



# DISTRICT NEWS

## MINNESOTA SOUTH

Through my window

### Koinonia 2.0

One thing I love about our tradition within Christianity is our deep love of the Scriptures. We in the LCMS are committed to the wisdom and authority of the Bible.



**Rev. Dr. Dean Nadasdy**  
District President

With the psalmist we affirm:

“I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.” **Ps. 119:16**

The Word is as lofty as seeding our hope of everlasting life and as mundane as informing our decisions on trending social issues. It is a dynamic Word, working faith and dynamically shaping our life together. We see the Word as the truth about God, about us and about everyone — not a truth, but the truth. We are people of the Book.

As Christ unites us, the written Word creates a cherished concord among us, a oneness of belief and confession, nurtured by a deep love and respect for one another. This is no small treasure. It defines us and it has us talking theology, frankly, more than most denominations.



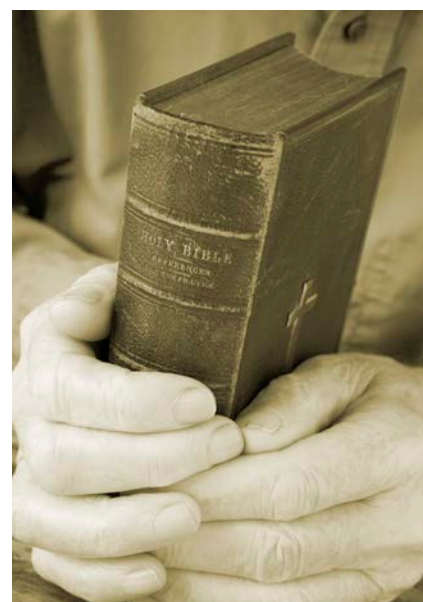
So on Saturday, Feb. 18, representatives of Minnesota South District congregations will gather in six locations to talk theology. We’re calling it Koinonia 2.0. *Koinonia* is a New Testament word describing the deep fellowship we have with God and one another. The Koinonia Project works toward greater concord in our confession and practice. The first round of Koinonia involved pastors meeting to discuss issues and practices calling for greater agreement among us.

Koinonia 2.0 will involve pastors, commissioned workers and lay people. Each congregation may send up to three representatives. At six locations around the district, a one-day colloquium will be held on one of the six chief parts of *Luther’s Small Catechism*: the Ten Commandments, the Creed, Holy Baptism, the Lord’s Prayer, the Lord’s Supper, and Confession and Forgiveness.

At each location a resource theologian will present a brief paper on one of the six chief parts, focusing on the importance of that chief part for the church and culture today. Then small groups will meet to respond to these questions:

- ▶ What do we confess together regarding this chief article of doctrine?
- ▶ What do we reject together?
- ▶ What aspect of this chief part do we need to discuss further?

On the basis of these discussions, our



six resource theologians will develop “A Statement of Agreement” on the six chief parts of the *Small Catechism*. That statement will in turn be formally read and discussed with a follow-up plenary session of all representatives at a single site on a Saturday after Easter. The date will be announced. During and after this event, the statement will be offered for signatures, study and conversation across our district.

If all this sounds a bit like Reformation-era convocations and diets, why not? It’s the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, for heaven’s sake! So think about setting aside 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 18, for a colloquium not far from where you live and worship. See your pastor for more details.

Let’s celebrate the concord we have as we worship and witness together in our time. After all these years, the Word still has its way with us! And we love it!

# POBLO reaching those 'FROM ALL NATIONS'

By Sandy Severson

POBLO Volunteer, Redeemer, Rochester

"All nations" is frequently referenced in the Bible. Some well-known verses that come to mind include:

- ▶ "For my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." **Is. 56:7 NIV**
- ▶ "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations." **Mark 13:10 NIV**
- ▶ "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." **Matt. 28:19-20**

I believe God's command to love "all nations" defines the essence of our ministry at the POBLO Friendship Center. I'm a POBLO volunteer who has the wonderful privilege to become acquainted with many POBLO participants. I teach POBLO classes because I want to share the love of Jesus with the people of all nations.

For me, loving those who walk through the doors of POBLO constitutes creating a personal bond. Many students in my class come from China and are working in research at the Mayo Clinic

for six to 12 months. In my Medical English class, I first relate to students through our mutual interest in research, discussing the merits of scientific papers in a type of journal club. We have fun interacting while working toward their goal of improved English proficiency.

Outside of class, I have invited my students to my church, my home for a meal and a Reformation concert by the Bach Society of Minnesota. It has been so rewarding to me to have POBLO students express the joy they feel after attending an Easter church service, or participate in singing and reading the Scripture lessons in their native language at the Pentecost service. This bonding with POBLO participants, however, extends much further than myself.

Building relationships is a united effort of many POBLO volunteers from our circuit of seven churches. For example, the same students that attend my Tuesday Medical English class may also attend the Monday Bible class taught by Katrina Meyer, and the Wednesday Advanced English Conversational class led by Molly Gommels. Time outside of the classroom is important in providing the memorable experiences that knit relationships together. Recent examples include harvesting gladiola bulbs at Meyer's farm or a field trip to an apple orchard organized by Molly.

God's love for the people of all nations is evident in the POBLO ministry.

See **POBLO**, Page 4

The daughter of a POBLO student is baptized by the Rev. Adam Koglin at Redeemer, Rochester. Her mother, looking on with their sponsors, was also baptized.



## Appeal for education underway

Approved as a feasibility study at the 2015 Minnesota South District Convention, the To All Generations appeal has launched to enhance the quality of Christian education throughout district congregations, schools and early-childhood centers, with a goal to raise \$3 million in gifts and pledges by the 2018 District Convention.

The three focus areas of the campaign are to:

- ▶ **STRENGTHEN** education ministries,

- ▶ **DEVELOP** unified marketing efforts, and
- ▶ **INCREASE** efforts toward parental choice in education.

With God's help, and the generosity of His people, we believe we will achieve our goal. Stay connected for more information as it's made available.

"One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts." **Ps. 145:4**



## Young recruits

The Ladies Guild of Holy Cross, Prior Lake, decided this year to invite girls in the congregation in grades 3-8 to a cookie baking/frosting night. The girls frosted cut outs and baked two additional kinds of cookies. All were sold the next day during the guild's Cookies for Christ bake sale. All the recipes came from the church cookbook. Tracy Eickhoff and Pat Harvey are pictured here working with the girls as they frost the cookies. This was the first time the ladies have shared their event with the girls and guild members think it turned out to be a great success!



## Quilts galore!

On Oct. 2, LWML Sunday, at St. John Lutheran Church, Woodbury, 25 quilts were dedicated by the Rev. Neldo Schmidt, who also serves as pastoral counselor for the LWML Minnesota South District St. Croix River Zone. The quilts were completed with help from Thrivent Action Team seed money and donated fabrics. The quilts were then sent to Lutheran World Relief, which will distribute them to those in need. What is God calling you to do to help His people?



## Christmas joy

Centennial Lutheran Church, Henderson, presented "Patchwork of Christmas" Dec. 9-10. Visitors enjoyed a beautiful display of Christmas quilts, decorations and projects crafted by local quilters and craftsmen, intermingled with nativity scenes and collections. Refreshments were served, "make-and-take" projects were completed and the guests were able to experience a little hands-on quilting.

## Mighty mites

*Following are excerpts from thank-you letters recently received:*

On behalf of the Concordia Theological Seminary community of students, I thank you for your recent contribution. Through this gift, the Lord bestows support on those He is preparing to serve His people in Word and Sacrament ministries throughout the world. Thanks be to God that He would bless His Church through you. Your direct support to

our Co-op helps us prepare pastors, deaconesses and missionaries who will proclaim the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in all the world. Again, thank you and we pray that God would continue to bless the labors of your hands and use you as His instrument whereby He blesses others.

**Rev. Dr. Gary W. Zieroth**  
Dean of Students, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

What a blessing and joy to call you a missionary and that certainly is what you are. Your kind gift of love is such a

special blessing and I can't thank you enough. This gift is being directed to one of our most important missionaries in Rosemont. Pastor Tom and Mary Aadland are special people and he is a great teacher at our seminary in Kenya. His support has been so short and your gift arrived at "just the right time!" It is a wonderful blessing to receive this gift when it is needed so badly. God bless you for this gift of love. May God continue to bless you and keep you each day.

**Gary W. Theis**  
Director of Mission Central,  
Mapleton, Iowa

# Stories from the mission field

## Campus missionaries in their own words

A student asked to interview me for a class photo project that's similar to "Humans of New York." The student said I was who they picked because I wasn't someone they really knew. I was asked to share some things about myself and what I do, and the student would find a story from what I offered to go with my photo.

I was asked about what I actually do. I shared that I spend a lot of time on campus, go to lots of events, games and concerts, and have lots of conversations. When asked why that was important, I got to share my philosophy of ministry in a nutshell.

Love shows up. I can't get to know you if I don't show up where you are. I can't share Jesus' love with you if I don't



know you. So I show up and invite others as well.

The student was intrigued. I got to continue by saying it wasn't my idea. Jesus did it first by showing up to earth, entering our mess and flesh, dying and rising, so that we can always be together. The response was "wow, that got deep." I have a feeling we'll be having more conversations.

**DCE Shelly Schwalm**  
Concordia University, St. Paul

During the Feed My Starving Children event, I began talking to a student who happened to be from the Bahamas. I was asking her how she was enjoying her time and she explained she actually did not like it and she felt very alone.

I began to share my own journey of moving to Mankato and tried to explain how it can at first be lonely. I asked her if she wanted to get coffee at some point

and she said yes. Her and I now communicate regularly and have met, and I have been able to encourage her.

**Sarah Mikul**  
Campus Evangelist, Hosanna, Mankato

Through October, I met up with several students. Pray for a Chinese student who counts philosophy as his religion, but is open to learning more about Jesus. Pray for him and the other Chinese students I am getting to know, that God would open doors to share the Gospel and that the Holy Spirit would put faith in their hearts.

Pray for a Russian family who is looking for good housing as the weather turns colder and colder, and pray that as they attend our Wednesday Bible studies God may strengthen their faith in Him. Pray also for the American students we and our students invite to University Lutheran Chapel (ULC).

**Rebecca Schaff**  
Campus Evangelist, ULC, Minneapolis

## POBLO (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

While I was preparing for class and learning how to pronounce certain medical terms, the Holy Spirit was quietly working in the background. Through the biblical teaching and witnessing of believers, POBLO participants were being convinced that Jesus was their Savior. The Holy Spirit was using our interactions and imperfect acts of kindness to lead people to the awesome love of God and ultimately to faith in Jesus.

And so it was, on Oct. 4, two of my students asked me how they could become a Christian. After meeting with the Rev. Adam Koglin, senior pastor, Redeemer, Rochester, three baptisms, which included an 11-year-old daughter of a POBLO student, were performed on Nov. 12 at Redeemer. Baptismal sponsors were POBLO teachers Meyer, Gommels and myself.

I have been blessed and honored to be a part of these baptisms. I have felt the

power of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of those recently baptized. In my own life, the Spirit's power is undeniable and has made me fearfully amazed. Together with my new sisters in Christ, I thank God for the wonderful mercy and grace He has shown to the people of all nations.

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Photos sent by email should be in high resolution, at least 300 dpi.