



/ MARCH 2024

# DISTRICT NEWS

## MINNESOTA NORTH



### WINTER FUN AT CAMP

There are lots of opportunities throughout the year to enjoy what Lutheran Island Camp in Henning has to offer. For example, this past January confirmation students from St. Paul's, Perham, and Faith Community, Zimmerman, attended a confirmation retreat. The students enjoyed a weekend full of learning, fellowship and broomball! Visit [islandcamp.org](https://islandcamp.org) to learn about other upcoming retreats — and the summer schedule — at Lutheran Island Camp!



### 'We welcome you in the name of the Lord!'

Immanuel, Parkers Prairie, welcomed several new members in early December. Among the new members, a father and son were baptized, five adults were confirmed and others joined by transfer and profession of faith. Pastor at left is Rev. Kirk Lee.



### 'Peace came to earth'

Trinity, Isle, Sunday school students (top photo) were joined by recent confirmands for the annual Christmas program. Carrying out the congregation's Advent theme, "Peace Came To Earth," the event featured speaking parts, action rhymes and special music, along with hymns sung by the children and congregation.

Sunday School Superintendent Laura Horsch led the group and was assisted by teachers Sharon Maunula, LeAnn Gregoire and Miriam Mueller, Trinity's music director.

Also at Trinity, volunteers (bottom photo) participated in the semi-annual Minnesota "Adopt-A-Highway" ditch clean-up, which enables groups or individuals to contribute to a cleaner environment as they pick up litter on both sides of an assigned road. The group enjoyed a lunch at the church before heading out for this community mission project.



From left, (front row) Owen Leach, Rhett Larson, Teagan Larson; (middle row) Allie Gallion, Jeremy Peterson, Hayden Leach, Cadence Mueller, Thaddeus Mueller; (back row) Abby Peterson, Abbie Gallion, Aria Mueller, Leila Gallion and Kenley Kohlgraf.



From left, Sharon Maunula, Kenley Kohlgraf, Dave Mueller, Cadence Mueller, Mike Dangers, Miriam Mueller, Dave Oslin, Aria Mueller, Rev. Mark Maunula and Thaddeus Mueller. (Not pictured are Sara, Jake and Cole Dangers and Judy Oslin.)

### 'As you did it to one of the least of these...'



So says our Lord in Matt. 25:40, commending His redeemed people for their love toward their neighbors.

Throughout November and December, the Afternoon Guild of Trinity, Bemidji, collected about 751 items including mittens, hats, socks and gloves, which were delivered to a local organization called Village of Hope, which distributes the items to people in need.

### Confessions study at CSP

Concordia University, St. Paul, will host "Confessio: A Retreat on the Lutheran Confessions" at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 20. **Rev. William Weedon**, former director of LCMS Worship, will serve as keynote speaker, focusing on his book *Thank, Praise, Serve and Obey: Recover the Joys of Piety*. This in-person event is free, and registration is required. Visit [one.csp.edu/confessio](http://one.csp.edu/confessio) to learn more and register.







**R**egistration is now open to volunteers who wish to participate in an LCMS Servant Event this year. Hosted by LCMS congregations and Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) across the country, LCMS Servant Events provide youth with opportunities to serve their communities, develop skills and relationships, and display God's mercy to their neighbors through service projects. Events will begin in 2024 as early as March and continue through August.

In a testimonial on the Servant Event website, the Rev. Michael Pottschmidt, former pastor of Trinity, Richmond, Va., writes, "Hosting an LCMS Servant Event makes ignoring or avoiding God's mission impossible. Congregation leaders and members must be intentional and deliberate about seeking local opportunities to proclaim and demonstrate the saving love of Jesus. And how invigorating it is for all involved to roll up their sleeves and join with fellow servants — youth and adults alike — in accomplishing this task. That enthusiasm for mission continues long after the Servant Event is over — those volunteers become leaders in finding ways to share their faith and serve others."

Servant Event leaders met at the LCMS International Center Nov. 13–15, 2023, to share ideas, receive training and

prepare to host their respective events. Among the events taking place this summer are:

- ▶ **"Forts and Sorts at Youth Haven Ranch,"** hosted by Messiah Lutheran Church in Holt, Mich.;
- ▶ **"Adventures in Colorado: Dirty Jobs Servant Event,"** hosted by Lutheran Valley Retreat in Florissant, Colo.; and
- ▶ **"Beholding God's Miracles in the High Country,"** hosted by Camp Linn Haven and Mountinside Lutheran Church in Linville, N.C.

**Lutheran Island Camp will hold "Planting the Fields" June 2–7 and "Building the Island" June 9–13.**

Many Servant Events challenge youth to step outside their comfort zones and get their hands dirty. As suggested by the name, the "Adventures in Colorado: Dirty Jobs Servant Event" will include trail building and maintenance at the retreat center, moving dirt and working on drainage around buildings, and even rebuilding a retaining wall. Volunteers will also have a chance to participate in challenging adventure options at the camp, such as rafting and rappelling.

Other events provide opportunities for youth to serve and connect with those in need. Volunteers at "Forts and

Sorts" will perform construction and maintenance to benefit underprivileged children at Youth Haven Ranch and may also have a chance to interact and share the Gospel with the campers. At the "Shepherding Sheep Volunteer Event" hosted by Camp Wartburg in Waterloo, Ill., volunteers will serve as companions for developmentally disabled children and adults during a five-day summer camp.

Along with the chance to serve, Servant Events provide an opportunity for youth to bond and grow in their faith through shared activities and Bible study. Youth will also learn from mentors and see the witness of ministry leaders and church workers in vocations that some of the youth may be called to some day as well.

"The goals for the youth at the servant event are to grow in their faith, experience their faith in action by working at Youth Haven Ranch, and build community and relationships with each other," says Jo Ellen Miskowski, host of the "Forts and Sorts" event. "Each year has been such a blessing for the youth, volunteers and staff. Our evaluations each year show that the youth participants enjoy the event. They often make comments regarding their growth in faith, relationships, learning new skills and what they can accomplish with the help of God."

"In the summer of 1989 I went on my first servant event," recalls the Rev. Steve Hayden, senior pastor of Lutheran Church of St. John, Quincy, Ill. "Entering my senior year, I was considering a future in pastoral ministry, so I thought a trip like this might be a good experience and a lot of fun. Little did I know the way it would transform my life. To any congregation considering getting a group together, or any individual who has always thought about participating in a Servant Event ... do it!"

*This article is reprinted from the February 2024 issue of LCMS Reporter and was written by Caitlin Magness.*



**For a schedule and descriptions of the 2024 LCMS Servant Events, and to register, visit [lcms-servant-events.org](https://lcms-servant-events.org).**

Counselor's Corner



**I**magine if there was no Good Friday and no Easter. Imagine life without the Gospel. For many people, even those we know, this is their reality. What would such a life be like for us? How would we live, think and be?

Without the Gospel we have only the Law, only demands, rules and a raging conscience that is devouring us, or which is caged and ignored. Without the Gospel there is no Jesus on the cross, no forgiveness of sin by His blood, no comfort in His Word. What is the result of such a void?

The answer is two-fold: pride or despair, a Pharisee or a Judas. Without the Gospel we are flung toward pride on the one hand, and despair on the other. We have to do something with our sins. If we cannot confess our sins and hear the promise of forgiveness, then we are to get rid of our sins in another way. Either we act like we have overcome sin, or we know that sin has overcome us. These are the only options. There is perhaps a third option: total indifference to sin, but this is really the worst form of pride.

Pride tries to handle sin by overcoming it, often by limiting the Law in some way to make it easier to keep. The path of despair is the result of the Law doing what it is meant to do — convict us of our sins. The Law shows us our sins; it always accuses us. But the Lord

intends that the Gospel would then come around to comfort us with the forgiveness of our sins. Without this comfort, despair is given free reign and despondency runs free. This is the way that Judas went.

While our pride seeks to overcome sin, despair results from being overcome by sin. The Lord intends neither. He does not leave us to handle sin and death with our own resources and strength. His solution for our sin is the death of Jesus, His suffering, His blood, His cross, and the resulting forgiveness and life. We take up the battle against sin not with our will or emotions, but with our Lord Jesus and His Word of forgiveness and life.

The Good News of the Gospel is centered on the work Christ accomplished on Good Friday and Easter. It is my earnest desire that the Lord would keep us both from presumptuous pride or despair of His promises, and keep us in the comfort of His Gospel. And may God open our lips to share His Law and Gospel with those under the delusion of pride or suffering under the cloud of despair; for those who are living without the Gospel. Amen.

**Rev. Reed Stockman**  
Lakeland Region Pastoral Counselor



A team from **St. John's, Ada**, recently participated in a Feed My Starving Children event in Fargo, N.D. The team was part of over 1,100 volunteers who packed nearly 475,000 meals in one two-hour shift. Those meals will feed 1,300 children for one year. Pictured are, from left, Danny Babolian, Hannah Brandt, Gus Brandt, MaryAnn Bell and Kathy Brandt. Not pictured are Melodie Hobbie and Edna Kazeck.