



# DISTRICT NEWS

## MINNESOTA SOUTH



cannot do it on your own. You have to be reborn, but not by your choice. Not by your own will. Not by your own reason or strength. You are reborn by the Helper — “The Spirit of Truth.”

For this reason, the explanation of the Third Article in the *Small Catechism* states very clearly that faith is the work of the Holy Spirit:

“I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.”

**“I cannot by my own reason or strength...”** That phrase follows us around throughout all of our lives. It begins at birth and keeps on going. A baby has no reason and has little strength. My toddler (Titus) and four-year-old (Soteria) remind me, as did their four older siblings, that children do grow in strength and do develop reason, but that reason is very often irrational and lost in tantrums. Yet, if we are being honest, such tantrums and irrationality are not limited to the children in our homes. Whether adult or child, our fallen and sinful natures make each one of us prone to sin by tantrums and irrationality.

# ‘Not by your own reason or strength’



**Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford**  
District President

Jesus promised the disciples a “helper.” In fact He promises the Helper — “the Spirit of Truth” — who would be with them “forever” (John 14:16-17). He knew they were not going to be able to do it alone. Not by their own reason. Not by their own strength. They would need a helper.

This is how life starts for every one of us. You were born into this world absolutely helpless. No strength to move around. No ability to feed yourself. No way to rationally communicate. No reason. No understanding. All you could do is coo, cry and make a dirty diaper. You were totally dependent on your parents for life. Not by your own reason or strength could you survive.

It is the same in our spiritual lives. We are completely dependent on the Lord for spiritual birth and spiritual life. Like the disciples, you

**“The Helper – the Spirit of Truth – gives you Jesus, who by divine reason and strength died and rose for you.**

**“I cannot by my own reason or strength...”** Yes, that phrase follows us throughout all of life. In fact, Scripture declares that you were dead in your trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1). When you are dead, you are dead! You can’t

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## Multiethnic congregation forms

Trinity of Lake Johanna, Arden Hills, and Hmong congregation Neej Tshiab Lutheran Church, Robbinsdale, on April 14 celebrated unifying into one congregation as Gathering Place Lutheran Ministries. The merging is a culmination of the late Rev. David Maki's vision for housing many ethnicities and ministries under one church roof. Praise and thanks to God for this new multiethnic congregation. From left, Revs. Dr. Peter Meier, Alan Braun, Johnny Vang, Thomas Evans, Yia Lor, Yia Vang and Robert Schulze.

## St. Peter welcomes Rev. Weber



Rev. Christopher Weber was installed as pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church, St. Paul, on April 7.

**Top:** Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, district president, installs Weber. **Right:** the congregation warmly welcomed and got to know Weber (at right) with a lunch after the service.



## TALKING POINTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

bring yourself back to life. And when you are a lost and condemned sinner, you are a lost and condemned sinner! You can't change that on your own, certainly not by your own reason or strength.

But this is why you are called by the Gospel. For where the Gospel is, there the Holy Spirit is at work. He goes into your ear holes and into your heart. God's Word is the living voice of the Gospel, not a dead word of some old, dusty book.

In fact, through the Gospel, the Holy Spirit goes into water to wash you clean. The Scriptures say that when you are baptized, you are washed (Titus 3:5). They say that when you are baptized, your sins are forgiven (Acts 22:16). They say that when you are baptized, you are

given the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38) who works saving faith in you (1 Cor. 12:3). Not by your own reason or strength can you believe.

Baptism is God's gift of grace. It's His gift of the Holy Spirit. You don't earn it, win it, achieve it or give it to yourself. And it's certainly not a work you do. Baptism is a divine gift of God's grace that wraps you in His love and leads you forward in faith. In fact, so profound is this gift that it moved the Apostle Peter to declare "Baptism now saves you!" (1 Peter 3:21).

Not by your own reason or strength can you have your sins taken away. Not by your own reason or strength can you be saved. And not by your own reason or strength can you raise your dead body back to life. The Helper — the Spirit of Truth — gives you Jesus, who by divine reason and strength died and rose for you. Jesus, who by divine love and

compassion makes you His redeemed disciples. Jesus, who by His powerful Word tells you of the Father's love and gives you hope to live in and hope to share with others. Therefore, rest not on your own reason or strength, but upon Christ who gives you strength (Phil. 4:13).

## Magazine returning

The district quarterly *Engaged in Mission* magazine will return this fall with more stories about God's people intentionally engaged in loving God, others and our Lutheran theology to make disciples of all nations in the district and beyond. Watch for it online and in the weekly *eNews*.

To receive a paper copy of the magazine, contact [communications@mns-district.org](mailto:communications@mns-district.org). Also, story ideas are always welcome.

## Meet our YWRs

Hello, I'm **Melissa Adelsen** and I had the privilege of being the Young Woman Representative (YWR) for my zone at last year's district convention and learned so much about how LWML works and what the LWML supports. I was lovingly encouraged by my fellow LWML society to apply for the national YWR position. Praise be to God, I was selected with Molly to represent the Minnesota South District.



I am really looking forward to attending the national convention and meeting so many other like-minded LWMLers. I am also very excited to see what missions will be supported through this convention. I cannot wait to attend the 2019 LWML convention in Mobile Ala. Thanks be to God for this privilege!

Hello! I'm **Molly Adelsen** and was lovingly encouraged by my society (and by President Deb) to apply for the YWR position — and I feel incredibly humbled to have been chosen along-



side Melissa to serve in this capacity. I've already learned much from serving on the district Gospel Outreach Committee, and I look forward to the new opportunities this role will bring. Finding faithful ways to support the spread of the Gospel is vital for men *and* women, and I'm grateful for these "good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

In Alabama, I'm looking forward to getting to know Melissa, learning more of God's Word and hearing many stories of how Christ's free gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation are impacting the lives of people I haven't even met yet!



## Helping women choose life

LWML members of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, welcomed Judy Hagen, director of Birthright of Hutchinson, at its March meeting. Hagen (standing at left) spoke about the organization's goals and work in helping women in choosing life for their unborn children. Hagen was also presented with baby and toddler supplies that the group had collected since January as part of its Human Care project. Hagen was overwhelmed at the generosity as the ladies also contributed money from their March mission project to Birthright of Hutchinson, which serves as a pregnancy crisis center. To God be the Glory!



## Zone helps The Dwelling Place

On April 6 at St. John's, Hammond, 30 people, including three men of the Lake Pepin Zone, were blessed to hear about the wonderful work God is doing at The Dwelling Place in St. Paul — an LWML district grant recipient.

Monica Groves, Mission Advancement director, shared with attendees how The Dwelling Place provides long-term healing and hope to victims of domestic abuse through supportive services, and a safe place to call home.

Monica said numerous times that this

was her chance "to brag about what our God has done." The attendees showed Jesus' love for The Dwelling Place with Gifts From The Heart, including toilet paper, diapers, laundry soap, softener sheets and paper towels.

Food and toilet paper were also given to the Zumbro Valley Food Shelf.

**IN PHOTO:** The Dwelling Place received the banner/baby quilt that Linda Zabel, zone treasurer, made for the 2018 district convention. From left, Zabel and Groves.

# DISTRICT NEWS



## HOLY WEEK IN PICTURES

The annual combined Hmong and Anglo Easter service gives a small glimpse of how heaven will look with people from all nations at King of Kings Lutheran Church, Roseville. — *Photo by May Lee*



Students in kindergarten through second grade reenact Jesus' triumphal entry in Jerusalem at Trinity Lutheran School, Morristown. — *Photo by Juanita Krueger*

A double rainbow appeared over St. John's Lutheran Church, Cedar Mills. — *Photo by Andrea Markworth*



## What a night!

The 20th annual OH! What a KNIGHT! Dinner Auction was held at Martin Luther High School (MLHS), Northrop, on March 23. The sold-out event had 250 guests. A new record was set with more than \$56,000 raised to support the MLHS ministry. Our sincere appreciation to everyone who supports the MLHS ministry with their prayers, volunteerism, children and gifts. To God be the glory!

**In photo:** Greg Schulz (center), explains how "Greg's Heavenly Homemade Ice Cream" got its name. He is flanked by his two bodyguards and his "lawyer" (far right), who helped protect his secret recipe. One batch of his ice cream sold for \$700.

— *Submitted by Marge Thiesse, MLHS Director of Development*

## Congregation mission receipts

### For the period ending April 30, 2019

Actual receipts . . . . .	\$208,534
Budget receipts . . . . .	\$175,000
Over (under) amount . . . . .	\$33,534

### Year-to-date receipts

Actual receipts . . . . .	\$707,256
Budget receipts . . . . .	\$700,000
Over (under) anticipated amount . . . . .	\$7,256

### Use of mission receipts (YTD-year to date)

50% remitted to Synod (YTD) . . . . .	\$267,983
100% remitted to Synod (YTD) . . . . .	\$29,055
50% for district operations (YTD) . . . . .	\$267,983
100% for district operations (YTD) . . . . .	\$142,235
<b>Total receipts . . . . .</b>	<b>\$707,256</b>

### Mission receipts—2019 vs. 2018

Mission receipts — YTD 2019 . . . . .	\$707,256
Mission receipts — YTD 2018 . . . . .	\$703,259
Over (under) last year . . . . .	\$3,997

2018 congregational receipts budgeted at \$2,100,000

### MINNESOTA SOUTH DISTRICT LCEF

#### March 2019

New investments . . . . .	\$1,512,680
Withdrawals . . . . .	\$1,668,915
Net increase (decrease) . . . . .	\$(156,235)

#### Year-to-date July 1, 2018–March 31, 2019

New investments . . . . .	\$19,125,210
Withdrawals . . . . .	\$13,735,564
Net increase (decrease) . . . . .	\$5,389,646

## Send submissions for the district supplement to:

- [communications@mnsdistrict.org](mailto:communications@mnsdistrict.org)
- 14301 Grand Ave. South  
Burnsville, MN 55306

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