

Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metropolitan Washington DC



LUNCHEON MEETING Thursday, September 4, 2014 – 12:00 noon

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

Opening Announcements

President Bob "Sarge" Sargeant opened the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

David Digby, Administrator of Largo Fellowship House was a first time visitor and thus was first in the food line. Birthdays celebrated were Greg Roemer's mom and Wallace Knutsen. Greg's wedding anniversary was 9/1.

Bob distributed a questionnaire to see if any members are interested in advocacy with our government. Any action will be non-partisan. What you do is up to you.

Caroline Sowinski again announced the benefit concert for Gifts of Hope. The money raised will be divided equally among the 17 benefit agencies. The Fairfax chapter of Thrivent will match up to \$1000.

(see attached flyer, please post on your church's bulletin board)

Ellie Wegner announced that the employment circles are still meeting and she is the point of contact for more info. Also the memoir writing group at Georgetown Lutheran still meets on Wednesdays at 7 pm.

Future meetings were announced:

October 2 - Jennifer Disano, "Lifelong Learning: The OLLI Experience"

November 6 - John Graff, "The Ministry of All God's People: Called to What?"

December 4 - Yvette Moy, "Bridges: Christians Connecting With Muslims"

NOTE: subsequent to the meeting the schedule was changed as follows:

October 2 - Dave Ryan, "Lifelong Learning: The OLLI Experience"

November 6 - John Graff, "The Ministry of All God's People: Called to What?"

December 4 - Christmas Songfest

January 1 - No meeting scheduled this month, Happy New Year!

February 5 - Yvette Moy, "Bridges: Christians Connecting With Muslims"

LLF members were again asked to usher at the Reformation service at the National Cathedral. *(see attached flyer, please post on your church's bulletin board)*

Opening Devotion

Our speaker Greg Roemer led devotions based on Luke 16, the story of the rich man whose dishonest manager owed him money and who thus feared losing his job. Make friends for yourself with worldly wealth.

Introduction of Speaker

David Berg introduced our speaker and presentation with his usual good humor.

Thrivent Financial Consultant Greg Roemer has been building his practice for 17 years. Following educational stints on Capitol Hill and the World Bank, he sought out a Christ-centered career path and never looked back. He serves 300 individuals and families in the metropolitan Washington DC area and has the opportunity each day to positively impact his clients' lives through a value-centric financial advisory process. He is married to Enid (pronounced EE-nid), they have 2 young sons and live in Washington DC. Greg and his family worship at St. Paul's in DC where Greg does his parenting homework teaching Sunday school to 3rd & 4th graders.

Presentation

"Update on Thrivent Financial"

Broadening Thrivent Financial's Common Bond in 2013 was the most dramatic change in the company's 112-year history. A century of service to God's (Lutheran) people has now expanded and looks forward to serving all Christians. CEO Brad Hewitt encourages Thrivent's 4,000 employees to "Make Haste Slowly" and embrace change as a constant. The Body of Christ is diverse and will present this Fortune 500 company with new challenges and opportunities. With an unwavering devotion to service, Thrivent Financial is now unusually well-positioned to strengthen Christian communities one Member at a time. Fresh back from a Mission Trip to Romania, Financial Consultant Greg Roemer will bring us up to date on the latest from America's largest fraternal benefit society.

He began by telling a story about his children meeting a new pastor for the first time. Then he gave an overview of what Thrivent is: a fraternal benefit society, a not for profit program that helps Christians manage their finances to promote financial stability. "Connecting faith and finances for good."

- We're a Fortune 500 company - and moving up the list
- We're hiring
- We're a company that has no debt

He then told of a blind man who climbed Mt. Everest and compared this venture to an act of faith. Your belief system tells you what you are going to see.

About a year ago Thrivent changed its charter to expand from only serving Lutherans to serving all Christians. The membership voted 72% to support the change. As the organization faces growth, there will be a number of interesting experiences. Lutherans traditionally have been northern European or Scandinavian. Other church bodies have different cultural heritages.

He called attention to the [Thrivent Choice](#) fraternal program, an underutilized way to support various ministries. You "earn" choice dollars based on the size of your investment. You can go online and designate where you choose to send your funds. Thrivent will not support any "controversial" organizations, e.g. NRA, ProLife or Pro Choice organizations, gay-oriented organizations. Many specific programs were consolidated into this program. Members who wish to support these controversial organizations can designate their congregations for Choice Dollars, then ask the congregation to send the funds on to the organization.

Another change is the chapter system. As a fraternal benefit society Thrivent is required to have some type of "[lodge](#)" system - members must gather together, then do something that qualifies as a charitable endeavor. The chapter system goes back to the 1950's. In the 21st century, members have said they find this modality outdated. Now there are "action teams." You can do a one-time event or a recurring series of events. You register online with Thrivent, and then will receive a box with tee-shirts and a \$250 debit card to use for the event. This system is rolling out this quarter. There will be monitoring. They can add onto the debit card by electronic transfer. Only one member of the action team needs to be a Thrivent member.

"[Thrivent Builds](#)" is another program, which works through [Habitat for Humanity](#). In 2005 there was an evaluation of all the organizations Thrivent had been involved with over the years, and found that Habitat was foremost. A \$100 million partnership was established, and Thrivent is Habitat's largest supporter. Thrivent's CEO is Brad Hewitt, who is now on Habitat's board. Three Thrivent Build components: Once you share work together, you are bound together.

- Homes - Local 10% must be raised. Can be done within your church community.
- Repairs - Easier to do. Get a grant to repair a home. Allows for volunteers to do a 1-2 day project.
- World-wide - Greg has participated in a number of international projects. He just returned from Romania. Thrivent is operating in 30 countries. You identify where, then Thrivent sends money to the local affiliate.

About 30 of Greg's work colleagues went to Bucharest, Romania. An organization, [SOS](#), which had taken in many of the orphaned children from the Soviet occupation, was in need of building repairs. There are 12 houses, with 6-7 kids per house. The children are cared for, but the kids don't have resources of their own. Yes, there are lots of local needs. But many places and needs world-wide are even greater. Thrivent Builds takes you out of your comfort zone. This is a ministry not only to the recipients of the service, but to those who do the service, whose lives are changed.

In conclusion, Greg asked us to take home the materials he distributed, share the news with someone else, especially someone not Lutheran.

Click to view the following handouts:

[*Thrivent Products and Services*](#)

[*Thrivent Talk About Money*](#)

[*Thrivent Financial Living*](#)

[*Thrivent Choice*](#)

[*Thrivent Builds*](#)

Closing

Bob Sargeant thanked Greg and offered the benedictory prayer.
The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Gifts of Hope **BENEFIT CONCERT**

Songs from the **GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK**

**Free
Admission**



*Free Will Offering
supports
Gifts of Hope*

*Enjoy the music of jazz vocalist,
songwriter, pianist **Lizabeth Flood***

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12 AT 3:00 PM

*Redeemer Lutheran Church
1545 Chain Bridge Road
McLean, Virginia*



www.giftsofhopemetrodc.org

*Generous matching gifts from
Thrivent Financial (Fairfax Chapter)*



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FINANCIAL®**

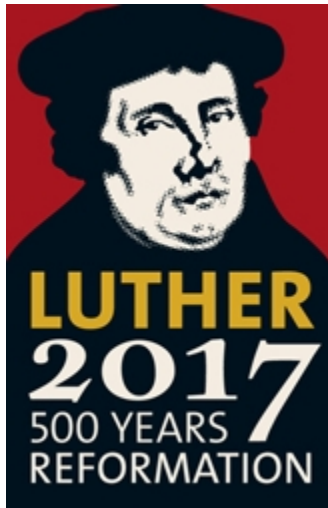
Connecting faith & finances for good.™

Reformation Service

Sunday, October 26, 2014—4:00pm

[Washington National Cathedral](#)

3101 Wisconsin Ave NW
Washington, DC 20016



[Reformation Sunday](#) is observed in October, recalling Martin Luther's posting of 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517. The theses were theological issues Luther wished to debate with the hope that the church would reform its practice and preaching to be more consistent with the Word of God as contained in the Bible. The act sparked a movement in history known as the Reformation and laid foundations for the Lutheran tradition.

A hymn penned by Luther, "[A Mighty Fortress is our God](#)," is often sung at this service.

This worship service commemorating the Reformation is sponsored annually by the [Metropolitan Washington DC Synod](#) of the [ELCA](#) and members of the [Lutheran Lay Fellowship](#) serve as ushers.

(please post)