



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA SOUTH

Stories from the mission field

Missionaries in their own words

A few weeks ago I introduced myself to a new family that had come for church — parents and their two children. I asked if they were related to a large family that had a gathering that weekend. They said no and introduced themselves, saying they were looking for a new church.

I asked a little about their story. They all started to get tears in their eyes. The church they left was close to closing. They told a story of a broken congregation that was slowly crumbling apart. The husband

looked at me and said, “We’ve missed being filled up like this in worship.” It was both heartbreaking and wonderful.

It’s amazing to be used by God, but it’s always heartbreaking to hear of churches falling apart and closing. While God is doing new things through church plants like ours, for me, it was a reminder to be in prayer for those congregations that are facing closure or wondering how to make ends meet.”



— **Rev. Jon Kuehne**
Woodbury Lutheran Church, Liberty Ridge campus pastor



I have been engaging in more spiritual discussions with one Indian student. She was born a Muslim and is attending a Unitarian church.

She has been suffering from chronic fibromyalgia and it is affecting her to a point where she is willing to mock God for it, unless she understands why He is allowing her to go through that chronic pain. She is in a critical stage of doubt about God’s love and mercy; she’s agnostic. Pray that the Holy Spirit guides our conversations.”

— **Nader Alaraj**
People of the Book Lutheran Outreach (POBLO)



LCMS/Erin M. Lunsford

PLEASE PRAY for all the students who are home for the summer but preparing to travel this month to return for school. Pray for all of the campus ministries getting ready to receive them, that they may have the opportunity to witness to these students and bring them into the Church.

— **Rebecca Wagner**, an LCMS national missionary, shown here talking with Juncheng, a Chinese student studying philosophy, last February at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Wagner serves at University Lutheran Chapel and focuses on outreach to international students.

Celebrating To All Generations: The Blessings of Christian Education

In 2015, our district in convention approved a resolution that began an effort to enhance the quality of our Christian education, both in the parish and in schools, through a fundraising appeal. This became known as **To All Generations**.

In Ps.145:4, we find these meaningful words:

“One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.”

And so it is that in our churches and schools, and in our homes, the faith that professes Jesus Christ as Lord has been passed down from generation to generation.

Since beginning this To All Generations appeal, our leadership team and volunteers have conducted a feasibility study, met with individual donors, and held area meetings with leaders from across the district. We have seen firsthand the generosity of God’s people coming together to enhance the teaching mission of our church. And now, we take a moment to celebrate all that has been accomplished with To All Generations.

The hard work and loving sacrifices of the volunteers and donors are just starting to bless education ministries across the district. To All Generations grants are empowering education ministries to do something new. They are improving and expanding programs, telling their communities about the great education, and supporting the start of new ministries. To All Generations is also encouraging a stronger spirit of collaboration between education ministries as they explore combined grant request efforts.

In December 2017, the first three To All Generations grants were approved and funded:



- ▶ **Shepherd of the Grove, Maple Grove** received a grant to fund a study to determine if it is feasible to start a Lutheran high school in the North Western Suburbs.
- ▶ **Hope Lutheran High School, Winona; St. Martin’s Lutheran School, Winona; and Immanuel Lutheran School-Silo, Lewiston**, are collaborating to advertise their education ministries through a variety of local and online media.
- ▶ **Kingdom Kids Learning Center, Ham Lake**, received a grant to market this new center to a community that is increasingly unchurched

and has relatively few Christian early childhood options.

Some of the grants awaiting the next round of funding include such exciting projects as:

- ▶ A group of 14 elementary schools are joining together to purchase and use cutting-edge curriculum mapping services, enabling these small schools to collaborate together as if they were one large school in developing academic curriculum within the context of our Lutheran ethos.
- ▶ Seed money for the Northwest suburb high school new start to help begin fundraising efforts and build momentum and support in the community.
- ▶ At least four Carver County schools are joining together to purchase an array of shared equipment intended to encourage, build and promote physical fitness and the wellness of students.

To All Generations is truly sparking new energy and quality programs for our education ministries. We praise God for blessing this effort for generations to come into eternity.



LCMS/Erik W. Lunsford

Hunde's story



By Rev. Ben Griffin
Executive Director, LINC Twin Cities

Bible translation is challenging in some African cultures because there are no words for certain concepts, like snow. A literal translation of Is. 1:18 into the Bassa language would be, “Your sins were red as scarlet, now they are as white as ice shavings!”

Hunde is not a Bassa speaker, but his experience with snow was just as limited. As a young Ethiopian man flying into America for the first time, he could not figure out why the ground below was covered in ash.

He had won the visa lottery and hopped a plane to Minnesota as quickly as he could. He did not speak English well and had no idea where he would go once he got here. He just arrived, completely on faith.

Maybe you are wondering, “Why, of all places, did he come to Minnesota?” Hundé’s answer is the same as many others: the reputation in Ethiopia is that “Minnesota weather is cold but the people are warm.” Hundé found that initial bit of warmth in an unlikely place, but it would later turn very cold.

Once landing at the airport and with no place to go, Hundé thought he might have to live there until he figured something out. Eventually he found someone working at the airport who spoke his native language. This led to a temporary place to stay.

This man was a devout Muslim and Hundé was (and is) a devoted Christian and follower of Jesus. These differences quickly became apparent. Hundé, much like Daniel in the Bible, prayed boldly and regularly every day. He was told by his Muslim host that he was not allowed to pray Christian prayers in his house. Hundé responded to him, “You eat bread to live physically. I pray to live spiritually. I cannot stop praying.”

The hostility escalated when the sister of Hundé’s host took a knife and multiple times tried to slit his throat. Hundé prayed, she fumed, but she was physically held back by something supernatural. He knows this because she confessed it to him.

“MINNESOTA
WEATHER IS
COLD, BUT
THE PEOPLE
ARE WARM.”

Hunde, a courageous Christian, shown here speaking during an Oromo service at Emmaus Lutheran Church in St. Paul. The Oromo people are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia and represent about 35 percent of the population, which is nearly 110 million people. The Oromo Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society (OELMS) is in partnership with LINC Twin Cities, which has helped start more than 20 churches in the last five years.

God had His hand on Hundé during his first days here and continues to bless him in many ways. Today Hundé is no longer alone. We are honored at LINC Twin Cities to be a part of the family that is walking with him.

We are helping Hundé begin his formal seminary training and praying about where in the Twin Cities God is calling him to lead a church. He continues to pray steadfastly and live every moment of his life by faith. He, like many of our local mission leaders, works full-time and gives every moment of his life to the pursuit of following Jesus.

We are actively raising funds right now to offset the cost of the seminary. Please consider how God may be calling you to help.

When you support LINC Twin Cities, you are investing in the transformation of our community with the Gospel. Our vision is big and so are our needs to accomplish all of it. Thank you for your partnership in this great work!

Thank you

...For supporting your zone Young Woman Representatives this year at the 2018 district convention. We enjoyed getting to know the fabulous young women in our district who have a love for the Lord and desire to do his work through LWML.

We worked hard to encourage the women to meet people in our organization, have fun and learn about the LWML. We enjoyed the “Coffee Shop Grace” devotion that was presented Saturday morning.

And we loved including our YWRs and all attendees in a “selfie challenge.” Our YWRs needed to take a selfie with 11 different people in under 48 hours. They passed out purple beads to those who took a selfie with them. A few of our BOD members had a lot of purple beads ... consider yourself blessed if you received one!

Tracy Eickhoff and Kelly LaVoie
Committee on Young Women Co-Chairs



Helping students in their **'WITNESS'**

Registration is open for "Witness," the 2019 National LCMS Campus Ministry Conference, set for Jan. 2-5 at Purdue University Fort Wayne and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Attendees will gain a familiarity with the *Every One His Witness*® (E1HW) evangelism program, with sectionals exploring some of the contexts college students may encounter, including witnessing to adherents of various world religions, atheists, agnostics, the dechurched, those with depression, social justice advocates and promoters of scientism.

Registration is \$250 per person and covers all aspects of the conference and non-free-time activities, including breakfast, lunch and supper on Jan. 3 and 4 and three nights at the conference hotel Jan. 2-4 (based on quad occupancy).

As with previous LCMS U conferences, tiered rates are provided at an additional cost for those who would prefer other occupancy arrangements.

Conference attendees sing at "Liberty," the 2017 National LCMS Campus Ministry Conference at the University of Maryland in College Park, Md.



For more information or to register, go to lcms.org/events/witness.

Please pray...



for these missions and ministries in your personal and corporate prayers, that their efforts to reach new people with the Gospel would prove fruitful.

Concordia University, St. Paul, Campus Ministry:

Rev. Tom Gundermann and DCE Shelly Schwalm

Family of Christ Lutheran Church (Rochester)

Rev. Jeff Niederstadt

Hosanna Highland Lutheran Church Campus Ministry (Mankato)

Rev. Darren Scuggs and Sarah Bohrer

LINC-Twin Cities

Rev. Ben Griffin and Rev. Demelash Yoseph

POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach)

Nader and Georgette Alaraj, Bloomington John and Maryam Gayed, Rochester

ReDO (Church/Fitness Center, Shepherd of the Valley, Hastings)

Rev. Chad Kirchoff

Remedy Church (New Church Incubator Plant #1, Oakdale)

Rev. Andy Audette

University Lutheran Chapel Campus Ministry (University of Minnesota)

Rev. David Kind and Rebecca Wagner

UpWorks Christian Community Development (St. Paul)

DCO Sue Hewitt

Woodbury Lutheran Church (Liberty Ridge)

Rev. Jon Kuehne

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2019 LCMS Youth Gathering

Local Volunteer Applications Open!

Learn more and apply at
lmsgathering.com/gathering-volunteers/

