

Annual Meeting of the Water of Life Conference
February 22, 2009
New Hope Lutheran Church, Farley, Iowa

Water of Life Conference held one meeting on February 22, 2009.

Pastor Roger McKinstry spoke about the Book of Faith initiative and made a video presentation on the course "Opening the Book of Faith." At this point in time that course, plus a second, "Rediscovering the Book of Faith," are available to congregations. A Study Bible and further studies and resources will become available in the course of this year. More information can be found online at www.bookoffaith.com, as well as at the synod's Website, www.neiasynod.org.

The Rev. Dr. Duane Larson, President of Wartburg Theological Seminary, was our guest, and he presented us with a great deal of information about the seminary, its purpose in the church, the importance of its connection with individuals and congregations in our immediate area, as well as some of the challenges currently facing the seminary.

Nominations were made for two synod positions:

One lay man to the Synod Nominating Committee: James Zumbach, First Lutheran, Manchester;

One clergy to the Board of Ministry and Mission: Pr. Merlin Schlichting, St. Peter Lutheran, Dubuque.

A proposal was presented by Pastor Schlichting and Miriam Bjornstad that St. Peter, Dubuque, host a "Passing on Vibrant Faith" conference on September 18/19 this year. The conference, put on by the Youth and Family Institute of Bloomington, Minnesota, presents ideas for effective ministry to and with families, children, and youth, with the goal being that faith be successfully passed from one generation to the next. This conference would be open to persons from all congregations of our conference and synod, as well as neighboring synods. As far as it is possible, it would also be offered ecumenically to individuals and congregations in and around Dubuque. Funding needs to be secured before further planning can take place. The request was thus made that the Conference help sponsor this event and contribute \$1500 toward expenses. This was discussed, then approved, with the comment that if further funds are needed, the hosts should again contact the conference.

The meeting affirmed the establishment of a **Conference Cabinet** to meet between the annual meetings in order to plan events or deal with any matters that arise, act on appeals for funds or ideas for projects. Members of the Cabinet would be the Communicator, the Dean, the Treasurer, and hopefully one representative from each congregation of the Conference. Communication could be by email, teleconferencing, or possibly occasional meetings. Each congregation is to suggest a lay person to serve in this capacity.

On a related note, ideas were shared for possible conference-wide events or emphasis, such as exploring the international character of the ministry of Wartburg Seminary, or the various ways that quilting has been and continues to grow as a ministry of many within our congregations.