



DISTRICT NEWS

OKLAHOMA

Easter victory... sing it loud!

A master gardener

Perched on a branch of a large cedar tree in our yard, I would watch my neighbor work outside. He was always dressed for outdoor work — a wide brimmed straw hat, blue bib overalls and brown cloth work gloves.



Rev. Barrie Henke
District President

I had known Wilhelm Glockler my whole life, and watched him work his way toward 90 and beyond. This retired German farmer was always working in his yard — hoeing, chopping, digging, trimming. He was both hardworking and frugal.

I once asked him if he had staked a claim in an Oklahoma Land Run. “Nein,” he said. And in his heavy German brogue he said, “Why should I wreck my wagon and kill my horses when I could buy a good farm the next day for a dollar an acre?” It made sense to me.

Wilhelm, whom we called Bill, believed that it was a waste of ground to tend grass. So he planted his whole yard — yes, his *whole* yard — with flowers and vegetables. His yard was beautiful and well manicured. It amazed me to watch him take a handful of dried, dead-appearing seeds, sow them in the dry

ground, cover them with dirt and then wait patiently for the beauty as they grew and bloomed and bore abundant fruit. He was a master gardener.

The Master Gardener

As we celebrate Easter, I marvel at the amazing gardening technique of *the* Master Gardner — God! He took something dead, planted it for three days and it came forth radiant, alive and bearing eternal fruit! Wow! Now that is real gardening!

The women and men came to the garden near that mount called Calvary and were astonished to hear the message of life in the midst of death. The garden to which they came early on that Easter morning was a graveyard — a burial place for lifeless human bodies. Graveyards can seem like hopeless places — places marking losses for us, a final resting place, *the end!*

But this was not the case on that first Easter! Those who came found that dead seed had sprouted and was in full bloom! “He is not here! He is risen!” Martin Luther preferred to look at a cemetery not as a depository for the dead, but as a garden planted by God. The bodies are seeds being planted in God’s garden. Luther based this on

Jesus’ words:

“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat

falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.” — **John 12:23-24**

Luther encouraged Christians to view a graveyard as God’s garden, where the seeds of the saints are planted, awaiting the trumpet blast announcing the glorious return of Christ! Then those saintly seeds will rise from death to be ushered, both body and soul together, into everlasting life. It has been a tradition of mine to knock three times on the casket during the “farewells” in the commendation. I tie this to Luther once saying that when he rests in the grave, the next thing he hears will be the “rap, rap, rap” on his coffin by the archangel saying, “Dr. Luther, it’s time to get up!”

It’s all temporary

The victorious resurrection of Jesus declares a powerful truth from God’s Word: death is not final. Because of our risen Lord, we rejoice in the truth that there is nothing final about a body-filled casket, an ash-filled urn or a coffin-filled grave. These are only temporary stopovers on our way to everlasting life.

Several years ago, a congregational member died suddenly while vacationing on the East Coast. His wife had him cremated for easier transport back to Edmond. UPS delivered to the church a plain, brown cardboard box that was stamped on two sides and the top with these words: TEMPORARY CONTAINER. I pondered how I could cover that

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EASTER BLESSINGS
Saints of Oklahoma!

MITE BOX BLESSINGS

Beginning in the 1850s, women of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) established local auxiliaries to meet the needs of people. These were extraordinary women! They started to mend clothes for seminarians; equip hospitals; establish schools, convalescent and retirement homes; help at orphanages and residences with people with disabilities; gather clothing, furniture and food for indigents; and eventually branch into funding mission endeavors at home and abroad.

In the 1920s, women from LCMS churches coordinated their efforts by uniting in state and regional leagues. The first Lutheran Women's League (LWL) society was established at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Apache, under the direction of Ida Hrbacek on Jan. 17, 1923. This led to the movement and establishment of the first district, the Oklahoma District LWL, organized on Feb. 8, 1928 at Zion Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City. It took more than a decade before the LCMS approved the

establishment of a national Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML).

The first mite box was created as a vehicle for collecting funds. Those contributions have totaled more than \$100 million for mission work, supporting Christian outreach in 71 countries on five continents. The blessings of the LWML go far beyond the millions raised for missions. Their benefits can be seen in faith deepened through Bible studies and leadership training, in befriending career missionaries, in blankets and clothing gathered for the impoverished, in food shared with the hungry, in the friendships nurtured and above all, in the lives changed by sharing the love of Jesus Christ.

In honor of the LWML Oklahoma District's 90th anniversary, our members are invited to assemble a replica of the first Oklahoma District mite box. Convention attendees are encouraged to fill their 90th-anniversary mite box with coins, bills and checks, and then bring



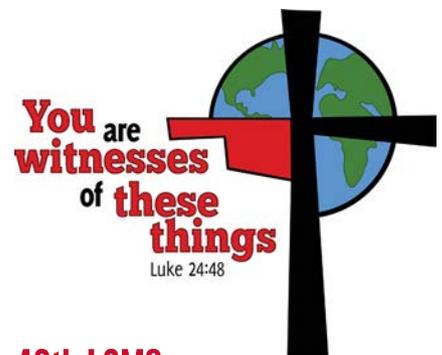
their mite boxes with them to the convention and donate the offerings during a special event. Convention is April 13-14 at Hilton Garden Inn in Lawton.

— Submitted by Diana Just, Oklahoma District LWML president



Family grows in Duncan

Recently received into membership at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Duncan, through profession of faith are Derick and Heloisa Lang; and Christina Lorenz and children, David, Haley, William and Mary Jane. Also pictured with the Rev. David Heitner are those who attended the Adult Inquirer's "God For Us" class — Samantha Wolff and her four children.



49th LCMS Oklahoma District Convention

April 20-21
 Hilton Garden Inn & Edmond Conference Center
 2833 Conference Drive (I-35 & Covell)
 Edmond, OK 73034

THEME:
 "You are witness of these things." (Luke 24:48)

All convention information is posted at the district website: okdistlcms.org



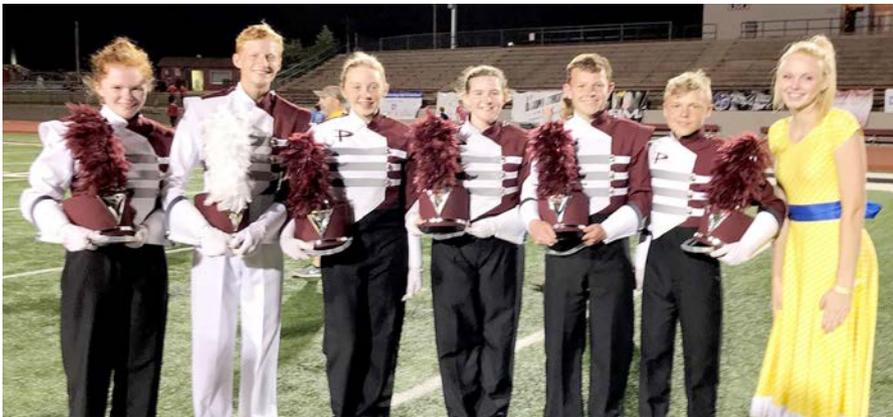
Program makes saving money fun

With an investment of just \$25 to open the Y.I. StewardAccount®, your young investor becomes a Y.I. Club member with special fun activities that grow with three different age levels.

Y.I. StewardAccount features:

- ▶ Minimum of \$25 to open account
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- ▶ Savings grow with the child, but are accessible
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- ▶ Debit card available at age 16
- ▶ Interest compounded and paid monthly
- ▶ Opportunity to make additional investments with checks or Y.I. Stamps

If you would like more information about LCEF's Young Investor savings account, contact Jeffrey Maltz, district vice-president, at 785-230-4112 or jeffrey.maltz@lcef.org; or go to lcef.org/young-investors-club.



Congratulations!

The Perry High School Band won its fourth consecutive state title at the Class 2A Oklahoma Bandmasters Association competition in Mustang in October. The band consists of members of Christ Lutheran Church. They are, from left, Habbie Colen, Will Calhoon, Kayley Wilda, Tali Stover, Mitchell Hartwig, Nate Karcher and Morgan Malget.



All State

Faith Armer (standing, third from left) a senior at Immanuel Lutheran Christian Academy (ILCA), Broken Arrow, is pictured with the Heartland Christian Athletic Association (HCAA) Class 2A all-state volleyball team last fall. Faith has attended ILCA since age 4 and has played volleyball since third grade. She will attend Concordia University Nebraska this fall and study to be a DCE.

Submitted by Nathan Armer, ILCA Board of Trustees president

MESSAGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

ugly box to make it more presentable in the service as it was set on a pedestal below the Christ Candle. Then it struck me: those two words were a whole Christian resurrection sermon!

No matter whether an expensive casket, a lovely urn, a leak-proof vault or a cardboard box may hold our mortal remains, they are all temporary containers because we shall rise again!

“Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imper-

ishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ‘O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” — **1 Cor. 15:51-57**

What an Easter victory song the Apostle Paul sang! May it be our song too! Sing it loud!

ANNIVERSARIES

We congratulate those in Oklahoma District congregations who are celebrating 50 years or more!

Broken Arrow, Immanuel
Glen and Loretta Herzberger
50 years, April 6

Edmond, Holy Trinity
Melvin and Caroline Schemm
58 years, April 24

El Reno, Trinity
Fred and Ruby Peterman
59 years, April 14

Enid, St Paul
Harlan and Linda Ragoss
57 years, April 8

Bud and Patricia Durheim
54 years, April 25

Norman, Trinity
Ron and Dona Lytle
65 years, April 5

Duane and Nancy Brosowske
56 years, April 9

Okarche, St. John's
Bobby and Violet Moeller
57 years, April 7

Oklahoma City, Messiah
Harl and Mary Dubben
53 years, April 17

Robert and Audrey Smith
56 years, April 21



El Reno, Trinity
Ray and Margaret Patrick
64 years, April 16



Ponca City, First
John and Nada Fetrow
69 years, April 30



Ponca City, First
Jack and Della Rein
62 years, April 5



Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer
Del and Jan Dreyer
55 years, April 20



Ponca City, First
Fred and Jane Miller
53 years, April 24



Ponca City, First
Bob and Jean Paulsen
62 years, April 21



Tulsa, Our Savior
Bev and Tom Bordner
51 years, April 1



Tulsa, Our Savior
Gene and Katie Duenow
56 years, April 9

BIRTHDAYS

We congratulate those who are celebrating 90 years or more!

Bartlesville, Redeemer
Ann Afdahl
91 years, April 3

Alice Gilbreath
97 years, April 8

Enid, St Paul
Helen Gilles
90 years, April 1

Roland Schroeder
90 years, April 15

Fairmont, Zion
Milton Eggers
93 years, April 10

Doris Holle
90 years, April 24

Oklahoma City, Messiah
Norma Schafer
91 years, April 6

Edgar Hoffmann
94 years, April 15

Ponca City, First
Carl Pierce
91 years, April 9

Belated

Bartlesville, Redeemer
Helen Gorrell
90 years, Feb. 11

Dottie Heinrich
91 years, March 31

John and Carla Cherry
55 years, March 23

Share your news with us

Deadlines:

> June-July issue, April 13

> August issue, June 15

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or

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