

The Voice of Renewal

NEWSLETTER OF LUTHERAN LAY RENEWAL OF AMERICA

*Renewing faith and promoting spiritual growth in individuals and congregations
with renewal weekends, retreats, workshops, and conferences*

Celebrating 53 Years!

September, A.D. 2026

WORD FESTIVAL CONFERENCE IN KENYA

The Evangelical Lutheran Conference and Ministerium of Kenya held a Word Festival Conference during the last week of August, the theme of which was Psalm 119:105 - *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*. Our Executive Director was honored to have been invited by Bishop Geoffrey Mburugu to be one of the speakers, which he was able to do remotely from the U.S. There was also a Q & A discussion with Bill after his presentation.



Bishop Geoffrey Mburugu, Rev. Rufus Mwandiki and other clergy and lay leaders at the conference

"The Word Festival Conference was a great blessing to us and especially with the theme YOUR WORD IS A LAMP TO MY FEET AND A LIGHT TO MY PATH. Our guest from the U.S. gave us a wonderful presentation and more especially on the authority of the Word. He was able to make us understand how Christ cares for our situations. We are really blessed and looking forward to more of these conferences. We will also be glad again to receive presentations from Bill." - Evangelist Amos Kithinji

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CHURCH COUNCIL RETREAT, GREENFORD LUTHERAN CHURCH, GREENFORD, OH

"We recently had Lutheran Lay Renewal lead two spiritual development courses for our congregation council retreat, and we cannot speak highly enough of their work. The sessions were thoughtfully designed, engaging, and deeply rooted in both practical wisdom and faith. Their facilitator created a welcoming space that brought our council closer together while strengthening our spiritual foundation as leaders. If you're looking for a spiritual renewal program for your church leadership, we wholeheartedly recommend Lutheran Lay Renewal. They delivered exactly what we needed and exceeded our expectations." – Bobby Kaiser

Does your congregation need a spiritual boost? Are your people in need of deeper spirituality and understanding? Maybe it's time to schedule one of our LLR retreats, a workshop or renewal weekend. Call our office or check our website for details and informational flyers!

"The Road Is Always Better Than the Inn" – Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

I recently ran across this quote and found it intriguing. It reflects *Don Quixote's* broader theme that life's experiences, challenges, personal growth, goals and achievements are more meaningful and rewarding than living a life of peace and comfort.

It didn't take me long to realize the importance of this idea in relationship to living a Christian life. There are so many biblical examples of God teaching us this lesson through the lives of chosen people throughout the scriptures.

Let's start with Abraham: *Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."*

Considering that Abram was 75 years old at the time, this call must have seemed like a huge surprise, to leave a comfortable life and go where? - *"to the land that I will show you."* Abram doesn't even know where he's going or what he's going to do when he gets there. It's not an easy call to follow, is it? And at his age Abram must have been thinking, "Couldn't you have sent me there when I was younger, Lord?"

It's a real walk by faith, isn't it, but it's also the call to the great adventure of life, the great adventure of following God, and it's a reminder that we are called to: "...walk by faith, not by sight" – 2 Corinthians 5:7.

Think of Moses, who fled Egypt to live in the land of Midian, where he was living a peaceful life as a shepherd, until the day God spoke to him from the burning bush and said, "Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." What a 40-year challenge that turned out to be, but Moses' obedience changed the course of history.

Of course, we can also remember the call of the many Jewish prophets and the hardships they endured; Elijah, who had fled to the wilderness to escape the wrath of Queen Jezebel, eventually going to "Horeb, the mount of God." He went seeking refuge, but it was here that God spoke to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And it was from this place of refuge that God sent Elijah back on the road with many new missions to accomplish.

And think of Jesus and his disciples, on the road for much of his three years of ministry. In Matthew 8 we read: *And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."* The inn must have looked pretty good to the disciples when they heard this, but the inn was not the destination.

Cervantes' words suggest that true purpose and fulfillment come not from luxury, comfort and rest but from learning, exploring, striving and achieving, and for us as Christians the most important lesson is being willing to follow the call of God.

The Christian life should be a continuous process of growth, where we see each "inn" or milestone as a temporary stop, not the ultimate goal. Seeing the road as a goal in itself is realizing the importance, the value, of the ongoing journey and how that journey will impact the future of not only our own lives, but also the lives of the people we meet on that road.

"This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified." — Martin Luther

OUR PARTNERS IN AFRICA NEED OUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT!

The financial needs of our partners in Uganda, Rwanda and Kenya are great, as this is a very poor area of the world. Would you or your congregation be willing to help? One hundred percent of any donations to Lutheran Lay Renewal will go to the need designated by the donor or, if you prefer to work directly with a church or ministry in Africa, please contact our office and we will put you in touch with church leaders there.

Lutheran Church of Uganda

\$4,500 will pay for all the annual expenses at **Naigobya Health Clinic** on the grounds of Naigobya Lutheran Church and School. This clinic serves the people of five remote villages in Eastern Uganda.

\$355 will pay the salaries of 6 teachers & the principal at a primary school for 1 month. Due to poverty in these areas, we are providing support as we are able for both **Naigobya and Kyabazaala Lutheran Nursery and Primary Schools.**

\$14,000 is all that is needed now to complete construction of **Trinity Lutheran Church, Kyahenda**, in a remote area of Southwestern Uganda.

Diocese of Northwest Ankole, (Anglican) Church of Uganda

"We are looking for partners to work with us to address the matters of education, health, food security, household income, clean water, sanitation, hygiene and afforestation. We, therefore, request a partnership in any of these matters, especially assisting the youth and children to attain education so that they might be released from poverty and ignorance." – **The Rt. Rev. Amos Magezi, Bishop**

Josiah Youth and Child Care Center – Ibanda, Uganda

At Josiah Youth and Child Care Africa, we are dedicated to nurturing the next generation through discipleship, mentorship, and life skills-based training. Our vision is "*An enlivened purpose-driven generation for Africa,*" and our mission is "*Nurturing children and youth through life skills-based training towards holistic transformation.*" Our goal is "*To raise a generation of God-fearing, purpose-driven young adults who will positively impact Africa and beyond.*"

Lutheran Lay Renewal of America is eligible to receive Choice Dollars Grant Funds from the Thrivent Financial Choice Dollars program. We are grateful to Thrivent Financial, and those individuals who designate their Choice Dollars to us, for their support of LLRA and its ministry!

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Healing for Elaine and Jack Schomaker, Jade, Julie, Dan Klueg
- For the Lord's blessings on our ministry in the U.S., Uganda, Rwanda and Kenya, and the financial resources that are needed for this ministry to continue to grow and flourish

Lutheran Lay Renewal of America is a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization (tax ID#35-2442848) and depends on contributions from churches, and individuals, that have benefited from our ministry to help us continue to bring this ministry to more and more congregations all across America - and also in Uganda, Rwanda and Kenya!

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"The churches that grow are the churches that uplift Christ - because he is a very attractive figure, even in the secular world. They may be critical of the church, but they are friendly to Jesus; he has drawing power." – John R. W. Stott

"I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess." - Martin Luther

"Christianity preaches the infinite worth of that which is seemingly worthless and the infinite worthlessness of that which is seemingly so valued." - Dietrich Bonhoeffer