



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA NORTH

'Looney Daze' in Vergas

St. John's, Vergas, and St. Paul's, Loon Lake, held a joint worship service at St. John's on Aug. 13, coinciding with the Vergas community's Looney Daze celebration, held Aug. 10-13.

The joint celebration service began with pre-gathering music. The preacher was Rev. Dr. Joseph Ochola Omolo, archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK), who shared a mission message. Pastor Omolo also talked to attendees about one of his missions called the Hope for the Destitute Orphanage. He brought with him numerous items that the orphans make and sell, including delicate beaded jewelry, handbags, carvings and paintings.

Rev. Gary Rehborg is serving as interim pastor of St. John's, and Rev. Del Stohs is serving St. Paul's as vacancy pastor.

Following the service, the congregations served lunch and children of the Jesus' Little Lambs preschool got to participate in the community parade by riding in a float. The congregations considered it a wonderful day, and were blessed with the attendance of many people.



Children of Jesus Little Lambs preschool rode in a float in the Looney Daze parade in Vergas, and hand out bags with goodies to those along the route. Below, Rev. Dr. Joseph Ochola Omolo, archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya, preached at St. John's, Vergas, on Aug. 13.



Life ministry grants available

The LCMS Office of National Mission has made an additional \$1 million available in its Million Million Dollar Life Match program, to be distributed over the coming triennium in grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Since the Life Match began in 2022, LCMS congregations have dedicated \$1,577,133, matched by \$1 million from the ONM, to projects that support and promote the sanctity of life. These projects have served over a half-million people, with more than 7,000 congregation members serving as volunteers. .

Applications for grants in 2024 will open Jan. 1. To apply, visit lcms.org/serve/grants/life-grant.



150 years of Trinity, Fergus Falls

Trinity, Fergus Falls, on Aug. 13 celebrated 150 years of Word and Sacrament ministry under the theme "Built on the Rock." Rev. Dr. Donald Fondow, Minnesota North District president emeritus, served as guest preacher during the worship service. The joyful celebration day began with Divine Service, followed by fellowship. The congregation continued the celebration with a catered meal and program. Pictured is the congregation; Rev. Christopher Lieske, Trinity pastor, is at bottom right.

Dedicated to – and for – SERVICE

St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School, Perham, held its staff dedication for the 2023-24 school year on Aug. 27.

Pictured are, from left, (front row) ReNae Tangen, McKenzie Schmitz, Jolene Wagner, Shari Brown, Angie Ratcliffe, Candice Bicondoa (principal); (back row) Rev. Andrew Ratcliffe, Elizabeth Augustus, Mary Ann Spencer, Brooke Adamczyk, Rachel McLemore, Deb Meyer and Justine Guck.



In May, Abby Peterson and Leila Gallion of **Trinity, Isle**, confessed the gifts received in Holy Baptism during the Rite of Confirmation. Abby and Leila received prayer books from the congregation's LWML, and as communicant members of the congregation they may also be members of the Trinity LWML. From left, Abby and Leila are pictured with Rev. Mark Maunula, Trinity pastor.



Share your news with us!

Why publicize your congregation's stories in *The Lutheran Witness* district Insert?

- ▶ It reminds people that Christ is active in His church in so many ways.
- ▶ It gives readers a sense of the larger body of Christ, that they have brothers and sisters engaged in the same work.
- ▶ It gives congregations ideas for events and outreach.
- ▶ It helps former members to see what is going on in their former congregations.
- ▶ It aids other congregations in knowing who to reach out to when they need resources or referrals for a project they are considering.

We love to feature a wide variety of events occurring in our district congregations. All that is needed is a brief description of the event and one or two photos. No event or announcement is too big or small.

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. Many email programs will try to resize the photos, but please send the original size.

LWML



▲ The members of the **Ebenezer, Leaf Valley**, LWML assembled 26 "blessing bags", which were distributed to the homeless during a UKANDU (as in, "you can do") mission trip. The bags in this case are socks filled with various necessities. UKANDU is a Christian organization in Chicago dedicated to helping youth and adults become the heart and hands of Christ to those in need around the world.

▶ In honor of the LWML's 80th anniversary, the LWML of **Bethlehem, Frazee**, hosted a cookie walk in mid May. The group baked three sets of "80" dozen cookies, which would be 240 dozen or 2,880 cookies. The proceeds supported Bethlehem youth to attend Lutheran Island Camp in Henning. Pictured are, from left, Joan Maertz, Lois Mae and Karlene Negen.



2023-2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Every year, the LWML Minnesota North District awards scholarships to district students enrolled at a Synod seminary or university and are preparing to become full-time LCMS church workers. For more information, visit lwmlmnn.org/scholarships.html.

Pictured are those who received scholarships for the current school year.



Jordan DeBoer
Master of Divinity
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne



Jacob Franck
Master of Divinity
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne



Mark Langton
Master of Divinity
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne



Sophia Greenfield
Elementary Education
Concordia University, St. Paul



Isabella Wolter
Elementary Education
Concordia University, Nebraska



Sarah Jeppesen
English, Education
Concordia University, St. Paul



Rocco Fritz
Director of Parish Music
Concordia University, Nebraska



Rebecca Pumphrey
Theology (Pre-Deaconess)
Concordia University, St. Paul

Counselor's Corner



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Getting ready!

When November begins, does your mind turn to getting ready for a Thanksgiving celebration? Or maybe now you begin to count down the shopping days until your Christmas celebration. As you see others going through the Christmas aisles at the store, does it inspire you to also “get ready”?

After a Sunday school, Sandy said to her mother: “Teacher told us that God puts people in this world so that they can get ready for heaven.” “That’s right,” mom said. Then Sandy asked: “Then why don’t we see anybody getting ready?”

Do you meet people that are so preoccupied with the demands of their world that they seem to have forgotten all about “getting ready?”

You know about the importance of this heavenly preparation. That is one reason why you are part of the LWML. Your mites are funding this message. Your lives are giving a witness of being prepared to meet the Savior and move into His heavenly home.

Psalm 90 says:

You sweep them away as with a flood; ... like grass ... in the morning it flourishes ... in the evening it fades and withers. So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. **PS. 90:5-6, 12**

Get ready! And display that readiness to remind others.

In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, Jesus teaches that the Bridegroom will suddenly arrive and “those who were ready went in with Him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut” (**MATT. 25:10**).

We prepare in daily devotions, by repentance and in prayer. On the Lord’s Day, in the receiving of His Word and Sacrament in the fellowship of His people, He prepares us. In the taking up of our cross to follow after Christ, in the kindness and care we show to “the least” among us, and in this daily living as His disciples, we are getting ready. Thanks be to God!

Rev. Matthew Vrudny • Park Region Pastoral Counselor