



/ AUGUST 2025

DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA NORTH



Blessed day in Grand Marais

On the afternoon of May 18, members of Life in Christ, Grand Marais, gathered with shovels —and joy — to break ground on a new church building that will serve the congregation and community now and for future generations.

Framed by birch trees and standing before a wooden cross, the group posed

for a commemorative photo as construction officially began on the site just off Highway 61. The new church will include a sanctuary, fellowship hall, kitchen, narthex and extra space for future growth.

“This isn’t just about a building, it’s about Christ and His church,” said Rev.

Jonathan Watt (pictured second from left), Life in Christ pastor. “We’re here to proclaim Jesus crucified and risen, and to serve the people of this community for generations to come.”

The project is fully funded through the generous support of members and friends of the congregation.

More details and updates are available at licgm.org/buildingplan.

Rev. Hayden Brown was ordained and installed as associate pastor of Zion, Alexandria, on June 21.

Pictured are, from left (bottom row) Revs. Matt Lorenz (Zion senior pastor), Scott Brown (pastor of St. James, Parkers Prairie, and Ebenezer, Alexandria; and Hayden’s father), Hayden Brown, Brady Finner, Ryan Pumphrey, Dane Compton; (top row) Kirk Lee, Jeff Ross, Jonathan Jahnke, Steve Meltzer, Noah Wehrspann and Dr. Steve Turner.



Welcome!

On Armed Forces Sunday, May 18, St. John's, Montevideo, recognized the nine new members who joined the congregational family in the last year. The recognition was followed with a potluck luncheon for both the new members and the military veterans of the congregation.

The food contributions included a welcoming cake and a fruit flag (blueberries for the stars and alternating strawberries and cheese rows for the stripes).



Pictured are, from left, Lorraine and Brad Rasmussen, Jon and JoAnn Croom, Richard Koopman, Rev. Kent Borglum, Gene and Pam Stengel, Anne and Michael Brown and Buddy, Michael's seeing-eye, 18-month-old lab.

Presenting the life of Christ in Alexandria

More than 1,000 people witnessed the reenactment of Christ's life at Zion, Alexandria, on April 13. The Passion Drama, last presented in its full form in 2016, was brought back for the community. The real story of Jesus' life came to fruition again when members decided that His life is such a pertinent event to share with the world.

Congregational members volunteered to make the dream of telling Jesus' story and its application into a reality. The volunteers were asked to organize, assemble the props, reenact the scenes, guide the guests who walked through the assembled scenes, cook for the volunteers involved and facilitate the technology to tell the Lord's story.

This event was a concentrated effort of uniting members together to tell the Good News of God's love for all people: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Pictured is the crucifixion scene.





LWML rallies at Good Shepherd

The Lutheran Women In Mission of the Alexandria Zone (Lakeland I Region) met for their Spring Rally on April 27 at Good Shepherd, Alexandria. The rally theme, "Put On The Full Armor Of God," was based on Ephesians 6. Sixty people attended the event.

Rev. Dr. Patrick Lovejoy (pastor of First Evangelical, Grand Rapids, and LWML Minnesota North District pastoral counselor) spoke on the topic "Unapologetically female: A biblical examination of what it means to be a woman."

Attendees collected an ingathering of more than 400 items for Someplace Safe, a nonprofit agency that provides support to those who have been victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and other crimes.



Trinity, Isle, presented its graduating high school seniors with quilts made by the congregation's quilting group. Pictured are from left, brothers Avery and Brock Tramm and Josiah Mueller.

Celebrate with Redeemer!

The congregation of Redeemer, Deer River, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Sept. 7. The congregation, led by Rev. Jim Anthony, will mark the occasion with a Divine Service beginning at 10:30 a.m. A picnic will follow the service.



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.

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.

Counselor's Corner



Are you listening?

By Rev. Reed Stockman

Lakeland Region Pastoral Counselor

A man went to his doctor and said, “I think my wife has a hearing problem. What do I do?” The doctor said, “Stand behind her about 15 feet away and ask her a question.” The man goes home and sees his wife in the kitchen with her back to him. He asks, “What’s for dinner?” No response. He moves 10 feet away and asks her again, “What’s for dinner?” No response. He moves five feet away and still has no response.

Finally, he gets right behind her and says, “What’s for dinner?” She whirls around and yells, “I told you four times, ‘Chicken.’” Many people have a listening problem, and it has nothing to do with their ears. A woman says, “My husband doesn’t listen to me.” A man complains, “My wife doesn’t listen to me.” A teenager complains, “My parents don’t listen to me.” It is a constant complaint.

The book of Proverbs mentions the importance of listening.

A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion. **PROVERBS 18:2**

When we listen with a sincere desire to know someone’s perspective, when we seek to understand the heart behind their ideas, beliefs, fears and aspirations, we are participating in a remarkable act of compassion. We show them they have value, we demonstrate our

concerns for them, and we acknowledge that they have something to offer us. And we draw a little closer to people when we have a better understanding of their thoughts and perspectives. But when we choose the fool’s path and “listen with the intent to reply,” we imply that their ideas, beliefs and feelings do not matter.

How often do we listen to our friends or family members with the intent to reply, with the drive to fix whatever is wrong, with the desire to think of a rebuttal to their words so we can win an argument as opposed to really listening to their words, their emotions, their hearts? I encourage you to take time to really listen to each other. If your spouse, relative or friend expresses fear or anxiety, do not just brush it off, saying, “Everything will be alright.” Listen to what they say and acknowledge whatever emotion they are feeling. Sometimes, saying these feelings and concerns aloud helps people feel better.

God’s word reminds us that Christ listens and Christ cares. At times, it may not always seem that way, but let me assure you that God cares and God knows our worries. You can talk to Him at any time and on any subject. He urges us to do this in His Word when He says, “Call upon me in the day of trouble” (Psalm 50:15). Christ cares so much that He went to the cross for us, and He continues to intercede on our behalf.



From left, Minnesota North district representatives Sue Milo, Cathy Tynnismaa, Deb Cermak, Linda Meyer and Kaylee Motschenbacher are pictured on the floor of the 41st Biennial LWML Convention, held June 26–29 in Omaha, Neb.