

## Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metropolitan Washington DC



### LUNCHEON MEETING Thursday, July 2, 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 12:15, announcing that our speaker would not arrive until 1:00. Guests included one of our scholarship recipients and another's mother. Our scholarship recipient's birthday is July 7. Bob asked attendees to tell what our plans are for July 4<sup>th</sup>. Some are traveling, some hosting friends, some going to the National Mall for music and fireworks, most gathering with families for traditional celebrations.

Bonnie Priebe introduced Ben Crookshank, one of the scholarship recipients, member of Prince of Peace, Springfield, Gaithersburg, MD. She read some of his resume; and he made remarks, about his martial arts experience. The other winner, Addie Block, is on a 4,500 mile bike trip, the Texas 4000. She is a member of Prince of Peace, Springfield, VA. Her resume was also read. Her mother brought photos of Addie's activities, and read a thank you note from her. Both students demonstrate not only impressive scholastics, but also extra-curricular volunteer experience. See additional information on our website at [www.LutheranLayFellowship.org](http://www.LutheranLayFellowship.org) then click on "Scholarship".

Dave Lambert shared information about next month's meeting. The speaker, Dr. Nelvin Vos, former English professor at Muhlenberg College, is traveling here from his home near Allentown, PA for this presentation on Faith in Daily Life. Members and friends are welcome to attend.

#### Opening Devotion

Dave Lambert led the devotions, reading [Psalm 51](#). Petitions were offered in prayer for some people having personal challenges as well as those facing our states and nation.

## **Introduction of Speaker**

Rev. David Berg, a graduate of Moravian College and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, has served parishes in central Maryland since his ordination in 1970. For 18 years, he served as Chaplain at Fellowship Square Foundation. Nearly a decade ago he served as president of LLF and orchestrated the move from SW DC to its Silver Spring location. This Annapolis resident now serves as Chaplain at Anne Arundel Medical Center and Supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education for the University of MD Shore Regional Health System.

## **Presentation**

"The Losses and Gains of Aging" entitled Rev. Berg's presentation, which was introduced in the meeting notice as follows:

If you were asked to draw the lifeline of a human being, what would it look like? For some people, it would look like a mountain. One would start at the ground level of birth, ascend into the foothills of childhood, climb the rocky slopes of adolescence, and finally arrive at the peak of maturity to enjoy the blessings of respect, income, family and parenthood. But then the lifeline would go downhill on the other side and eventually pass through the dark forests of fear and loneliness into old age, and finally to ground level again, into death.

But such a description reveals the stereotypes of ageism. Because, for many of God's children, life involves continuing in a variety of ways. For I believe that the aging years are neither all bleak nor all golden, but is a mixed bag of gains and losses, of good news and bad news. This we shall explore and discuss at our next luncheon.

Pr. Berg shared some of his experience working with "seasoned citizens" at Fellowship Square as well as Ann Arundel County Medical Center. He is now involved in a multi-year strategy to help people plan their Advance Directives and have them readily available to emergency personnel.

He passed out a sheet "The Losses and Gains of Aging" There were nine losses and seven gains. He read from Preuss' Decades of Physical Degeneration. The process of aging is called senescence.

The loss of social role involves the loss of work role upon retirement, significant in a society that bases social standing on one's work role. Freud said that work provides the most consistent measure of reality. The loss of one's power and authority present difficulties for many in a society that does not value the elderly as much as other societies do. Seniors have time and wisdom to offer younger generations.

The loss of mobility, ability to drive one's car is a major life changer. Yet many seniors claim to be busier than ever. People need structure in their lives to get them out of bed in the morning.

Helping seniors face their day and their future requires the ability to listen, and not adopting an artificially cheery disposition. There are differences between how men and women face their role changes. There is a need to find new ways to be generative.

The Gains of Aging include freedom, new relationships, openness to new experiences. Identity is less on what we do or did, but who we are. There is an increase of research interest in wisdom, seeing ourselves in the complete matrix of life. If we take our faith seriously, then we can be free of the fear of death.

### **Closing**

The meeting adjourned a bit after 2:00 p.m.

**Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metro Washington, DC  
Outline of Luncheon Talk, July 2, 2015**

**THE LOSSES AND GAINS OF AGING**

The aging years are neither all bleak nor all golden. They are a mixed bag of losses and gains, of bad news and good news.

**Nine Losses of Aging:**

1. Physical losses
2. Loss of social role
3. Loss of identity
4. Loss of power
5. Economic loss
6. Loss of safety
7. Loss of independence
8. Loss of time
9. Spiritual losses

**Seven Gains of Aging:**

1. Physical – psychological gains
2. Gains in the social domain
3. Gains in relationships
4. Gains in self-esteem
5. Gaining freedom
6. Openness to perceive God
7. Freedom from the shackles of death

In summary, aging is the process of coming to terms with both gains and losses. The gains of aging do not necessarily cancel out the losses and guarantee “golden years,” nor need the losses inevitably sour the closing years of one’s life. One comes to terms with both, each in his or her individual style. Often it is the opportunity of the Christian caregiver to enter into the struggle and aid the older person in assimilating losses and gains and, hopefully, to help make continued living, and finally dying, a celebration of victory.

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