



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA NORTH



Students compete in Bible Bowl

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Walker, hosted an annual Bible Bowl on Feb. 11 for the schools of the Minnesota North District.

The Bible Bowl is a competition designed to give students an opportunity to showcase their knowledge of Scripture

and Lutheran doctrine. Each participating school is encouraged to send teams of three to four students from each of their fourth- through eighth-grade classes. The teams in each grade are then asked a series of questions for six rounds. The kids really enjoy the op-

portunity, and never fail to impress with how well they know their stuff.

This year, five district schools participated. The Bible Bowl needs a significant amount of participation from volunteers and church and school staff, and the dedication of these volunteers and the many other folks from each school who make this event a possibility is greatly appreciated.

The Bible Bowl served to highlight what a treasure the district's schools are. This competition served well to highlight that nothing helps a child grow in the knowledge of Christ and the Scriptures quite like having an education grounded in the Gospel of Jesus.

Passing on the heritage of God's Word to students is why congregations continue to support Lutheran education through direct donations and programs like Cross Appeal. May the Lord continue to bless the schools in our district.

A 'doggone' good comforter

On Sunday, Feb. 26, the congregation of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Willmar, received a very special visitor.

Gideon, a service dog who is part of Lutheran Church Charities' K9 comfort dog program, dropped by Redeemer to teach the congregation about the wonderful services he offers. Gideon's handlers explained that Gideon and Golden Retrievers like him go nation-

wide to interact with people at churches, schools, nursing homes, hospitals and even disaster sites. Their purpose is to bring comfort and emotional support to the communities and individuals they visit. Comfort dogs like Gideon have helped people in major crises such as the Boston Marathon bombing and the Sandy Hook school shooting.

See REDEEMER, page 2



Lively Sunday at Zion

In keeping with the Synod's aim to affirm life in a culture of death, the congregation of Zion Lutheran Church, Alexandria, designated Sunday, Jan. 15, as "Life Sunday." This means that the congregation places a special emphasis on acknowledging human life as God's gift to be received with thanks and humility.

To help commemorate the occasion, the Life Team of Zion sponsored a congregational life chili dinner in order to raise support for various life-affirming ministries and activities.

A Life Team is a special group of volunteers in a congregation that works to:

►provide and disseminate life-affirming



Members of the Zion, Alexandria, Life Team served chili on "Life Sunday" Jan. 15.

resources and educational materials to a congregation;

►organize and promote events to raise awareness concerning or publicly address cultural attitudes relevant to

life issues; and

►generally encourage fellow Christians to respect life as a gift given and received by the Triune God.

Evangelism was focus of workshop

At the 2016 LCMS Convention, delegates resolved to encourage evangelism as a major priority of the Synod, and further encouraged congregations to use the Synod-sponsored *Every One His Witness* program in pursuit of this goal.

Every One His Witness has been developed with the aim of creating a thoroughly Lutheran evangelism program, rather than "lutheranizing" programs developed by other traditions. As such, it strives to integrate the Word of God, the Sacraments and the centrality of justification as it promotes conversationally sharing faith with others who we are connected with through our vocations.

**EVERY
ONE
HIS WITNESS**
LUTHERAN EVANGELISM

On Saturday, March 11, the congregation of Emmanuel, Backus, hosted a workshop for the program and invited members of congregations throughout the Brainerd Circuit to attend. Forty-eight people, including laity and clergy, attended from several congregations. Together, they worked through videos and exercises facilitated by Deaconess Maryann Hayter, Synod coordinator for Witness and Outreach, and Revitalization. Lunch was provided through funds from the Thrivent Action Team program.

For more information, visit lcms.org/witness-outreach.

REDEEMER

(Continued from page 1)

While everyone was pleased with Gideon, the Sunday-school children made the most of the opportunity. They not only got plenty of hands-on experience with the kind of support Gideon offers,

but they also took time to reverse the roles and bring comfort to some local animals by creating handmade toys that were later delivered to Hawk Creek Animal Shelter of Willmar.

For more information on Lutheran Church Charities and the comfort dogs, visit lutheranchurchcharities.org.

Please send your newsletter submissions to the.lutheran.witness@mnnlcms.org. You may also mail your articles to Emmanuel Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 12, 603 State 371 NW, Backus, MN 56435, attn. Rev. Stephen Rutherford.

INSTALLATIONS



The Rev. Jeffrey Ross was installed as pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Garfield, on Feb. 5. Participants in the service were, from left (front row) the Revs. Geoff Gronewold; William Moeller Sr.; David Hinz, circuit visitor and lector; Ross; Kirk Lee, installer; Dennis Angland; (back row) Roger Krebs; Robert Brueske; Ed Borchardt; Dr. Joel Koepf, preacher; Don Klatt, liturgist; Philip Beyersdorf; Jim Walburg; and Terry Finnern.



The Rev. Donald Wagner was installed as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Deer Creek on Sunday, Feb. 5. Participating in the service were, from left (front row) the Revs. Del Stohs; Dr. Karl Weber, installer; Wagner; Ray Hendrickson; David Cloeter; (back row) Ron Jobe; Kevin Mann; Robin Fish; Stephen Meltzer; Blake Rickbeil; Carl Noble; and Alvin Jeske.

Celebrate at CSP

A Reformation 500 Celebration will be held at 4 p.m. on Oct. 29 at Concordia University, St. Paul (CSP).

Three mass choirs of Lutheran singers will assemble to enhance the worship. The first choir will be made up of children in grades 4-8, led by Libby Wegner of Central Lutheran School, St. Paul. The second will be comprised of youth grades 9-12, led by Rebeca Fritz of Concordia Academy, Roseville. Finally, there will be an adult choir led by David Mennicke of CSP.

The service will also include CSP choirs, Concert Band, Handbell Ensemble and organist, and actors from the CSP Theatre Department's production of the play Luther. LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison is the guest preacher.



The Rev. Keith Weise was installed as the new vice-president of Spiritual Care Services at The Good Shepherd Community, a senior living facility in Saux Rapids, and as pastor and chaplain of The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Saux Rapids, on Feb. 5. On Feb 24, the Rev. Donald Wilke retired after faithfully serving Good Shepherd for 17 years.

From left, Weise and Wilke.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

God bless our mothers

Mother's Day had its founding in America in 1905 when Anna Jarvis honored her mother, Ann, for speaking out for peace in a time of war, and for caring for the Civil War wounded of both North and South. Although the Fourth Commandment to "Honor your father and your mother" is not a once-per-year honor but a continual one, all of us would agree that a special day is fitting to remember, thank, visit and praise our mothers.

For by God's grace and help, they labored and rejoice over us as their children. In 2 Tim. 1, Paul has praise for two mothers. Paul reminds Timothy that he has been taught the Gospel and, therefore, he has reason to show thankfulness:

"I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice."

Paul goes further, saying that Timothy had even known the Holy Scriptures from infancy. Although, sadly, Timothy's father was probably an unbelieving Greek, he did not prevent Timothy from receiving a Christian education. Mother Eunice knew that her young son needed to be taught, from the earliest age, that it was God who knit him together in her womb; and that the God of life is also the God of our forgiveness and salvation in Christ. So that's what she did.

Why would Paul mention this? To remind all of us of the blessing and working of the Lord through our parents. Since the Lord has used our parents in this most blessed way, so in this faith we will "honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them." In this way, we are returning thanks and praise to God! How will you observe Mother's Day?

Rev. Matthew Vrudny
Park Region Pastoral Counselor

Meet our newest Young Woman Representatives

The Young Women Committee has selected Nicole Beyersdorf and Victoria (Tori) Nerud to represent the LWML Minnesota North District at the LWML Convention June 22-25 in Albuquerque, N.M.

Nicole has been involved with the LWML for about two years. She graduated as a deaconess in 2013 from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. (CTSFW). Nicole met her husband, Philip, while he was also a student at CTSFW; they have been married for almost three years. Philip serves as pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Villard.

Nicole serves as Human Care co-chairman for the Ladies Aid (LWML) group at St. John's. She also loves being involved in Altar Guild, learning to make banners with the help of the congregation's more experienced hands. Nicole loves to study and teach God's Word, as well as find opportunities to serve the church and community.

"I am so thankful to be selected to be one of the Young Woman Representatives for the LWML Minnesota North District and I'm looking forward to learning more about the LWML in Albuquerque," Nicole says.

Tori lives in Wyoming with her grandmother, Shirley. She is a member of Lord of the Lakes Lutheran Church, Forest Lake, where she is an active member of the choir, a confirmation mentor and, of course, an active member of the LWML.



▲ Rev. Philip and Nicole Beyersdorf



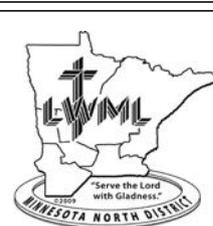
◀ Tori Nerud

A standing joke about Tori is that she started attending meetings in early 2015 to convince her grandmother to go and "spend time with people her own age." However, she found the LWML to be a group of sisters, mothers, aunts and grandmothers whom she loves — and has been regularly attending meetings ever since.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to represent the LWML Minnesota North District at the LWML convention as an YWR in Albuquerque this year," Tori says. "I'm excited to learn even more about the LWML and grow in my walk as a woman in Christ. May the peace of God be with you all."

Read the full stories of the two YWRs in the spring issue of the *Minnesota Northern Light*. (Available for download from the publications page at lwmlmnn.org.)

SCHOLARSHIPS REMINDER: The deadline for the 2017-18 scholarship application is May 15. Consider a career as a church worker.



Marilyn Hittel
LWML District President
6850 Golden Spike Road
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379
president@lwmlmnn.org
320-387-2219