



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA NORTH

Reformation still relevant at state pastors conference

Pastors from the Minnesota North and Minnesota South districts gathered together May 15-17 at Madden's Resort outside of Brainerd for the 2017 Minnesota State Pastoral Conference.

2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and the official theme of the LCMS for this momentous celebration is "It's *Still* All About Jesus." In keeping with Synod's theme, many excellent speakers were invited to present on topics related to the Reformation, and specifically on the way the ideas and struggles of the Reformation still remain helpful for navigating the challenges and situations pastors and congregations are facing today.

The Rev. Dr. Erik Herrmann, associate professor of Historical Theology and director of the Center for Reformation Research at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, led the main plenary presentations on "The Relevance of the Reformation." Herrmann illustrated how Luther's concern for pastoral care was as much at the center of the Reformation as doctrinal concerns, and how his insights and emphases can continue to instruct us today.

Pastors were also given the option to attend breakout sessions throughout the conference. Each session was led by excellent speakers on topics including



The Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, gave a report to Minnesota pastors about what's happening in the Synod.

the hymnody of reformation, the public policy efforts of the Minnesota North and South districts, the care of souls, apologetics, preaching, family life and the certainty God's Word gives us in a world filled with personal choice.

LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison addressed the conference, reporting on the state of the Synod as well as giving insights into lesser known aspects of Luther's life.

Connections lasting lifetimes



The Lord sometimes brings people in and out, and then back into our lives in remarkable ways. Over a period of 34 years, the Rev. Bruce Noennig has had the joy and privilege of connecting and reconnecting with a family. These multiple contacts have resulted in three junior confirmations and two adult confirmations.

While serving as pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Snellman, Noennig confirmed Tammy Chesnick, the daughter of Steve and Bernice Chesnick, in 1983. Later that year, he confirmed Tammy's father, Steve.

In 1999, Noennig began serving Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Moorhead, where Tammy was attending.

In 2000, he officiated at the wedding of Steve Morgan and Tammy, and then through adult instruction confirmed Steve in 2001. In 2005, Noennig confirmed Tammy's daughter, Brittney. And then in 2017, he confirmed Steve and Tammy's son, Bryce.

Noennig also baptized Brittney's children, Spencer in 2008 and Carson in 2014. Today, all are members of Our Redeemer.



Family of faith grows in Moorhead

The congregation of Our Redeemer, Moorhead, recently celebrated and welcomed the addition of 14 new members. Five adults were confirmed; four children were baptized, including two infants; and four adults and one child are transfers.

Although Rev. Bruce Noennig taught the five adults and brought them to an understanding of the Christian faith, he was unable to officiate at their confirmation on April 30 due to health reasons. God provided another servant, the Rev. George Krueger, to baptize and confirm them in Noennig's presence so that they could both share in the joy of bringing these folks into the fellowship of believers.

Additionally, 12 youth were confirmed at Our Redeemer on May 7.



Confirmed

Four confirmands were recently accepted into communicant membership at Trinity Lutheran Church, Isle. The Rev. Mark Maunula administered the rite of confirmation to, from left (front row) Mikayla Anderson, Matthew Kargel; (back row) Ethan Horsch and Kaitlyn Peterson. May the Lord keep these and all new confirmands secure in their faith and hope unto the end of their lives.



Family grows in Finlayson

Peace Lutheran Church, Finlayson, rejoiced to recently welcome three new members into their fellowship following worship services on May 21. The occasion was celebrated with a special cake-and-coffee fellowship hosted by the Women of Peace. The new members are, from left, Kate Alm and Craig and Diane Howard.

Grace is fishin' for mission

The congregation of Grace Lutheran Church, Marble, held a fish-fry fundraiser on April 7 to support its annual mission contributions. The event was a huge success, raising \$1,092.

The voters of Grace decided to donate an additional \$408 from the congrega-

tion's funds to make the amount designated by the event an even \$1,500. The members of Grace feel that the Lord has richly blessed them, and they want to share those blessings by helping others.

Grace is a very small congregation, but is located in a community that strongly

supports everything the congregation does. This was obvious at the fish fry, since the congregation managed to serve 123 people and received rave reviews about how good the meal was.

Grace's annual mission contribution is \$500. Combined with the total \$1,500 the fish fry raised for missions, a total of \$2,000 will be designated to serve others.

Parish nurses gather

Parish nurses have long been a fixture of many LCMS congregations from the early days of our Synod. These men and women often offer health education and counseling, help in promoting the physical and spiritual health of congregants and serve as touchpoints for health resources in the communities they serve.

Parish nurses from across the Minnesota North District gathered at Trinity, New York Mills, on June 9 for a day of



From left, Collette Christoffers, Carla Scheffert, Gen Keranen, Jan Meyer, Phyllis Neumann, Mary Scott and the Rev. Jeff Lee.

devotion and sharing. The devotion of Scripture, relating to depression, was led by the Rev. Jeff Lee, Minnesota North District mission facilitator. Gary Bach, Trinity DCE, shared insight into

“Singing Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs” while singing and playing his guitar. The afternoon was a time for the parish nurses to share their ideas and programs with each other.

INSTALLATIONS



The Rev. Kirk Schield was installed as an assistant pastor at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Superior, Wis., on March 5. Participating in the service were, from left, the Revs. Walter Lehenbauer, Matthew Kohl, Schield, David Schoessow, Dr. Donald Fondow (district president and installer), John Bonk and John Knierim.

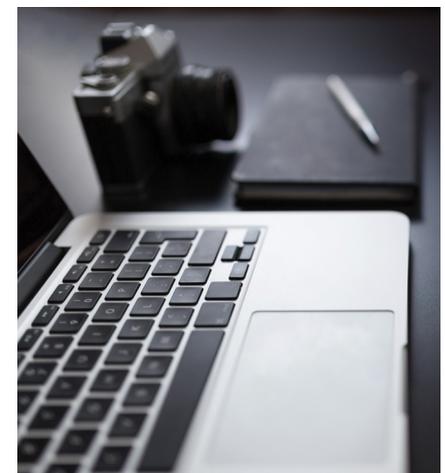
Send us your news

If you have any announcements, or if you would like to report on special events or human interest stories from your congregation or organization, please send submissions to the.lutheran.witness@mnlcms.org.

You may also mail your articles to:
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The congregations of Nicolai Lutheran Church, Canby, and Zion Lutheran Church, Boyd, were blessed to receive as pastor **the Rev. Dean Rager**, who was ordained and installed on June 25. Participating in the service were, from left, the Revs. Robert Friedrich, David Dauk, Dr. Donald Fondow (district president and officiant), Matthew Canion, Rager, Loren Kruse, Steven Frank, John Schultz and Dr. Joel Koepp.



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

The long last days of summer

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

Has summer been too short for you? Do you wish the warmth and green and long days would last a bit longer? The lazy days will soon come to an end and then it will be back to work, school and the activities at church.

In contrast to the shortness of summer, the Church is in her longest season of the year — the season of Pentecost. We can have up to 27 Sundays after Pentecost. For half of the church year, we focus on the life of Jesus. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter focus our thoughts and hearts upon the promises of Jesus — His birth, baptism, being made known as God’s son, suffering, death and resurrection. The other half of the year focuses on the life of His Church — from the “birth” of the Church at Pentecost to the resurrection of the Church on the last day.

The Christian Church has now lived more than 2,000 years. That’s a long time. Sometimes, even in our congregations the days get long, the work gets hard and we become tired of this long season of waiting

for Christ to return. Sometimes it appears that instead of being a “growing” and green season for the Church, it looks more like a “dying” and brown season. That can be true of congregations. It can be true of LWML societies, and it is most certainly true of every individual Christian.

That is where the Word of God given to St. Peter is so comforting. God is at work in this long season of the Church. He is not slow to keep His promises, but rather is at work through the Church, through His Word to bring all to repentance and faith. His Church grows when one sinner repents, when one child is baptized, when a new congregation is started in Africa, Asia or North America. We may not always see the Church as “green” and growing, but it is because God is not slow in keeping His promises. You can be sure of that because Jesus died for your sins and rose again from the dead — just as God Himself promised.

Rev. Bruce Timm
Arrowhead Region
Pastoral Counselor

2018 District Convention

The LWML Minnesota North District Convention will be held June 18-20, 2018 at the Sanford Center in Bemidji. The theme Bible verse is, “See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands” (Is. 49:16a NKJV). The convention theme is, “Forever Written in His Hands.” The convention will be hosted by Park I Region.

‘Serve Him With a Whole Heart’

The Alexandria Zone Spring Rally was hosted April 25 by the Mount Calvary LWML in Miltona. The ingathering — items for children to be used to further the Native American Ministry “The Reach,” was dedicated by the Rev. Dennis Angland, zone pastoral counselor.

The Rev. Terry Finner spoke on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation — “A Journey of Life and Faith”. Attendees had the opportunity to have their picture taken with Katie Luther. The Rev. Dane Compton provided the rally with clarinet music during coffee and lunch.



Long Prairie Zone Spring Rally

The Long Prairie Zone gathered on April 22 at Trinity, Long Prairie, for its spring rally. The guest speaker, the Rev. Geoff Grone-wold, pastor of Zion, Alexandria, shared the history and present work of the pro-life movement; he led the group in discussion on how individuals can get involved.

In support of the pro-life movement locally, an ingathering of



more than 11,000 items was gathered. The items were divided between two centers in the Long Prairie Zone — Options for Women, Sauk Centre, and the Pregnancy Resource Center, Long Prairie.



Marilyn Hitel

LWML District President

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