; Assistant Secretary for Lectures, Rodney Smith; At-Large Board Members: Dan Bella, Leslie Bergman, Rev. Tom O'Brien & Delores, Rev. Faye Coddling.

Rev. Tom O'Brien discussed his impending trip to Tanzania to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Lutheran Church in Tanzania and dedication of several facilities. He hopes to have a DVD to show when he gets back.

Speaker Notes

“Life Together for Today’s Church” **Bishop H. Gerard Knoche, Retired** **Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA**

We welcomed recently retired Bishop H. Gerard “Jerry” Knoche of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, ELCA as the speaker for our May luncheon. He provided 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 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 a 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.

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. 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.

He discussed Bonhoeffer’s book because it has been one of the most significant ones in his ministry and is particularly applicable now in the ELCA. He described Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s life and death briefly to include the time he was in charge of an underground seminary for that part of the church that opposed Hitler. This book was designed for that church’s life together. Bishop Knoche found this book surprising and life changing when he read it in college. He shared the influence that the group, Young Life, had on him during high school which was interdenominational and homogenous. Young Life recommended its members affiliate with Inter-Varsity when they got to college. He went to Harvard and tried Inter-Varsity but was turned off by the type of folks there. However, after reading *“Life Together,”* he stayed with the group and ultimately led it there and helped bring Billy Graham to campus.

He discussed the first chapter where Bonhoeffer covers ideals and wish dreams we have for community that rarely endure. The divine reality survives all disillusionment and demands that we persist at community when it does not live up to our dream for it. Bonhoeffer states that it is a privilege to be together with other Christians and whoever you are with is the group you should fellowship with and not be critical of its members. The community happens in and through Jesus Christ and the Word spoken to us by a brother is often stronger than that of our own. Our model with others should be Christ’s model to us which is difficult, related with forgiveness rather than judgment. Christian community is a divine rather than a wish or ideal community, so we should focus on giving thanks for the Christians we are provided. No pastor should ever complain about his congregation since that is who the Lord has provided. It is hard in this country to see Christ in others, need spiritual love for the other for Christ’s sake. It is better to speak to Christ about a brother rather than a brother about Christ. Bonhoeffer is anti-retreats because the attendees get an emotional high rather than the daily uplifting through Christ.

Bishop Knoche then discussed the current divisive issue with ELCA about allowing gays to be ordained. He believes Bonhoeffer would be supportive of allowing for diversity in the church and not allowing this issue to be church-dividing since it is peripheral (e.g., not mentioned in the creed). The church does not have to be like-minded in all things. While personally not supporting the decision, he believes it should not cause churches or individuals to leave the corporate body. They should be able to continue to worship together with their different opinions. His understanding of Lutheran ethics is that the Holy Spirit changes the person from the inside out in a process and there is not a hard set of rules such as in the Reformed tradition. He noted that both sides of this issue indicated that they had been seeking God’s will prior to

this vote and that the final decision noted that there was not a consensus. He noted that Bonhoeffer never spoke negatively of the national German church that supported Hitler.

He mentioned the seven ministries that Bonhoeffer lists in his book and that the first six should be practiced before the ministry of authority is used. We need to always remember that it is God's church and He is in charge so don't worry about it.

Respectfully submitted,
Rodney Smith

WHAT IS THE LUTHERAN LAY FELLOWSHIP?

“As early as 1936, feeling there was a definite need for closer cooperation between Lutheran laity and clergy, a group of laymen in the Washington, DC. Metropolitan area, organized to hold meetings that would bring pastors and laity closer together. Due to jurisdictional differences as well as ministerial difficulties, very little success was achieved until the fall of 1941. Then the group met and decided to hold a luncheon once a month, invite their friends and bring visitors. The first luncheon was a success, and within three months every Lutheran judicatory was represented...” [From a **Lutheran Directory of Metropolitan Washington, DC**, published in 1999.]

Today, more than 70 years later, the Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metropolitan Washington takes pride in knowing that every night, 365 nights each year, more than 700 low income seniors and disabled persons live in safety and friendship in four high rises owned and managed by Fellowship Square Foundation, Inc. By means of annual scholarships and grants, LLF also supports various college and seminary students; it also provides ushering services for major inter-Lutheran events. But most of all, LLF is known far and wide as a place to hear stimulating speakers on timely topics and to make friends from other Lutheran congregations—friendships that last for decades!

Won't you join us?