



# INTERCOM / E-NEWS

MINNESOTA NORTH DISTRICT—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Volume 17, Issue 4

Dear Friends in Christ,

Rahm Emanuel served as the Chief of Staff under President Obama. He is credited with the idea that you should “Never let a crisis go to waste.” By that, he meant that there are real opportunities to effect changes during a time of crisis. Charles Doyle of the University of Georgia, co-author on the forthcoming Yale Book of Modern Proverbs, has found that this expression is now commonly applied to economic or diplomatic crises that can be exploited to advance political agendas, but he traced it back at least as far as 1976, when M. F. Weiner wrote an article in the journal *Medical Economics* entitled “Don’t Waste a Crisis — Your Patient’s or Your Own.” Weiner meant by this that a medical crisis can be used to improve aspects of personality, mental health, or lifestyle. (August 13, 2009 blog written by Fred Shapiro).

Personally, I turn to Romans 8:28: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.” That doesn’t mean that all things are good, but God can work good in all things.

So what good can come out of a pandemic? In an April 2, 2020, opinion piece in the *Jerusalem Post* by Joel C. Rosenberg entitled; “Millions of Americans say coronavirus a ‘wake-up call’ from God” reports “a stunning 44% of Americans polled said they see ‘the global coronavirus pandemic and economic meltdown’ as ‘a wake-up call for us to turn back to faith in God,’ as ‘signs of coming judgment.’”

I do not take glee in the crisis we are in  
— but I know that God can, and does  
work all things for good, for those who  
are called according to His purpose.

In the March survey, 22% of non-Christians polled said that the crisis is causing them to start reading the Bible and to listen to Christian sermons online even though they usually do not search online to learn more about Bible prophecy and God’s plan for the future of mankind and have more spiritual conversations with family and friends.

40% of self-identified Christians report to be reading their Bible more than ever and watching or listening to Biblical teaching and Christian sermons online since they cannot go to church.

The survey was conducted by McLaughlin & Associates, a nationally-respected polling company, from March 23 through March 26. The questions were asked of 1,000 likely American voters. The poll had a reported margin of error of +/- 3.1%, at a 95% confidence interval.

We live in a time of fear and unrest. Even though we may be sheltered in, I have witnessed more outreach taking place by our District Pastors and rostered Church Workers. I do not take glee in the crisis we are in – but I know that God can, and does work all things for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. Get the Word of God’s Grace out into our communities that the people in our communities may know that we have a sure and certain hope in a loving God who redeems us to be His children. To God be the glory.

In His Service,

*Rev. Jeffrey A. Lee*

## In this issue...

- 1- Message from Rev. Jeffrey Lee, MaCO Facilitator
- 2- District Happenings, Call Services
- 3- Mission Trip Report
- 4- Message from Rev. Jason Wolter, District Life Coordinator
- 5- Message from Rev. Dr. Karl Weber, District 1st Vice President
- 6- RSTM, Parish Nurse Conference, Lutheran Island Camp
- 7- LCEF, State Bible Bowl
- 8- Mission Minutes
- 9- Call Update, Wellness Resources
- 10- Calendar of Events, Church Anniversaries
- 11- In Our Prayers
- 12- Prayer Calendar, Contact Information

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply affected the church and those in it. For many, life has come to a screeching halt.

But — perhaps now more than ever — the need for well-formed, educated and loving pastors and deaconesses continues in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, will once again hold Call Day services for vicarage assignments and calls to the Holy Ministry, though in a different format.*

## Concordia Seminary St. Louis, MO Tuesday, April 28 @ 7:00 pm

This year's Call Day service at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, will be a *joint service* for all assignments and calls on **Tuesday, April 28, 2020, at 7 p.m.**

Stream the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, call services online: [csl.edu/academics/call-day-services](https://csl.edu/academics/call-day-services).

Students, families and congregations are encouraged to share photos and video of their in-home celebrations on social media by using the hashtags **#CallDay2020** and **#CallDayWatchParty**. Learn more at [csl.edu/callday](https://csl.edu/callday).



## Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, IN Wed., April 29 @ 7:00 pm

This year's Call Day service at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, will be a *joint service* for all assignments and calls on **Wednesday, April 29, 2020, at 7 p.m.**

Stream the Concordia Theological Seminary call services online: [callday.ctsfw.edu](https://callday.ctsfw.edu).

# DISTRICT HAPPENINGS



## 35 Participate in L.E.R.T. Training

On Saturday, February 29, 35 people from District congregations received L.E.R.T. (Lutheran Early Response Team) training at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sauk Rapids. Rev. Michael Meyer and Rev. Robert Wurst, from LCMS Disaster Response in St. Louis, led the sessions. Evaluations from participants indicated the training exceeded their expectations in both presentations and the wealth of materials provided.

Participants expressed the desire to build on the day of training and continue to develop L.E.R.T. resources in their communities and the District. Congregations or circuits interested in hosting L.E.R.T. training can contact one of our District Disaster Response Co-coordinators: Rev. John Beck (Trinity, Sauk Rapids) and/or Rev. Steve Breithbarth, (em. Hibbing).

# COVID-19 CANCELLATIONS

While the District Office remains open with regular hours, the current situation in our communities has prompted a number of cancellations:

April 18 - Organist Workshop - Rescheduled to August 22, 2020

April 25 - Tech + Workshop - Postponed

April 26 - Brainerd Circuit Convocation - Cancelled

May 18-19 - Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Symposium on Preaching - Cancelled

# IDENTITY AND CREATION:

21st-Century Problems, 1st-Century Solutions

*Featuring: Dr. Adam Koontz*

**June 8-10 in St. Cloud, MN (Prince of Peace Lutheran School)**

How do we know who we are? Much of the confusion we experience today is not new. People in the ancient world asked themselves the same questions about marriage, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. The New Testament provides solutions to these ancient/modern problems through the life we now have in Christ.

[www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/continuing-education/st-cloud-minnesota](https://www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/continuing-education/st-cloud-minnesota)



As our nation does its best to alleviate the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, we remember the military-connected people in our communities who must leave their families to support the response.

The April issue of [Warning Order: Operation Barnabas](#) contains a timely devotion on Baptism as many are unable to receive the Lord's Supper or even the personal touch and bedside prayers of their pastors/chaplains.

Luther confessed that when he was in the distress of affliction and anxiety, he comforted himself by repeating: "I am baptized! I am baptized!"

We pray this month's devotional will bring you comfort and peace in the midst of uncertainty as you remember "I am baptized!" Where Baptism is, there is Christ. And where Christ is working forgiveness of sins, there is life and salvation.

This April issue also features many great resources, including:

- A prayer request for those who mourn fallen heroes.
- Information about Operation Barnabas activities at Memorial Lutheran Church in Ames, Iowa.
- A list of online resources for service members, veterans and families as well as those who support them.

Thank you for your continued support of and partnership in the LCMS Operation Barnabas project. As always, please contact LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces with your questions and concerns at [lcmschaps@lcms.org](mailto:lcmschaps@lcms.org).

In Christ's Service,  
Chaplain Craig G. Muehler  
CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.)  
Director, LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces

## NEWS FROM A MN NORTH DISASTER RELIEF TEAM

August 2005 was a pivotal moment for our nation, Hurricane Katrina struck hard in New Orleans, LA and Gulf Port, MS with a fury like we were not prepared for, and the aftermath touched the heart and conscience of our nation like never before.

From that awakening Ron Sundeen (Zion, Crown), and I have just completed our twelfth trip in fourteen years to help people as part of a Disaster Relief team through our Church. January 2006 we put together our first team from our congregation and went to New Orleans.

We were impressed that a Disaster Relief center had already been put in place with Camp Restore. Camp Restore was a great blessing in light of how we went about engaging in disaster relief early on. Participating in disaster relief consisted of making contact with the District office where a disaster had happened. From there we were directed to a congregation and determined, not



so much when, but how we would help and through local connections, figure out where we would live, the work required and tools to bring, etc. Over the years we have stayed at youth camps, bunk trailers, Church classrooms, unused gyms, and hotels. We found our host congregations helpful as they were able and the folks we help so very appreciative. We have been privileged to help people in Louisiana, Texas, Tennessee, Iowa, North Dakota, South Carolina, North Carolina, and a mission project in MN.

I am certain that everyone who has taken a trip with us would admit two things, the work is hard and the rewards are immeasurable. To see someone whose life has been torn apart see their world being put back together by people who come out of love and care in Christ's name, even if we cannot complete their world in our time frame, is in and of itself the joy of the trip.

I am delighted that our Church body, at Synod and District levels, has engaged in making disaster relief trips even more joyful for participants. With the introduction and continued development Lutheran Early Response Teams (LERT) at both levels we are better organized and more proficiently trained and equipped to engage in disasters. As a participant it is satisfying to be able to contact the Coordinator from my District for information of where we might be most beneficial to those in need as well as opportunities for continued and advanced training in disaster response including certification of proficiency recognized as many levels. It is also much easier to help folks when I can contact the coordinator from a District where a disaster has occurred. Synod has developed a standard training program that brings everyone together in disaster relief excellence.

Disasters will not stop breaking hearts and lives, but the more proficient we all can become of helping the heartbreak will not be as harsh as it might have been when we can help put lives back together sooner.

I did not share specifics of what happens on a relief trip as each one is unique, but I will extend an invitation to everyone to take a LERT training course, go on a trip and be part of the hands of Christ helping bring relief to a broken world.

*This article was written by Rev. Gary Rehborg, Interim Pastor, St. John Lutheran Church, Barnesville, MN.*



# A MESSAGE FROM THE MN NORTH DISTRICT LIFE COORDINATOR

Rev. Jason Wolter, Benson, MN

About a month ago (*March 15<sup>th</sup>, at the congregation that I serve*), we began to earnestly practice “social distancing”. Church services were canceled (*or, more accurately, moved online*)... schools were closed... and lots of people were told to stay home from work. Social gatherings were discouraged... and people quarantined themselves in their homes. It was like the whole world gave themselves a “time-out”. (*Based on the direction that our culture was heading, I’d say it was deserved... but that’s a conversation for another time.*) Even those who felt “strong enough” (*and didn’t think that they would be seriously affected by the virus*) were willing to undergo the same restrictions as everyone else.

But that’s not all. Not only did people mutually agree to follow every precaution for the sake of their neighbors, many of them have also sought ways to bring joy to those who have been particularly hurt by the restrictions on social interactions. Perhaps you’ve seen the pictures of loved ones “visiting” each other: by talking to each other on the phone... while they look at each other through an exterior window. Others have used technology to accomplish the same thing: to make sure that our loved ones know that we haven’t forgotten them... and that we miss them and love them.

Or maybe you’ve seen the videos of the car “parades”, which have been used to give special encouragement to those who need it. My daughter was one of those recipients. For most of her teenage life, she has been looking forward to her “Sweet 16” birthday.

Well, her birthday came at the beginning of this month, and her birthday dreams were crushed. But she was blessed to have friends who drove by our house at an appointed time (*it was a surprise!*) to wish her a happy birthday. They honked... made signs... and let her know that they loved her. These acts of kindness are happening all around the country: as people continually to look for ways to build one another up... even as they also strive to protect one another from becoming infected.

But why? Why are so many people choosing to avoid so many of the things that bring them joy? Why are they voluntarily agreeing to be sentenced to a “house arrest”? Why are they going to such lengths to show their love for those who need some encouragement? You know why. It’s because we know that there are many people in our communities that are vulnerable to the dangers of the coronavirus. So, for their sake, we have holed-up in our houses and taken every precaution possible so that we would not- *even inadvertently*- contribute to the spread of this disease.

In other words, people have awakened to the truth: that every life is important- even the lives of those whom we don’t know... and *especially* the lives of those that are most vulnerable. We love the elderly and the infirm; and we want to protect them,

encourage them and make sure they know that they have not been forgotten. We also care about families, especially those with young children; and we don’t do anything that would put any of them in any kind of jeopardy.

People everywhere are concerned about the well-being of their neighbors. And for the first time in my lifetime, we (*finally!*) seem to know who our neighbors are. In [Luke 10:29](#), a wise-guy tried to weasel out of loving his neighbor by asking, “*Who is my neighbor?*”

*... people have awakened to the truth: that every life is important- even the lives of those whom we don’t know...*

Jesus responded by telling the Parable of the Good Samaritan. And what was one of the main points of that parable? That everyone is my neighbor: not just the people I know... or like. Everyone!

All around us, people are seeing everyone else... as their neighbor. And they are treating them like a neighbor: by loving them and “*helping them and supporting them in every physical (and emotional and spiritual) need.*” Thanks be to God, that He has kept His promise “**to work good in all things for those who love Him**”. May He continue to stir up His Church, so that this love for our neighbors will continue, even after this pandemic is past. In this way, we will continue to affirm: that every life is precious and worthy of protection. May He, “**who began this good work in you, bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.**”

## DOING MINISTRY DURING UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

The way we do ministry very literally changed overnight. We at the District Office are so proud of the new and creative ways our pastors and churches have found to continue sharing the Gospel. Great work everyone! Now we want to know:

- What is working for you?
- What are your greatest challenges?

- How have you seen Jesus at work in your community?
- What kind of support does your ministry need?

Please continue to share your ideas, videos and ministry successes with us during this time. Share your stories with Diana at the District Office at [diana.ruopp@mnnlcms.org](mailto:diana.ruopp@mnnlcms.org) and with the Lutheran Witness by emailing [the.lutheran.witness@mnnlcms.org](mailto:the.lutheran.witness@mnnlcms.org).

# TRUSTING JESUS AMID A PANDEMIC

Rev. Dr. Karl Weber, St. Paul's, Richville & St. John's, Ottertail

We here at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Richville and St. John's Lutheran Church, Ottertail are following Federal and State recommendations to not hold services. The Elders and I are disappointed but know it is the right decision.

1. We have made this decision struggling to remain faithful to the Third Commandment which teaches, "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it" (Meaning, Third Commandment). The heads of the household should continue to have devotions at home. Spend time memorizing Scriptures and talking about the things of God, and, continue to forgive those who harm you. This decision to not hold church is not because our hearts despise the Word of God, but it is done in an attempt to slow the spread of the pandemic. When things return to normal, we will leave these contingency measures and joyfully go to the house of the Lord.

tells us this is a good thing. He does so in these words, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," (Prov 9:10). The wisdom of God is not some intellectual concept but is the body of God's Son on the cross to make atonement for the sins of the world. Pray that this pandemic be used by God to turn more people to Jesus wherein is our true and only hope.

You are baptized dear children of God and Jesus never reneges on his promises. Your sins are forgiven, and you are his beloved child. As such you can know with certainty that you are not alone during this time of social distancing and isolation. Jesus hears your prayers, knows your concerns, and dwells in you and you are surrounded by myriads upon myriads of his holy angels whose only responsibility in life is to watch over you.

In your devotions continue to lift up the medical community that they gain a better understanding of this virus and a cure. Also, continue to lift up our governing authorities who are charged by God to protect our

church—so heavenly minded that she is of tremendous earthly good loving the neighbor. For love biblically speaking is not an emotion or feeling but is good works in service to the neighbor. This crisis is an opportunity for the church to be who we are called to be, servants of our Lord Jesus loving our neighbor in word (pure doctrine) and the labor of our hands, (our good works) which we are called to do to honor Jesus.

During this time of isolation make phone calls to people, even people who are not in your circle of friends. Send them cards letting them know you are thinking of them. Also, we can make meals for families with young children, or the elderly who are lonely. What a witness to bless a non-Christian with a meal! When they ask you, "why?" our answer is not what the world says, "we are paying it forward." We tell our non-Christian neighbor that we are bringing this meal (or any good work) to them because Jesus loves them! What credibility our words about Jesus have based upon such love—action and deeds of kindness!

In time this virus shall pass, and we will joyfully come to the Lord's house. On the lips and hearts of many will be those heartfelt words from the pen of Martin Rinkart, "Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices, Who wondrous things has done, in Whom this world rejoices."

As much as we thank the medical and governmental authorities for their labors, our hope and trust is in Jesus who means us only good. And we know and see Jesus' goodness to us in the fact that Jesus took our sins upon himself and shed his blood and give his life to win for us forgiveness and peace with God. In God's time there will come that utopia, that perfect life without illness, disease, or virus. But utopia, that perfect life will come only with the resurrection when Jesus gathers his elect from the four corners of the earth and takes us to our heavenly home.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

**"You are baptized dear children of God and Jesus never reneges on his promises. Your sins are forgiven, and you are his beloved child. As such you can know with certainty that you are not alone during this time of social distancing and isolation."**

2. We have made this decision in a desire to comply with the Fourth Commandment "...that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them" (Meaning, Fourth Commandment).
3. Also, we have made this decision to also honor the Fifth Commandment which says, "...so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but help and support him in every physical need" (Meaning, Fifth Commandment).

As this pandemic continues across our nation and the world people are becoming fearful for their lives and livelihood. The Psalmist

physical life as the church through Word and sacrament is charged by God to protect our spiritual life.

At times we may lament that we are living in such times asking God, "why, why am I living through this pandemic?" In response I share some fine words found in J.R.R. Tolkien's, *The Fellowship of The Ring* that can certainly be applied to our baptized lives. The quote is as follows.

*"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."*

During this time of crises may the church be



## Reaching Rural America for Christ

### re:Vitality

This issue of *Reaching Rural America for Christ* highlights The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s *re:Vitality* initiative and how congregations can come to better understand and pursue their mission through it.

The resources available through *re:Vitality*, offered to LCMS congregations at no cost, focus not on “congregational decline” but on the things churches should do “because we’re the Church.” [Read April 2020 newsletter >>](#)

### Upcoming Webinars

**“re:Vitality”** — 1 to 2 p.m. Central time, Thursday, April 23. Presenter: Rev. Dr. Mark Wood, director of LCMS Witness & Outreach Ministry and LCMS Revitalization.

**“Counting Your Blessings: Hope for Rural and Small-Town Congregations”** — 1 to 2 p.m. Central time, Thursday, May 14. Presenter: Rev. Todd Kollbaum, director of LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission.

**“Opioid Abuse in Rural and Small-Town Settings”** — 1 to 2 p.m. Central time, Thursday, June 18. Presenter: Rev. Dr. Steven Schave, director of LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission.

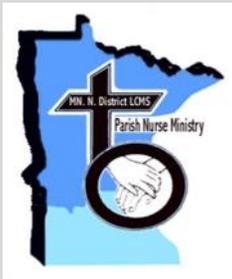


Minnesota North District  
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Missouri Synod

## STUDENT AID GRANTS 2020-2021

The MN North District provides grant monies for students pursuing church work degrees at LCMS Colleges and Seminaries. Students apply for the grant through the financial aid office at their school. Applications are due May 15th. The District Aid Application can be found at the link below:

[STUDENT AID APPLICATION](#)



## PATIENCE AND PERFECTION

June 6, 2020

8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church, New York Mills

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Daniel Paavola

- Find a union of patience and perfection.
- Identify 7 Biblical themes that are repeated actions combining God’s perfection and patience.
- Identify how perfection welcomes failure.

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” - Galatians 5:22-23*

[REGISTRATION INFORMATION](#)



## WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

This class is for the young adult who wants to learn how to become more self-reliant, safe and comfortable in an outdoor environment. Classes are taught by Ray Reitze Jr of Earthways, LLC. . Ray is a Master Maine Guide, outdoor instructor and noted naturalist. Ray has conducted workshops for L.L. Bean, the Maine and New Hampshire Audubon Society and the Wilhelm Reich Museum. Students will learn in depth skills that will allow them to be more relaxed and comfortable in the woods.

June 21-26, 2020 - \$500/person

Register by calling 218-583-2905 or online at [www.islandcamp.org](http://www.islandcamp.org)



# Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> where investments build ministry

**lcef.org**

## Soldiers of the Cross—COVID-19 Response Initiative

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is blessed to partner with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) to provide financial assistance through our Synod's Soldiers of the Cross program to church workers in crisis situations. Our LCEF funds, administered by each LCMS district office, **will help ordained or commissioned ministers and laity serving congregations, schools and Recognized Service Organizations** who find themselves with immediate unmet financial needs stemming directly or indirectly from the spread of the pandemic.

**[GIVE NOW](#)**

## Need to move your fundraiser online? Idea starters:

[Lincoln Lutheran Education Foundation](#) successfully hosted their event online March 27 - food, fun, etc. A resource they found useful was handbid.com. See the fundraiser [here](#).

With the cancellation of Cooking for Kids Fundraising Dinner & Auction, [Lutheran Elementary School Association](#), St. Louis, is hosting a fundraiser online. You can browse the items in preparation for the bidding which opens on April 18 at midnight and closes on April 25 at midnight. During those dates, you can log on at any time to participate. [Click here](#).

## Congratulations 2020 LCEF District Outreach Grant Recipient!

### REDEEMER LUTHERAN, AURORA, MINNESOTA

LCEF helps empower Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ministries with every dollar invested. LCEF has served as the financial extension of the LCMS since 1978, offering funding and resources in support of the Church. 2020 LCEF district grant funds were awarded to LCMS organizations in the following districts of the Central Region: Iowa District East, Iowa District West, Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Wisconsin. Each grant was \$1,000.

## Joyful Response®

LCEF offers e-tithing and e-tuition payments through the Joyful Response program, a stewardship service for LCMS congregations, schools and registered service organizations (RSOs).

**[Click here for ONLINE GIVING OPTIONS for your church/school.](#)**

Please contact me with any needs you may have at this time. I am here to serve.  
Prayers,

### **Kurt Fuhr**

Lutheran Church Extension Fund  
Regional Vice President  
952-270-5878  
kurt.fuhr@lcef.org



## Bible Bowl Goes Virtual

For well over 30 years MN North along with MN South Districts have hosted a State Bible Bowl competition at Concordia University, St. Paul. The 2020 State Bible Bowl Competition scheduled for Saturday, April 4 ran into some major challenges. The pandemic prevented the Young Adults (grades 7-12) from face-to-face competition.

The Bible Bowl was blessed with a talented individual from Holy Cross in St. Cloud, Paula Paulson, who helped put together the first Bible Bowl Competition to be held online.

The young adults studied the book of Judges. Both the team and the individual competition consisted of 50 questions. Congratulations to all competing teams; the top three places in the individual competition were Ella Kleve, St. John's Wycoff 1<sup>st</sup> place, Jacob Moeller, Immanuel Fairmont 2<sup>nd</sup> place and Katie Fischer Holy Cross St. Cloud 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The top three teams were: Trinity Faribault - 1<sup>st</sup> place, St. John's Wycoff - 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Immanuel Fairmont - 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

The date and topic for the 2021 State Bible Bowl will be announced this fall. Watch the e-news for additional information about Bible Bowl. The State Bible Bowl is organized by Pastors Rudy Maurer-MNS and Steve Breitbarth-MNN.

# MISSIONARY MINUTES



*"The combined Mayaguez and Ponce team are working to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the people of Puerto Rico via technology. We are uploading two daily meditations on readings. The morning is the Psalms and the evening is the Gospels. These are being shared on both church Facebook pages as well as their websites (Ponce and Mayaguez). We also as a team have been working on streaming and posting services for our members and anyone else who desires to watch on the web. We are also looking at ways that we can*

*continue teaching English and Music through the web. For those members who do not have access to the web we are taking advantage of snail mail and phone calls to keep in touch with them. While at this point in time we are not able to meet face to face with one another we are working diligently as a team to provide the Gospel however we can."* Contributions to LCMS Disaster Response (Puerto Rico) will aid some of the short term costs. Learn more [HERE](#). Contributions to the [FORO](#) will help with longer term efforts, including support for our alliance missionaries and for a much-needed local administrative staff person. Missionaries Rev. James and Christel (Ponce) are sharing regular updates on their [Facebook Page](#) and newsletter [HERE](#). See Pastor DiLiberto's (Mayaguez) newsletter [HERE](#)

**GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH AND SCHOOL, COTTON TREE LIBERIA** Rev. James NS Kollie serves Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School in Cotton Tree, Liberia. COVID-19 has closed the school for now, and Pastor Kollie and his family continue to minister to their community. Pastor Kollie is pursuing a Doctorate Degree at CTS, Fort Wayne, IN, with hopes of then teaching pastors in Liberia. Jamesetta Kollie, a 2019 CSP grad is working towards a Master's Degree. Gifty Kollie (deaconess student at CUC) and Diane (in high school at Concordia Academy, Roseville, MN) are also studying in the US with plans to return to Liberia to use their education. Funds collected and disbursed to date for the School: \$135,621; for Pastor Kollie's education: \$51,695; for Jamesetta's education: \$10,161; and for Gifty's education: \$15,323. Donations can be sent to: MN North District, PO Box 604, Brainerd, MN 56401.



**DAN & JOAN JASTRAM** Pastor Jastram serves as a manager for theological education in Asia, based in Tokyo, Japan. Pastor Jastram shares: "A lot has been happening here in Asia since last we communicated! Of course, the coronavirus, or COVID-19 has loomed large in it all. Thank you for your prayers as we live, by God's grace, through the uncertainties and disruptions in daily life that are accompanying the outbreak. It is preoccupying and as a consequence energy-draining some days. Nevertheless, we remain in good health and the work continues— despite some extra twists and turns." Learn more [HERE](#). Become a partner [HERE](#).

**PROJECT 24 & CHRIST'S CARE FOR CHILDREN - KENYA** Project 24 is an initiative of the LCMS Office of International Mission and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya. Greetings from Nairobi, Kenya! We want to say thank you for your continued support of the Project 24 program. We wanted to inform you that all of the children as well as the staff are doing well during this health crisis. Presently, the children are home with their families until the Kenyan government reopens the schools. Thank you for your prayers! Please see our latest newsletter, telling you of the wonderful things that have taken place in the last few months. Total Number of Students at the P24 sites: 190 children; Number of Students Sponsored as to date: 140. Find the latest Project 24 Newsletter [HERE](#). Find missionary Brit Odemba's latest newsletter [HERE](#). District support for Project 24 to date is \$112,034. Support for CCC: Kenya date is \$17,366.



Dr. Jim and Susan Kaiser are excited to extend the partnership between Lutheran Bible Translators and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). In the early 1980's, Susan helped establish a literacy program for the Loko people of Sierra Leone. Together with Jim they helped to translate the New Testament for the Kono people of Sierra Leone, and later the New Testament for the Chaldean people of Iraq. Jim now consults with six different translation projects and Susan provides care to other missionaries. Susan is a former member of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Willmar. Learn more [HERE](#).



Support for any of these missionaries can be sent to: Minnesota North District—LCMS, PO Box 604, Brainerd, MN 56401 —earmarked for the specific mission or missionary.



# CALL UPDATE

MINNESOTA NORTH DISTRICT—Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

## CALLS ACCEPTED

### CALLING CONGREGATIONS

**BARNESVILLE**, St. John's (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. Gary Rehborg)

**BELLINGHAM/CORRELL/ODESSA**, Trinity/Grace/Trinity

**BROWNS VALLEY/CLAIRE CITY, SD**, Zion/Zion (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. Larry Johnson)

Calling a 2020 Seminary Candidate

**CROWN**, Zion (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. Don Polege) - Calling a 2020 Seminary Graduate

**ELY/BABBITT**, First/Good Shepherd (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. John Grohs)

**FERGUS FALLS/FRIBERG**, Faith/Immanuel - Calling a 2020 Seminary Candidate

**GRAND RAPIDS**, First

**MADISON**, St. John (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. Noel Herr)

**MOORHEAD**, Our Redeemer (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. George Krueger & Rev. Adam Harvala) Called Rev. Ben Micheel, Crestwood, KY

**PEQUOT LAKES**, Gloria Dei (Vacancy Pastor—Rev. Mark Johnson)

**RED LAKE FALLS/PLUMMER**, St. John/Redeemer

**ST. CLOUD/CLEAR LAKE**, Faith/Trinity - Calling a 2020 Seminary Candidate

**ST. CLOUD, Holy Cross** (Senior Pastor)

**ST. CLOUD**, Redeemer (Associate Pastor) Calling a 2020 Seminary Candidate

**VILLARD/GROVE LAKE**, St. John/Trinity - Calling a 2020 Seminary Candidate.

### OTHER CALLS AND CHANGES

Rev. Steve Benson to Trinity, Oshkosh, WI. He declined the Call.

### COMMISSIONED MINISTER CHANGES

Caleb Kunze (Lay Minister) received a Call to Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Anoka, MN. He declined the Call.

## CHURCH WORKER WELLNESS RESOURCES

In Our District:

### **CHURCH WORKER CARE**

**COORDINATOR:** Rev. Paul Cloeter is available to provide a listening ear, sound advice and even professional referrals. He can be reached at (320) 333-6319 or [paul.cloeter@mnlcms.org](mailto:paul.cloeter@mnlcms.org)

### **HEALTHY CHURCH WORKERS:**

[HealthyChurchWorkers.com](http://HealthyChurchWorkers.com) exists to help ministers and their spouses to live the abundant life Jesus promised in John 10:10.

From the Synod:

### **CHURCH WORKER WELLNESS**

**ONLINE:** Whether you are a church worker or spouse — or someone who loves those who are called to serve — the LCMS prays that these resources are helpful. Learn more [HERE](#).

Recognized Service Organizations:

**DOXOLOGY:** DOXOLOGY offers an innovative program of advanced study retreats to strengthen pastors for the task of faithfully shepherding the souls entrusted to their care. [Doxology.us](http://Doxology.us)

### **GRACE PLACE WELLNESS:**

Grace Place Wellness is a preventive wellness ministry that seeks to positively impact the ministry of Christian congregations. [www.graceplacewellness.org](http://www.graceplacewellness.org)

### **SHEPHERD'S CANYON**

**RETREAT:** Shepherd's Canyon Retreat offers seven carefully designed days of individual, couple and group Christian counseling for church professionals and their spouses. [shepherdscanyonretreat.org](http://shepherdscanyonretreat.org)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| May 4, 2020           | MN North District Board of Directors Meeting, District Office |
| June 6, 2020          | Parish Nurse Conference, Trinity, New York Mills              |
| June 22-24, 2020      | MN North District LWML Convention, Grand Rapids               |
| July 14, 2020         | LWML Board of Directors Meeting, District Office              |
| August 19-20, 2020    | New Workers Orientation, District Office                      |
| August 20, 2020       | Retired Workers Luncheon, Brainerd                            |
| August 22, 2020       | Organist Workshop, Emmanuel, Barnum                           |
| Aug 31– Sept 1, 2020  | Circuit Visitors Conference, District Office                  |
| September 20-22, 2020 | Fall Pastors Conference, Lutheran Island Camp                 |
| September 27-28, 2020 | MN North District Board of Directors Meeting, District Office |
| October 13, 2020      | LWML Board of Directors Meeting, District Office              |
| November 20-22, 2020  | MN North District Youth Gathering, St. Cloud                  |
| December 6-7, 2020    | MN North District Board of Directors Meeting, District Office |
| April 12-14, 2021     | MN North District Convention—Madden’s on Gull Lake            |

## CHURCHES CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARIES

|                    |           |   |
|--------------------|-----------|---|
| July 12, 2020      | 50 years  | Church Building at Trinity, Staples         |
| August 15-16, 2020 | 75 years  | Redeemer Lutheran Church, St. Cloud         |
| August 16, 2020    | 125 years | St. John Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls |
| October 11, 2020   | 100 years | Trinity Lutheran Church, Isle               |

Please contact the District Office if your congregation will be celebrating an Anniversary.

# IN OUR PRAYERS

The family of Mrs. Ellen Linen (widow of Rev. Clarence Rantala and Rev. Elmer Linen), who was called to glory on April 11, 2020.

The family of Rev. Ronald Tibbetts (em. Aitkin), who was called to glory on April 9, 2020.

The family of Helen Keyes (mother of DCO Peter Keyes), who was called to glory on April 6, 2020.

The family of Mrs. Carol Langemo (wife of emeritus pastor Rev. Martin Langemo) who was called to glory on March 22, 2020.

The family of Marion Rutter (mother-in-law of Rev. Dennis O'Neill) who was called to glory on March 21, 2020.

Rev. Fred Kutter (Immanuel, Albany), recovering after surgery.

Rev. Norm Hanan (em. Annandale), dealing with health issues.

Rev. Don Wagner (Trinity, Deer Creek), recovering after surgery.

Rev. Larry Cain (em. Cromwell) dealing with health issues.

John Kutter, Brother of Rev. Fred Kutter (Immanuel, Albany) continuing to deal with health issues.

Rev. Henry Koopman (em. Waite Park) recovering after heart surgery.

Mrs. Sheila Brustuen, wife of Rev. Keith Brustuen (St. Paul, Montevideo) recovering after hip surgery.

Mrs. Mary Weber, wife of Rev. Dr. Karl Weber (St. John, Ottertail & St. Paul, Richville), diagnosed with cancer.

Mrs. Charlotte Kollie, wife of Rev. James Kollie (Good Shepherd, Cotton Tree, Liberia), recovering after surgery.

Rev. Dean Stolz (Zion, Crosby & Immanuel, Iron Hub) dealing with health issues.

George Miller, dealing with severe back pain.

Rev. Jim Meyer (cand. Thief River Falls), dealing with health issues.

Jenny Schoessow (wife of Rev. David Schoessow, Christ, Superior, WI), who is dealing with health issues.

Rev. David Milz (St. John, Kimball), dealing with heart issues.

Rev. Victor Dorn, (em., St. Cloud), dealing with health issues.

Mrs. Jolene Wagner (St. Paul's Lutheran School, Perham), dealing with a blood disorder.

Rev. Paul Dare's (Zion, Alexandria) father, diagnosed with cancer.

The mother of Rev. Dennis McManus, facing a number of health issues.

Mrs. Martha Buchholz (wife of sainted pastor Rev. Henry Buchholz), Richville, who is having health issues.

Rev. Gunard Heikkila (em., New York Mills), dealing with health issues.

Mary Langemo Hughes (daughter of Rev. Martin & Carol Langemo, Princeton), who is suffering from hyperacusis.

Mrs. Melissa Martini-Tischer, wife of Rev. Steven Tischer (Zion, Princeton), diagnosed with sarcoidosis.

Rev. Robert and Mrs. Phyllis Volkert (em., Palisade), both dealing with health issues.

David Rickbeil (brother of Rev. Blake Rickbeil, St. Paul, Bertha), who

has been missing for several months.

MN North District Seminary Students:

LeAnn Gregoire, Isle, Deaconess student at CTSFW

Gino Marchetti II, Elk River, student at CTSFW

Joshua Mork, Moorhead, student at CSL

Josef Muench, Duluth, on vicarage in Capistrano Beach, CA

Carl Seim, Elk River, SMP student at CSL

Stafford Thompson, Brainerd, on vicarage in Howard Lake, MN

Stephanie Wilde, Parkers Prairie, Deaconess student on internship in Puerto Rico

Those serving in the military & chaplaincy and part of our District family:

Rev. Noah Rogness, serving a Special Assignment in Washington DC, US Army Reserve

LT Geoffrey Gronewold, Active Duty Chaplain, US Army—North Carolina

Chaplain Captain Vincent Bain—Active Duty Chaplain, Fort Campbell, KY

Chaplain Lt. Aaron Bell, son-in-law of Pastor Tom and Mary Brinkley (St. Matthew, Esko) – Active Duty Chaplain—US Navy Camp Pendleton

Chaplain LCDR John Thomson – Active Duty Chaplain—US Navy Guam

Rev. Steve Breitbarth (em., Hibbing), LCMS endorsed Emergency Response Chaplain and Disaster Response Chaplain

Joshua Bonk, son of Rev. John Bonk and Linda Bonk —US Army

MSgt Jonathan Fondow, son of Pres. Don & Connie Fondow, Park Rapids—US Army

Ens. Michaela Biegner, granddaughter of Rev. Paul (em. Brainerd) and Joan Biegner, Pensacola, FL Flight School

Ensign Emily Geddes, granddaughter of Virginia Ansorge—US Navy

Dennis Gerold, husband of DCO Abby Dawkins Gerold, US Air Force

Timothy Milo, son of Rev. Frank & Sue Milo, —MN National Guard

1st Lt. Micah Uhrinak, son of Rev. Les & Susan Uhrinak, Crosslake, Air Force

Sgt. Nathaniel Vrudny, son of Rev. Matthew & Bonnie Vrudny, Walker, with the Army Reserve Engineering unit in Mankato.

Tanner Wagner, son of Rev. Don & Jolene Wagner, Trinity, Deer Creek, National Guard

Missionaries Rev. Dr. Daniel and Dr. Joan Jastram serving as career missionaries through the LCMS in northern Asia, based in Tokyo, Japan. (son of sainted pastor—Rev. Robert Jastram and Mrs. Phyllis Jastram)

Missionaries Dr. Jim and Susan Kaiser, serving with Lutheran Bible Translators in Ethiopia.

# MAY PRAYER CALENDAR

| Sun       | Mon   | Tue  | Wed  | Thu   | Fri   | Sat       |
|-----------|---|--|--|---|---|-----------|
|           |   |  |  |   | <b>1</b><br>Zion, Boyd - Rev. Dean Rager                    | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b><br>St. Stephen, Braham - Rev. Tim Renstrom       | <b>5</b><br>Zion, Brainerd - Rev. Steve Benson             | <b>6</b><br>Grace, Breckenridge - Rev. Ross Fritz      | <b>7</b><br>Zion, Browns Valley                         | <b>8</b><br>Beautiful Savior, Callaway - Rev. Matthew Meyer | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>11</b><br>Joy, Cambridge - Rev. Daniel Lewis           | <b>12</b><br>St. Paul, Campbell - Rev. Carl Berner         | <b>13</b><br>Nicolai, Canby - Rev. Dean Rager          | <b>14</b><br>Trinity, Carlos - Rev. Mark Schwarz        | <b>15</b><br>Immanuel, Cass Lake - Rev. James Sorensen      | <b>16</b> |
| <b>17</b> | <b>18</b><br>Grace, Chisholm - Rev. Brad Felix            | <b>19</b><br>St. Matthew, Clarissa - Rev. Justin Hesterman | <b>20</b><br>Trinity, Clear Lake - Rev. George Sagisor | <b>21</b><br>Hope, Munger - Rev. Walter Lehnbauer       | <b>22</b><br>Our Redeemer, Cloquet - Rev. Matthew Kohl      | <b>23</b> |
| <b>24</b> | <b>25</b><br><b>Memorial Day - District Office Closed</b> | <b>26</b><br>Our Redeemer, Cohasset - Rev. Mark Peske      | <b>27</b><br>Grace, Correll - Vacant                   | <b>28</b><br>First English, Eldred - Rev. Steven Bohler | <b>29</b><br>Our Saviors, Crookston - Rev. Steven Bohler    | <b>30</b> |
| <b>31</b> |   |  |  |   |   |           |

## CONTACT US

Rev. Don Fondow, District President  
Diana Ruopp, Admin. Ass't

[don.fondow@mnnlcms.org](mailto:don.fondow@mnnlcms.org)  
[diana.ruopp@mnnlcms.org](mailto:diana.ruopp@mnnlcms.org)

Mission & Ministry Facilitators:

Rev. Jeffrey Lee [MaCO]  
Rev. Monte Meyer [PLaN]

[jeffrey.lee@mnnlcms.org](mailto:jeffrey.lee@mnnlcms.org)  
[monte.meyer@mnnlcms.org](mailto:monte.meyer@mnnlcms.org)

George Miller, LCEF/Office Manager  
Bookkeeper - Angie Ringstrom  
LCEF

[george.miller@mnnlcms.org](mailto:george.miller@mnnlcms.org)  
[angie.ringstrom@mnnlcms.org](mailto:angie.ringstrom@mnnlcms.org)  
[lcef@mnnlcms.org](mailto:lcef@mnnlcms.org)

Church Worker Care Coordinator:

Rev. Paul Cloeter  
[paul.cloeter@mnnlcms.org](mailto:paul.cloeter@mnnlcms.org)

Congregational Care Counselor:

Rev. Dr. Larry Harvala  
[congregationalcare@mnnlcms.org](mailto:congregationalcare@mnnlcms.org)

Lutheran Witness Editor

Rev. Philip Hoppe (320) 233-6138  
[the.lutheran.witness@mnnlcms.org](mailto:the.lutheran.witness@mnnlcms.org)

Gift Planning Counselor:

Mr. David Priebe  
[david.priebe@mnnlcms.org](mailto:david.priebe@mnnlcms.org)

District Secretary:

Rev. Marty Mably, Elk River  
[pastormarty@lordofglorylutheran.org](mailto:pastormarty@lordofglorylutheran.org)

District Treasurer:

Mr. Mike Uran  
[treasurer@mnnlcms.org](mailto:treasurer@mnnlcms.org)

Committee on Constitutions & District Memberships:

Rev. Ron Carnicom, Chairman (218/675-6532) [constitution@mnnlcms.org](mailto:constitution@mnnlcms.org)



Mail: PO Box 604, Brainerd, MN 56401-0604

Phone: 218/829-1781 800/482-5022

e-mail: [mnndist@mnnlcms.org](mailto:mnndist@mnnlcms.org)

Fax: 218/829-0037

website: [www.mnnlcms.org](http://www.mnnlcms.org)