



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA SOUTH

TALKING POINTS WITH PASTOR

Caring for souls



“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

— Phil. 1:3-6

Dear fellow redeemed of the Minnesota South District,

I thank God for each of you, especially for your faith in Jesus and for the partnership that we share in the Gospel. I count it a joy to serve you and I look forward to our work together here in the Minnesota South District of our beloved LCMS.

I realize I'm a bit late with this, my first *Lutheran Witness* article to you all. But I suppose that's not all that unusual for a new guy who has been drinking from a fire hose and figuring everything out, including new deadlines and dance moves. (Well, not technically dance moves, but I'm finding the district office keeps me hopping, so I'm trying to look classy about it.)

In any case, for those who do not know me, I am the new president of the Minnesota South District. I was elected on June 22 but did not take office until Sept. 1. Ever since then, I have been joyfully, if feverishly, learning the ropes of my new position.

I'm a Gen Xer who follows in the footsteps of President Nadasdy, as an admirer of his wonderful service to our district and as one of his former seminary students. (He taught me homiletics—the art and joy of preaching.) I hope to carry forward the great care and love he

has for our district, while at the same time developing my own voice and pastoral leadership along the way.

Prior to this, my 15 years of ministry have all been in the parish (both congregations I



Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford

District President

served included pre-K to eighth-grade schools). I love being a pastor and under-shepherd of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving care to the precious souls of the people and communities I serve. So I'm adjusting to my new administrative role, though I do hope to remain a pastor and act pastorally to our pastors and their families.

The district president is the answer, at least in part, to the question: “Who is the pastor to the pastors?” True, I must carry out ecclesiastical supervision along the way, as well as provide organizational leadership to our district, but that will not stop me from ensuring that our pastors have a pastor to care for their souls even as they care for yours.

Therefore, I want to bring my pastoral passion for the care of souls to my ecclesiastical tasks as district president. I have been blessed to serve in multiple other

capacities along the way (besides senior pastor) that I believe will enhance my leadership and care for all of you and our district as a whole. In short, I count it an honor and a joy to serve and lead this wonderful district

My first vocation, however, is husband and

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Pastor to serve dual parish, and as missionary

Rev. Gemechu Olana was installed as pastor of Holy Cross, Austin, and Our Savior, Brownsdale, on Oct. 21. With district support, he will also serve as a missionary to the east side of Austin.

Pictured are, from left (front row) Revs. Ben Griffin, Demelash Yoseph, Peter Haugen, Olana, Larry LaDassor, Jesse Krusemark, James Groleau, Matthew Lehman; (back row) Robert Stohlmann, Bob Bailey, Bill Natzke, Dr. William Utech, Dr. Lucas Woodford, John Schleicher, Loel Wessel and Ron Prigge.

TALKING POINTS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

father. My bride Becca and our six precious children (ages 1 to 14) have been real troopers during this time of transition and getting moved into a new home. Now that we're settled, I do hope to begin serving (on a limited basis) as an assistant pastor in some capacity at the congregation where my family finally lands. This way I can ensure I continue pastoral service in the parish, but even more, that I am with my family a few Sundays a month when my busy schedule might otherwise pull me away.

I believe it is crucial for the church's mission in our chaotic culture that Christians model and teach faithful marriage and family life to each other and a watching world. I believe this challenge certainly includes, and starts with, clergy families. Thus, I don't think my vocation as husband and father conflicts with my calling as a pastor but will, I believe, only

enhance it. I hope to demonstrate this conviction in my approach to serving as your district president. With the able support of my district staff, vice-presidents and circuit visitors stepping in at appropriate places, I'm looking forward to a wonderful partnership of serving in this district while raising my family.

Overall, I am excited as I look ahead to the next three years. I rejoice in our partnership in the Gospel and pray

the Lord Jesus sends His Holy Spirit to comfort you and lead you in the joy of the Gospel and in the confidence of giving witness to the kingdom of God.

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

— Eph. 3:20-21

Congregation mission receipts

For the period ending Oct. 31, 2018

Actual receipts	\$236,521
Budget receipts	\$200,000
Over (under) amount	\$36,521

Year-to-date receipts

Actual receipts	\$1,704,542
Budget receipts	\$2,000,000
Over (under) anticipated amount	\$(295,458)

Use of mission receipts (YTD-year to date)

50% remitted to Synod (YTD)	\$646,598
100% remitted to Synod (YTD)	\$64,809
50% for district operations (YTD)	\$646,598
100% for district operations (YTD)	\$346,537
Total receipts	\$1,704,542

Mission receipts—2018 vs. 2017

Mission receipts — YTD 2018	\$1,704,542
Mission receipts — YTD 2017	\$1,785,020
Over (under) last year	\$(80,478)

2018 congregational receipts budgeted at \$2,400,000

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September 2018

New investments	\$1,303,565
Withdrawals	\$1,441,435
Net increase (decrease)	\$(137,870)

Year-to-date July 1–Sept. 30, 2018

New investments	\$3,815,045
Withdrawals	\$4,437,038
Net increase (decrease)	\$(621,993)

Imagine the impact

On Oct. 6, Deb Vinkemeier, LWML Minnesota South District president, and Carol Hubert, VP of Gospel Outreach, were honored guests at the 20th anniversary celebration gala of The Dwelling Place, held at the Earle Brown Heritage Center Carriage Hall in Brooklyn Center.

More than 700 guests attended the event, themed “The Walk of Impact.” A silent auction, dinner and program included ministry updates provided by Linda Wiza, executive director of The Dwelling Place. The impact of the evening were the life stories of two brave women who had experienced generational domestic abuse. They had grown up experiencing violent behavior or sexual abuse from a father figure and later from a spouse.

The women escaped with their children to the safety and love of The Dwelling



From left, Deb Vinkemeier, Linda Wiza and Carol Hubert.

Place. They witnessed to our Lord on the healing transformation that takes place with spiritual counseling, healing time and hope for the future that they gained from their stay at The Dwelling Place.

The Dwelling Place is one our district mission grants for the 2018-20 biennium.

President visits Fort Wayne seminary

Deb Vinkemeier recently visited Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. (CTSFW). Along with five other district presidents, she was present for “Donation Day” and brought greetings to the seminarians from LWML Minnesota South District during chapel.

She was able to meet with two of the five seminarians from the Minnesota South District. Cory Kroonblawd stopped for a quick visit with President Deb before running off to class. Cory is the son of Rev. James Kroonblawd, pastor of Trinity Lone Oak Lutheran Church, Eagan. Cory is in his second year of studies, and is hoping that for his vicarage next year, he will be placed with a Minnesota South District congregation. Cory and his wife, Tori, are expecting their first child soon.

The four other Minnesota South District students attending CTSFW are John Dolde, Joshua Dub, Jordan Peiser and Tanner Post.

During a luncheon with the Fort Wayne auxiliary women, wives of the seminarians — along with children grinning from ear to ear, — put on a fashion show with clothing they received from the Clothing Co-op. Paul Gaschler, Student Association president, said the students and their families are very thankful for the prayers and support from LWML. This helps tremendously to ease their financial burden while preparing for ministry. President Deb had the privilege of taking a tour of the Food and Clothing Co-op, and to see firsthand what is available for the students.

Deb also got to visit with Rev. Dr. Gary Zieroth, former LWML Minnesota South District pastoral counselor, who was the keynote speaker. He now serves as assistant professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, dean of students and director of Vicarage and Internship at CTSFW.



Zone gathers for service

The Southwest Suburban Zone hosted a “Saved to Serve” event Sept. 29 at Mount Hope Lutheran Church, Bloomington. The ladies tied 15 fleece blankets for Phil’s Friends, which was also the recipient of a \$150 gift. The blankets will be distributed to cancer patients to give them a warm hug while they undergo chemotherapy. The group also assembled Witness bracelets for MOST (Mission Opportunities Short Term) and contributed \$150 for the ministry. The ladies enjoyed working together to complete these two projects and spending time with each other. Special thanks to Thrivent Financial as these projects were funded through the Action Team program.

New pastor in Holland

On Sept. 9, Rev. David Petrich was installed as pastor of St. James Lutheran Church, Holland. Attending this installation were, from left Revs. Shawn Ethridge, Cliff Adair, J.J. Stefanic, Gary Klatt, Petrich, Dennis Brech, Harold Storm, Robert Moeller and Evan Schiller.



Doctor grateful for support

This note comes from a recent POBLO (People of the Book Lutheran Outreach) newsletter and was written by Aysegul Atasoy Zeybek, Ph.D. POBLO is supported by district missions dollars.

I would like to express my appreciation for our mentors. I am happy to be a learner in medical English class. As a doctor, at the beginning, I felt nervous and was afraid of communicating with other doctors. Academic speaking in medical environments is a very challenging task compared to professional writing or reading skills.

One of the biggest reasons to start medical English class is to be able to communicate successfully and efficiently with my colleagues. This class has provided guidance on developing both a strong understanding of scientific vocabularies and accent modification for my professional speaking skills. I have learned how to say medical terms and received valuable knowledge from different fields of medicine.

Giving an oral presentation is already difficult to do, even in your native language. It could be stressful and even more daunting if you are making the presentation in English as a non-native speaker. One of the scariest parts of a presentation is to not be understood by the audience because of the accent. Making a presentation in this class makes me more comfortable and it provides me fluency during speaking. It is also kind of a pre-practice for

international conferences, medical meetings and seminars. I think one of the most significant aims of this class is to improve my presentation skills and techniques, which also augment my self-confidence during speaking.

There are several other reasons that I have attended medical English class.

One of the reasons to begin this class is to accomplish culture shock that shows one of the most complex transitions I faced in my life. When I first came to Rochester, my daily routine, culture

and the attitudes of people around me were no longer familiar. Although living and working abroad and experiencing a different culture is an adventure and a challenge — and most probably the most exciting time of my life — moving to a new country isn't exactly the same as moving down the street. I have to become independent and adjust to this new culture. One of the best things that I have done is taking the class that has provided me help in adapting to a new culture.

Furthermore, meeting new people from different cultures has also provided an excellent opportunity to become a part of the community. In addition to that, I have felt more immersed myself in the local culture by attending events such

as a potluck meal, movie day and a concert, which are organized by POBLO.

I am so very grateful to my medical English class mentor, Mrs. Sandy, for taking such great care of me, showing me her incredibly interesting culture and her way of thinking. I also would like to thank each of the people who give support to POBLO.



Send submissions for the district supplement to:

- ▶ communications@mnsdistrict.org
- ▶ 14301 Grand Ave.
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Photos sent by email should be in high resolution, at least 300 dpi.



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