



Advent and Christmas Greetings



Dear CLEF Supporters and Friends working together FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL,
 The LORD be with you and yours and grant you a blessed coming Advent and Christmas.
 It has been quite some time since we last sent out a newsletter – as we have always promised to not waste your gifts to The CLEF with never ending mailings and fund raising requests. This year we have focused on communicating with you through the internet and Mission Festival Sundays in your congregations and presentations at conferences and conventions. And you have responded awesomely! For example three LWML Districts have approved grants to the CLEF in the coming years of 2017 & 2018! THANK YOU LWML! And THANK YOU to all of you who use the Thrivent Simply Giving opportunity and the Thrivent matching fund program! And a major huge big THANK YOU to the so many of you who support us with regular monthly gifts – YOU ARE THE DIFFERENCE!!

Take a look at the CLEF website, TCLEF.org, and explore all the new pictures and articles. While we have been on Facebook for some time it is only recently that we have found a wonderful lady (Kristi Strawn) to keep it up to date – I don't know how to do that. She is also keeping the web site more up to date.

The hymnal projects trudge along – the holdup is getting the actual music and words together – never the less, the hymnals are a focus. In fact one is going really well so that now a couple other “mission organizations” are trying to come in the back door and take over and take credit for the work done. The CLEF will stand firm!

The KINDLE PROJECT is beyond words! On The CLEF web page you can find links to more than 2.5 million works by clicking on the “E-READER PROJECT”. Every person in the world has access to that for free! It makes the traditional use of the hardcopy library almost a dinosaur. As I sit here with my laptop on my lap I can search any theological topic without leaving the comfort of the couch. The CLEF KINDLE PAPERWHITE is a tremendous blessing to the many pastors and seminary students all over the world who receive them from you through the CLEF for free. In fact it has become such a success that even the LCMS World Missions is trying to copy what you have started and supported. But – the wheel is already invented and in use.

We continue to actively and intensely support our sister church bodies by providing them with the best theologians who are LCMS parish pastors to teach at their seminaries or to conduct continuing theological education to the church body pastors through seminars and conferences. Additionally we continue to provide confessional Lutheran materials for use in educational and congregational settings. For example, we have completed the translation of the Lutheran Press series of eight books by Dr. Martin Luther into Spanish.

So we have much for which to be thankful. For the success we have been granted, for so many supporters like you. But above all for the forgiveness of sins for where there is the forgiveness of sins there IS LIFE AND SALVATION! Rev. John Fehrmann

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Pastoral Theology Seminars in Ghana

by Rev. Gerold W. Goetz, EM

October 2016 was my third trip to Ghana. The first was made reluctantly. In 2012, Rev. John Fehrman asked me to teach at the seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana (ELCG), a confessional Lutheran church body in fellowship with the LCMS. I am a parish pastor, not a seminary professor. But Rev. Fehrman convinced me that I could teach Pastoral Theology, based on my (then) 45 years of experience as a pastor. The month in the classroom was well received by the fourth-year students.

So, for the second trip in 2015 for the next class, I was willing to endure the equatorial heat and humidity for a good cause. But

then Rev. Gordon Gyampo Kumi, assistant to the president of the ELCG, suggested that I return to Ghana in 2016 for two regional seminars for the pastors of the ELCG. I protested that the pastors of the ELCG would resent having to take time off from their parishes and their jobs (Most ELCG pastors receive insufficient financial support from their congregation, and must hold another job to support their families.) just to hear me tell them how to do their jobs. But Rev. Kumi persisted, and I consented to conduct two 4-day regional seminars for ELCG pastors, on a trial basis, to see how it would be received.

I flew from Minneapolis to New York to Accra,

...we of the CLEF travel on a shoe string budget. Your financial support will be used carefully.

"...for the sake of the Gospel."

2017 Congress on the Lutheran Confessions

The Association of Confessional Lutherans (ACL) will be holding the 28th Annual Congress on the Lutheran Confessions from **April 26-28, 2017** at the Crowne Plaza Aire in Bloomington, MN. This is a new location as the Ramada no longer exists. Last year the Congress focused on the events and circumstances which lead up to the Reformation. This year most conferences and such will talk about the daily, weekly, monthly things that happened 500 years ago. They are much like just watching the movie, "Luther". Taking a unique approach to the 500th anniversary the Congress will address "The Impact of the Lutheran Reformation on the World". We will explore what the Reformation did to theology, education, worship, Biblical interpretation, church government, church structure, secular governments, medicine, publishing, Christianity in Europe, and much more! There has never been a conference like the coming CONGRESS 2017!!! Look for registration information and updated conference information in the coming weeks on www.theacl.org and www.tclef.org.

Ghana, and arrived on a Saturday morning. The next day I preached at Trinity Lutheran Congregation, Tema, about a half-hour drive from the airport. The divine service (TLH p.5 or 15) is customized for native use. The offerings, for example, take 25 minutes and include dancing the offerings to the altar while singing in the native (Twi) language, accompanied with native drums and tambourine and clicking sticks. Every element of the divine service is there, and then some.

Monday was a travel day for me and the pastors of the Volta Region, which is near Togo to the east. The town of about 3,000 population was called Adidome, and 14 pastors and I discussed Pastoral Theology from Tuesday through Friday. Saturday was a travel day for everyone, and I went back to Tema for the weekend, and another sermon at Trinity Lutheran Church. Monday was a travel day again, this time a five hour ride by bus to Takorade in the Western Region which adjoins Ivory Coast. As before, Tuesday through Friday was devoted to pastoral theology. Saturday was a travel day back to Tema, and Sunday was my third sermon at Trinity. Sunday night I flew from Accra to Amsterdam, and Monday was the flight back to Minneapolis, and a welcome drive home.

Both seminars were well received, with much discussion. After each, Rev. Kumi asked for an evaluation from the pastors. In my presence! They were all positive, of course. I told Rev. Kumi that he ought to ask them when I was not in the room. Well, after I arrived home in the USA, he sent me an email informing me that he had received numerous phone calls in the days following our seminars, thanking him for the excellent conference. It looks like I'll be going back to Ghana within a year, as finances allow, for two more regional conferences in the NE and NW areas of Ghana.

In retrospect, I must agree that these seminars were helpful. For example, one day I asked where each pastor had had his pastoral training. They were trained in three different African countries! It was good to get them started in working with one another to have a unified, confessional Lutheran doctrine and practice of Pastoral Theology in the ELCG.

And now some random observations. I'm often asked about the food. It's fine, if you like grilled chicken and white rice. Their pineapples are two-thirds the size of those to which we are accustomed, and are twice as sweet and juicy. The same is true of their bananas...two thirds the size and twice the flavor. I had pineapple juice for breakfast – 100% pineapple juice. Period. Excellent! And their roasted peanuts? You can't eat just one. Nevertheless, I lost four pounds in seventeen days, because of the heat and humidity, not the food. The climate just seems to blunt my appetite.

Most public transportation is taxi or bus. And they are all old vehicles, recycled from some other country. For example, the bus from Takorade had a window by my seat that was replaced with a sheet of plexiglass. It bowed in and out a bit, but the bus was air conditioned, and I could not complain. Also, the taxi that took me to the airport for the flight home had no air bag, and the seat belt buckle would not latch.

So, we of the CLEF travel on a shoe string budget. Your financial support will be used carefully. And if God wills and the funding is available, I am willing to return to Ghana for two more Pastoral Theology seminars.



Students at the Jonathan Ekong Memorial Seminary in Obit Idom, Nigeria using their Kindle E-readers in class.

CLEF Kindle Project

The INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN ELECTRONIC READER PROJECT – ILERP (KINDLE) is a project endorsed by our partner church bodies around the world, and is supported by our LCMS seminaries and our LCMS missionaries in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa. A most pressing educational need in Lutheran Churches is theological and educational support. The KINDLE reader is the answer. The Kindle is a hand-held electronic device that enables users to download and read electronic books electronically, and other digital media via wireless networking and the internet. KINDLE software is downloaded free via the CLEF access through Amazon. The CLEF supplies theological works of all varieties – Bibles, Lutheran Confessions, Biblical & Church Languages, reference books, exegetical, historical and homiletical works – check it out – join for free. Please support the CLEF in this most worthy project.

CLEF Hymnal Project

The Confessional Lutheran Education Foundation translates, publishes, and introduces into various countries in the world confessional Lutheran books. After some years of translating and publishing, we've had requests to produce materials. Within a few weeks of each other, three church bodies from three different countries approached the CLEF and asked if we would consider redoing their hymnbooks. Obviously, the answer was yes, and we will do whatever we can do raise the money for the project. Dr. Fynn, president of the Lutheran Church Ghana, and Rev. Cerdenola, president of the Lutheran Church of the Philippines, and Rev. Schumann, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chile, were the three who approached the CLEF about producing a hymnal for them. Rev. Cerdenola approached Rev. Fehrmann, and gave him two hymnals - both very different from each other. In the Philippines one of their "hymnals" they only had one copy the president could give Rev. Fehrmann. Dr. Fynn said, "We have five major languages in our church. We have two hymnals that are not the same. How can we go to conferences and worship together? Fix this!" President Schumann, from Chile, also approached the CLEF to assist in producing a confessional Lutheran hymnal for their country in Spanish. When other Spanish countries heard of the project, they insisted that they wanted to be a part of the project. That which began as translating and producing a hymnal has turned into a huge project.



CLEF in Croatia, Albania, & Kosovo

In September 2015, Rev. Fehrmann & Rev. Strawn were invited by the city of Labin, Croatia to attend a conference on the Lutheran theologian Matthias Flacius. While there, they visited Albania and delivered Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*, which the CLEF had translated into the Gheg language. Gheg is only spoken in parts of Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia by the ethnic group known as the Ghegs. Gheg does not have any official status as a written language in any country.

In the above picture, you can see them and Dr. Oliver Olson meeting with the mayor of Labin and other city officials.



An archaeological dig in Pristina, Kosovo.

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"For the Sake of the Gospel"

Find us on the Web:
www.tclef.org



Give to the Max

November 17th was Give to the Max Day in Minnesota. You can still go to the giveMN website if you would like to donate to CLEF. Please go to www.givemn.org and search for the Confessional Lutheran Education Foundation under the "Donate" Tab. There you will be able easily to donate. Please know that 100% of your donation will be used to further the mission of the CLEF "...for the sake of the Gospel."



LWML Mission Grants

This fall, the CLEF submitted grant proposals to the LWML to be considered for mission projects at the National LWML convention in 2017. One proposal requested a grant of \$15,000 to support the distribution and maintenance of Kindle e-readers in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa. The other proposal requested a grant of \$15,000 to continue producing and distributing Lutheran hymnals in countries that so desperately need them. Please read the two articles on page three for more information on these worthy projects.

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