



/ OCTOBER 2023

DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA NORTH

Thanking veterans for their service



Pictured are veterans who attended the celebration, from left (front) Carolyn Draeger, Dale Brasel, Rodney Draeger, Eric Steuber, Glen Olsen, Gary Wanderi; (middle) Monroe Damlo, Albert Jorgenson, Gary Koplin, Dorvin Wendt, Roger Bajumpaa, Lloyd Schultz, Jane Harris, James Carow; (back) William Bauck, Mike Woeste, Robert Wierima, Tom Gustafson, Dave Pawlowski, Dean Bauck and John Mercer. Missing from the photo are Brien Meyer, Jeff Dickerson and Alec Grey.

St. Paul's, Perham, held Veterans' Recognition Sunday on April 23. Rev. Howard "Howie" A. Krienke, retired U.S. Army chaplain and former senior supervisory chaplain of the 88th Regional Support Command at Fort Snelling — gave the sermon. He currently serves as an associate pastor of Zion, Hopkins.

Monroe Damlo, veteran and St. Paul's member, served as soloist. Veterans from the congregation greeted and ushered people as they entered the church.

A world map with pins representing the various parts of the world where the congregation's veterans served was hung in the narthex. Along both sides of the sanctuary, the congregation listed all of its member veterans who have died in the faith.

Following the service, the congregation served a special cake during fellowship. Veterans Gary Koplin, Mike Woeste and Dean Bauck received a Quilt of Valor — sewn by some of the ladies of the congregation— from the Veterans Appreciation Committee.



Well done, good and faithful servant!

The Rev. David Milz presided over his final worship service at St. John's, Kimball, on Monday July 10. He retired exactly 29 years after his installation as pastor of St. John's, where he was called upon graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1994. After receiving his master of divinity, David headed north with his wife, Shirley, and their son, Nathan.

A retirement celebration was held after worship the day before, which included a congregational potluck followed by a community open house. Those in attendance included

Rev. John Bolt, a good friend of Pastor Milz. The celebration featured a video montage of Pastor Milz through the years, speakers and lots of fellowship.

Pastor Milz and Shirley will move closer to children and grandchildren. He also has a desire to do pulpit supply and help with Bible studies.

Looking back over his years of service, Pastor Milz was able to clearly see God's hand in many areas. The congregation constructed a new church building in 2009 and then added a fellowship hall about 10 years later.



Rev. David Milz gives the benediction on July 9, his last Sunday as pastor of St. John's Kimball. He retired following 29 years of service to St. John's.



Welcome!

In May, Our Redeemer, Moorhead, celebrated the addition of 23 new members to its family. Pictured are, from left, (seated) Jennifer Hackler, Ruth Novotny, Iva Moll and Jaci Voth; (standing) Rev. Sam Pitsch, the Bond family, the Stegman family, Clayton and Sarah Luedeke, Carol and Arnie Schick and Vicar Brandon Johnson. Not pictured: the Laraas family and Mavis Smith.

Share your news with us!

We love to feature a wide variety of news and events occurring in our district congregations. All that is needed is a brief description event and one or two photos.

Send submissions to the.lutheran.witness@mnnlcms.org. You may also mail your

submissions to Emmanuel Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 12, Backus, MN 56435, attn. Rev. Travis Lauterbach.

Please ensure photos sent electronically are high resolution (send the largest sized photo from your camera or phone).



Blessed summer at Trinity, Twin Valley



Top, Trinity, Twin Valley, welcomed more than 20 children for vacation Bible school the week of July 17. The congregation chose the theme, "Digging into the Apostles' Creed," which is produced by Higher Things, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization whose mission "is to make the Gifts of Christ Jesus known to youth and young adults." The children are pictured holding the craft banners they worked on throughout the week, adding creed-related items each day.

Below, on Aug. 6, the saints of Trinity rejoiced as Charlotte Bates was baptized and the Thornton family — parents Kurt and Missy and their children, Reed, Rhenley and Lane, were received as members through Profession of Faith. The group, minus Reed, is pictured with Rev. Josef Muench.



CALLED BY THE GOSPEL

On July 23, Peace in Christ, Hermantown, rejoiced in the baptisms of Annalise Dahl and her three sons, Sawyer (4), Owen (2) and Lewis (two months).

Annalise had no experience with the Christian church. Her husband, Joseph, grew up as a Methodist. During his teenage years, he strayed from the church. Several months ago, Annalise grew curious about God and faith. She talked to Joseph about that curiosity, and he said that he also had a desire to find his way back to God. They attended the Easter Sunday service at Peace in Christ, where Joseph's grandparents are members.

Eager to be closer to God and learn more about the faith, the family began faithfully attending services following that Easter Sunday. Joseph and Annalise attended adult confirmation classes together and became members upon completion. Both have pursued getting to know the Lord through the Bible, church attendance, prayer and various resources. In terms of their faith and values, they have found a home in the Lutheran Confession of the Christian faith. Joseph intends to continue his learning through online biblical and theological courses.

Joseph has a career as a farrier while Annalise is a full-time stay-at-home mom. She intends to homeschool their children.

Both Joseph and Annalise are excited about raising their children in the Lutheran faith and having them know all about the love of Jesus. The congregation of Peace in Christ is thankful for the Dahl family's blessed entrance into their midst, as they grow in their relationship with their Lord. Both of Peace in Christ's pastors, Revs. Tim Ludwig and Caleb Weight, took part in baptizing the four family members.



Sisters in Christ enjoy retreat

A total of 62 women, guests and pastors from the Minnesota North District gathered at Lutheran Island Camp Aug. 11-13 for the annual retreat. This year's theme was "Balancing Act Amid Life's Challenges," based on 1 Corinthians 10:31. The weekend started on Friday night with a picnic supper, a Bible study titled "Balancing Life's Challenges" (led by Rev. Dr. Patrick Lovejoy), and a campfire with singing and snacks. Saturday speakers Katy Gifford and Deb Vinkemeier were enjoyed by all. The retreat was blessed with 13 first-time attendees. As always, spending time with sisters in Christ old and new is an experience looked forward to every year.

Counselor's Corner

Staying on God's mission

Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-2

Workplace drama can be more than just a little discouraging. I have sat with people seriously considering changing professions, moving to new locations, and even stepping out of the workforce entirely based on the atmosphere in their places of employment. I know that following COVID-19, "the drama" was one of the main reasons many people were reluctant to return to the office.

Working with people can be a challenge, there is no doubt about it. There are personal interests, passions, pet projects and, of course, the stress from personal lives that often bleed into workplace interactions. In fact, it can poison them. We can become so overwhelmed by the

things that surround our lives that we become unable to efficiently do what we ought to be doing. Those times of distraction are too often the times when mistakes, accidents and missteps take place and only lead to greater frustration and dysfunction. This is why Paul in 2 Corinthians appeals to us to keep our focus as we work with God in this present age to proclaim the day of salvation, which is now.

At church we can become distracted by cliques, mission initiatives and who's missing from the clean-up party after the last big event, that we forget how we have been called to share the mission and ministry of Christ, not our self-interest. We begin to feel threatened as we look at attendance numbers, bank balances and external pressures from the world. As we forge ahead in our mission in our communities, our head spins in many directions focusing on things of the world, all while losing sight of the cross.

We must always remember that we work together for the Gospel — that Jesus Christ came to seek and save the lost, to bleed and die for them in order that He might emerge victorious over death and the grave by the power that enables Him to subdue all things to Himself — so that those who are hurting around us may have an eternal relationship with the God who loves them.

Satan works tirelessly to get us to lose sight of our true mission so that we trip over each other, make mistakes in the form of harsh words or make hasty decisions. The world places new hurdles in front of us every day, and the sin we all possess continues to erupt in our relationships. Therefore, we must encourage each other every day.

It wasn't only Paul who had to remind the church of this. To paraphrase and adapt words from Peter, "We must not lose sight of the one who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light, that we may declare His praises to the world."

Take a moment in the coming days and weeks and try to identify ways you may have been caught up in the drama of life instead of the narrative of God's mission. Run toward reconciliation, strive for unity and extend grace. The challenges may seem insurmountable and our task heavy. But remember, the one who raises the dead is with us, and the battle for salvation is won. All we must do is boldly proclaim it and root out the worldly divisions among us, that more may come to know the comfort we ourselves have been comforted by in Christ Jesus. To Him be all the Glory.

Rev. Dr. Patrick Lovejoy
Arrowhead Region Pastoral Counselor