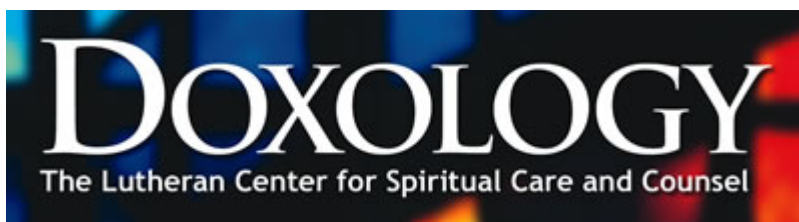


## OCTOBER 2009 NEWSLETTER



Pastoral Notes  
October 2009

Volume 2,  
Number 3

*Our guest essayist Rev. Timothy Pauls (DOXOLOGY Nebraska '08) compares the joys and frustrations of pastoring and fly fishing – read and enjoy!*

### **A Blessed Frustration**

One of the unexpected pleasures of a call to Idaho was the sport of fly-fishing. Growing up near Seattle, I have fond childhood memories of pursuing smallmouth bass in the family canoe, or bobbing up and down in Puget Sound after salmon. My father and I were never particularly successful; but fishing is fishing, after all.

And fly-fishing for trout is entirely different—a blessed frustration.

Every variety acts differently: the cutthroat hide behind every riffle in stony mountain streams, while bull trout rarely leave the deep pools. Rainbows like slow swirls of current, while German browns often seek shoreline shade, where clumsy insects will drop off the branches.

Every river is different in weeds, cover, and floor; and each one changes through the seasons, even with individual rain showers. That's only the beginning, though: each stream its own ecosystem, with a unique variety of hatches that serve as fish food. Pick the wrong insect to imitate, and you're going to have a bad day—the cutthroat of Kelly Creek won't touch the bluewing olive that the browns of the Owyhee River hold dear. Pick the wrong size of the right fly—even less than a millimeter's difference, and you'll get no attention at all.

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

A Blessed Frustration

Historic First

November Conference

New Training Cycles

Siebert Foundation

The Research Begins

Trouble viewing this?  
Please see it on our  
web site by [CLICKING  
HERE](#).

Doxology is a  
Recognized Serviced  
Organization (RSO) of  
The Lutheran Church  
- Missouri Synod.

**DOXOLOGY**  
3415 Tall Oaks Drive  
Brookfield, WI 53045

[www.doxology.us](http://www.doxology.us)



Environmental factors throw in more uncertainties: a gentle breeze turns easy casts into knotted nightmares, while shoreline thicket threatens to snag every back cast. Add barometric pressure, cloud cover, solar angle and lunar phases, and the variables increase. Exponentially.

That's the frustration: there's so much beyond the fisherman's control. For success, the fisherman need "only" tie on the right size of the right fly for the right fish at the right part of the river, preferably during the right time of day and the right time of month. It's a guessing game, a battle of wits against a creature with a brain so simple that it doesn't feel pain; yet the fish will win more often than not. All that the fisherman can do is wade in with the most sensible choices, the best casts he can muster, and—in Norman Maclean's elegant phrase—"the hope that a fish will rise."

Focus on all the things you can't control, and you'll never go near the river. The variables make the frustration. And if you measure every trip by the number of fish you've landed, you'll get frustrated, too; and the one who gets frustrated is the one who quits.

But within bounds, it's a blessed frustration. A day where the fishing is slow is still a day in a pristine stream, with mink and muskrat swimming while eagle and heron wing above. One does what he can, shrugs at the variables and enjoys the task at hand.

### ***The ministry is full of blessed frustration, too***

I've sometimes joked that parish ministry is often easier without a congregation; it's hardly fair, but people do make for a whole lot of variables beyond the pastor's control. Households and congregations are in constant flux, assaulted by sin and sickness, crisis and apathy. After fifteen-plus years in the ministry, I'm still waiting for one situation to go just the way it did in the textbook.

The pastor finds himself wading constantly into far-from-pristine situations. Here, I think, is a great temptation: he's expected to have all the answers, the magic words, the quick fix to relieve the pain. And where others don't place that expectation upon him, he places it upon himself. Pastors want to help people. They want to make things better. Because of that desire to help, the lack of apparent results can dog a man. He'll want to change what's beyond his control, losing sight of what's been given him to do.

Thus my prayer for all my brothers in this peculiar office: by the grace of God, may you shrug at the variables, focus on what's been given you to do, and enjoy the task at hand. What is given you to do is to loose sins and fling open heaven's doors by proclaiming Christ and Him crucified. In the task of fishing for men, it is to catch them that they might live. It is to

**Preach the Word in season and out of season, whatever the circumstance**

Everything else flows and changes, but the Word of the Lord endures forever: and the more all else changes, the greater the comfort of that unchanging Word. It is reason to rejoice that you are only the messenger: it's not given to you to create magic words to make people better, but to speak God's grace for them in Christ. You're not a superhero who's supposed to turn back time, but the proclaimer of the mysteries made known by the eternal God. No matter the scorn of foes, you're not the victim: the Victim already suffered all things for you, and every enemy is under His feet.

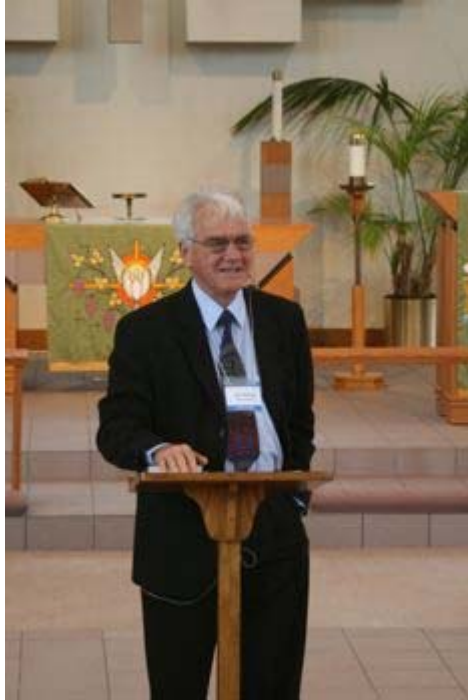
You're not in much control at all, but that is fine. The Word you speak to others is also for you. God's grace is sufficient for you, and His power is made perfect in weakness. For before He sends you fishing, the Lord has first caught and given you life in His name.

*Rev. Tim Pauls serves as associate pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Boise, Idaho.*

## **HISTORIC 'FIRST' – TWO REUNIONS CAP INAUGURAL YEAR**

More than 200 people from seventeen different states met in South Dakota (Broom Tree Retreat and Conference Center, August 28-29) and Illinois (Bethany Lutheran Church, Naperville, September 11-12) for the third and final phase of DOXOLOGY training. The "Reunion" brings pastors and their wives together to learn, reflect, worship, and relax in the company of other clergy couples.

The keynote presenter for both Reunions was Dr. John W. Kleinig of Luther Campus, Adelaide, Australia.



*Dr. John Kleinig*

He addressed central dimensions of faith and life in plenary presentations as well as providing pastors with specialized training for spiritual care. Drs. Beverly Yahnke and Harold Senkbeil, co-directors of DOXOLOGY, led targeted discussions for women on the unique vocation of a pastor's wife.

Participants at both Reunions joined in corporate worship led by Dr. Paul Grime of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (Broom Tree) and Dr. Scott Bruzek of St. John Lutheran Church, Wheaton, IL (Naperville). Cantor Phillip Magness of Bethany, Naperville, led the music at both events.

Evaluations were uniformly enthusiastic. Pastors reflecting on their DOXOLOGY experience noted:

- It has been very helpful to my personal and professional life, helping me to develop balance, concern for fellow pastors and to be a better pastor to God's people.
- DOXOLOGY will "fan into flame" or reignite your love for Christ and His church. In the midst of the mundane, you will be reminded of the duties and the joys of the ministry. The program offers insight and mechanisms that support the role of the ministry in an increasingly changing world.
- It is a golden opportunity to re-immersede yourself in the Gospel. All the riches that can seem to lose their luster as years go by in the ministry are suddenly brilliant once more



*August 2009 Reunion: Irene, SD*

Women in attendance wrote:

- My husband has felt more joy and satisfaction in his service of God's people since participating in the DOXOLOGY events, he has set aside more time to be with our children and we have been growing in communication, expressions of love and forgiveness.
- I think this program is wonderful. It is refreshing, rejuvenating, and provided me with an opportunity to see the light in the darkness once again. Well Done!!
- I am very appreciative of the time that my husband has given to DOXOLOGY. Our family is stronger and happier. We have made time to laugh more and simply be together. I see him as a much more encouraged man, spending time in the Word. Our family is stronger and happier. Thank you! My prayer is that many more pastors (and wives) can experience DOXOLOGY.



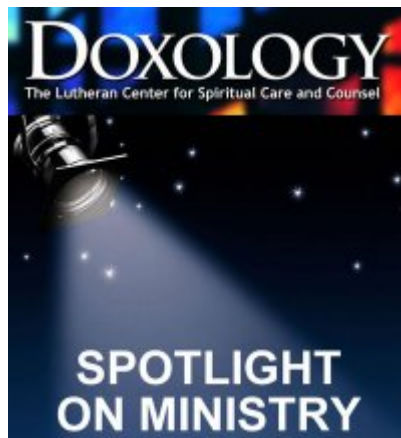
*September 2009 Reunion: Naperville, IL*



Dr. Kleinig's incomparable teaching style, his impressive grasp of the scriptural foundation of Lutheran spirituality and profound pastoral wisdom all combined to make these initial Reunions memorable experiences for all in attendance. During his trip to North America, DOXOLOGY facilitated his appearance at numerous other events, including the Fall Faculty Forum at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (September 2), a lay lecture at Elm Grove Lutheran Church (metro Milwaukee, September 9), a student convocation and faculty lecture at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (September 16), and a theological conference at Ainsworth, Nebraska (September 21-22).

## **NEW NOVEMBER CONFERENCE OPEN TO ALL PASTORS**

Many pastors who have completed one full cycle of DOXOLOGY training have requested that we offer additional opportunities for study, worship and to enjoy fellowship together. The SPOTLIGHT series will be a great opportunity to gather together once again. For those who have wanted to learn a bit more about the "DOXOLOGY experience," the SPOTLIGHT on Ministry is the perfect way to become better acquainted with our program.



Tuesday, November 17th, DOXOLOGY will offer its first SPOTLIGHT on Ministry Conference. The Conference will address Pastoral Care Responses to Marital Struggle.

Dr. Harold Senkbeil and Dr. Beverly Yahnke will address the topics: *Truth in Love: Spiritual Therapy for Troubled Marriages*; *Essential Tools for Hearing, Helping and Healing*; and, *"Pastor, We're Getting a Divorce": A Shepherd's Guide*.

***Tuesday, November 17, 2009***

***Pastoral Care Responses to Marital Struggle***

Registration: 8:15-9:00 a.m.

Program begins at 9:00 a.m.

Program concludes at 4:00 p.m.

For those pastors who are traveling some distance and would like to arrive before Tuesday's conference, as well as for men who would like to extend their conference experience, a Pre-conference program examining Personality Disorders will be offered beginning Monday afternoon.

Monday, November 16, 2009

Pre-Conference Program

***Understanding Personality Disorders: Providing Spiritual Care for "Difficult People"***

Registration: 2:15-3:00 p.m.

Program begins at 3:00 p.m.

Dinner, Evening Office and Fellowship follows

### ***Registration Fees***

Pastoral Care Responses to Marital Struggle, \$45.00  
(Includes lunch)

Both programs, including meals, lodging and reception, \$135.00

**Location:** Bishop O'Connor Catholic Pastoral Center in Madison, WI 53744

Please see [our website](#) for a downloadable Registration Form

## **New Training Cycles Slated for 2010**

DOXOLOGY will launch several new cycles of training in 2010. The first, at the Chiara Center near Springfield, Illinois, starts with a Gathering (pastors only) January 24-27, 2010 and continues with an Encore (pastors and lay leaders) July 30 - August 1. Check out the fine facilities of the Chiara Center at [www.chiaracenter.org](http://www.chiaracenter.org).

Registration forms are now downloadable from <http://www.doxology.us/registration.html>. DOXOLOGY grads, please send this link to colleagues in your circuit and elsewhere!

## **SIEBERT LUTHERAN FOUNDATION GRANT RECEIVED**

Since its inception, DOXOLOGY has received a total of two grants totaling over \$200,000 from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation to support this program of spiritual care training. The most recent grant, received this July, will allow DOXOLOGY to fund two additional cycles of spiritual counsel and care training beginning in 2010. We are deeply grateful for the support and encouragement offered by President Ron Jones and his Board.

## **THE RESEARCH BEGINS**

Pastors, foundations, Districts and congregations are eager to learn what we have discovered after one full year of working with pastors enrolled in DOXOLOGY. Throughout the training cycles we have collected a wide array of responses from pastors regarding their personal spiritual practice, their pastoral practice as well as their impressions about what they have found helpful about the DOXOLOGY experience. We are beginning to examine all of that material and hope in the months ahead to begin reporting the research findings as they emerge. This e-news letter will feature the earliest research discoveries. Stay tuned.