

SOLA Support & Outreach Legacy Association

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Meet SOLA Member LeRoy Lothert: “Godliness and Contentment Is Great Gain”



Retired Pastor LeRoy Lothert, now 87, says he learned early in life the lesson of 1 Timothy 6:6-8: “Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.”

His parents raised LeRoy and his seven younger siblings on a

160-acre farm they rented north of Morton, Minnesota. They didn’t have much.

So when he began his studies at Dr. Martin Luther High School in 1942, he did so with financial help—help that was tied to an early form of “work-study” on campus. “My name was always on the morning snow-shoveling list before 8:00 am morning chapel,” he says. “I also had to scrub the kitchen floor on my hands and knees and help with washing the dishes.”

When he graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1954 and was assigned as a tutor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, LeRoy and the other tutors received \$125 in salary for the year, plus board and room. “We served with godliness and contentment,” he remembers.

A rich life of parish ministry followed as he served at congregations in Michigan, Minnesota, and Missouri before retiring and moving back in 1998 to his roots in Morton, Minnesota, and two years ago downsizing to an efficiency apartment in New Ulm.

It’s “that truth about contentment” again, he says. “I am very content downsizing and living here. Thanks be to God for what he has done in my life and attitude!”

Remembering well his own financial need as a young man pursuing the pastoral ministry, Pastor Lothert established

the Timothy Endowment Fund at Martin Luther College in 1996 and designated it as the recipient of his estate.

The grants from the Timothy Fund go to MLC preseminary students who, like the young LeRoy at DMLHS in the 1940s, have financial need. Each grant comes with a letter encouraging the MLC preseminary student to become a faithful Timothy.

Just a few years ago, Pastor Lothert decided to increase the size of the fund by buying a life insurance policy and naming the Timothy Endowment Fund as the beneficiary.

But he didn’t stop there. In 2015, Pastor Lothert established a similar endowment fund at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. He named it the Aaron Endowment Fund, a reference to Aaron and Hur holding up Moses’ arms during the battle against Amalek. “It’s important that we hold up the hands of our students financially as they go out into ministry,” he says.

These grants also come with an encouragement letter, asking these future pastors to support others financially, especially at the ends of their ministries: “I remind them to become Aarons at the end of their ministries if the Lord has well blessed them.”

Pastor Lothert’s gifts are the fruit of his contentment, yes—and also his gratitude. “We need to appreciate how much the Lord has blessed our church body so that today we have the sound teachings of his Word, that God has blessed us with many students who are eager to study and do church work, that we have faithful professors in our synodical schools who are training up our students, and that we have the opportunity to take this message out into all the world.

“I am amazed at the end of my life,” he continues, “that the Lord has so well blessed me when I consider my humble beginnings. I have not been blessed with a wife or children. But I am grateful that I can leave such a legacy to support future church workers.”



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