



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA SOUTH

TALKING POINTS WITH PASTOR

How much are you worth?



“[Simon the magician said,] ‘Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ But Peter said to him, ‘May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!’” – Acts 8:19-20

The fall season often marks a time when congregations head into stewardship drives. Perhaps yours is engaged in one right now. Such drives always require a careful balance. When money seems short, it's easy to get lost in thinking that the primary business of a congregation is to balance budgets, raise funds and pay the bills. True, those things are all part of congregational life, but without question they should always take second place to the priority of teaching and preaching the Good News of the shed blood of Jesus Christ to both the lost and the found.

At the same time, in order for ministry to take place (at the congregational, district or Synod level), good stewardship is necessary. We need to make salutary use of our time, talents and treasures as part of our discipleship.

Even so, oftentimes it's our finances that seem to be stressed the most. Perhaps



Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford
District President

that is because there are some 2,000 verses about money in the Bible (depending on who's counting). In fact, as the musical “Cabaret” says, “Money makes the world go round.” But that reflects the misbelief that money gives us our meaning, identity and purpose rather than our Lord Jesus Christ. Be assured, the devil, the world and our own sinful nature will tempt us to think and act this way.

However, when Scripture speaks of money, it's not as something that can give us ultimate meaning, purchase God's favor or buy our salvation. The verses above remind us of that. Nonetheless, it's good to consider how you view your money. Or even more, to take a serious look at how you use your money. Consider the following.

In 1815, Napoleon was defeated in the battle of Waterloo. The hero of that battle was the Duke of Wellington. Interestingly, one of the Duke's recent



biographers claims to have an advantage over all the other previous biographers: He found an old account ledger that showed how the Duke had spent his money. This, says the biographer, was a far better clue to what the Duke thought was really important than just reading his letters or his speeches.

Imagine if someone wrote your biography on the basis of your checkbook or your income tax return. What might it say about you, your priorities, your focus and about whom you serve?

It's often easy to forget that the money we have in our wallets, checkbooks, credit cards and bank accounts is really not

See MESSAGE, Page 2

INSTALLATIONS



Rev. Ryan Alvey, left, was installed as associate pastor of St. Michael's, Bloomington, on Aug. 24. He will serve alongside Rev. Pat Simmons (right), senior pastor, and LCC Comfort Dog Gideon. St. Michael's rejoices in the new collaborative ministry of Pastor Alvey. We praise and thank God for the good works He has in store for Pastor Alvey at St. Michael's.

Rev. Vance and Linda Becker were installed as missionaries to Kenya, Africa, during worship at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, North Mankato, on Aug. 25. Rev. Martin Teigen conducted the installation.

The Beckers will help teach and train pastors and deaconesses to serve the church in Kenya. Vance had served as pastor of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd since 2003.

We praise and thank God for the Beckers' willingness to serve God's people in Kenya. Find specific prayer requests and more information about their service at lcms.org/becker.



From left, (front row) Rev. Harold Storm, St. John, Gaylord, and district third vice-president; Vance and Linda Becker; (back row) Teigen; Rev. James Ruey, Sudanese Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Minnesota, Mankato; and Rev. James Vehling, emeritus and former missionary to Japan.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

our money. It is the Lord's, and we are simply stewards of God's gifts and the caretakers of the money and possessions He has placed into our hands.

Thus, what would your checkbook and receipts say about how you spend your money or what you have as priorities? Even more, what might our congregation's checkbook or even our district's checkbook say about how we spend our money and what we view as priorities?

If we're honest, on the personal level it's easy to get lost in how society determines our worth and value. We read it in the headlines all the time — a professional sports player signs a multi-million-dollar contract, a movie star is worth so many millions, and Forbes tells us that Bill Gates and Warren Buffet are worth billions.

How much are you worth?

You could certainly look at your wal-



let, credit cards, checkbook or bank accounts. But you will only find a finite number that leads to emptiness. Instead, look to the cross of Christ. Look to the water and Word of Baptism that unites you to Jesus who gives you infinite value and worth.

Luther's Small Catechism summarizes things this way:

"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God... has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death" (*Explanation of the Second Article to the Apostles' Creed*).

You see, you are worth more than any amount of money or gold or silver. Forbes may have their list of the wealthiest people in the world. But God has His list, and all on it are covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. His list comes with the powerful promise that you "might be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness" (*Second Article explanation*). This is what we desire for all people — certainly the found, and especially those still lost in unbelief.

Regardless of what your bank account says, Jesus has paid for your sins in full. Regardless of how much or how little you give to the stewardship drive, your giving or lack of giving cannot make God love you more or less. He loves you because He chooses to love you. He sent Jesus to prove it. And when you believe you are a redeemed, beloved and precious child of God, your priorities (including your life of stewardship), along with the meaning of life and your purpose for life will all fall into place.

125 years in the light



CONCORDIA ACADEMY (CA), ROSEVILLE, celebrated 125 years of ministry with a weekend of outdoor activities and worship July 27-28. Chris Roth, CA director of Communications, summarizes the weekend's events:

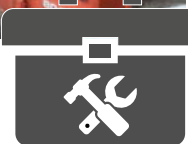
“Celebration Saturday (July 27) included a meal, a bags tournament, face painting, a balloon artist, inflatables, school tours and music by an alumni band. **Robert Holtz** (pictured above), a member of the Class of 1950, was our oldest alumnus in attendance.

“The Ultimate CA Sunday, a worship service on July 28, began outside, but rain forced the service to move indoors to the CA auditorium. Our principal, Rev. Dr. Timothy Berner, was the preacher. Tom Kuseske (Class of 1964) presented “125 Years of CA History in 12.5 Minutes.” Music was provided by the CA Reunion Choir and a praise team made up of CA alumni. A processional featured banners representing all the current CA association churches, as well as the association's founding churches. Rev. Robert Krueger, Class of 1963 and pastor of Bethlehem, St. Paul (1981-2010), was the liturgist.”

We thank and praise God for 125 years of faithful ministry of Concordia Academy! Please remember their teachers, administrators and students in your prayers throughout this school year.



Under construction!



St. Martin's Lutheran Church and School, Winona, was chartered in 1856 and has been providing a Christian education component from its outset.

This summer, St. Martin's broke ground on a new educational facility. The new construction will enable the congregation to replace and rebuild an aging and dated building, and expand to meet current and future needs in its community.

Upon completion, the new school will house a new childcare ministry, St. Martin's Lutheran School (toddlers through eighth grade), and Hope Lutheran High School. The estimated timeline is to begin school in the new building in the fall of 2020. And then they will complete the fellowship hall and gym construction by the fall of 2021. Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is blessed to help provide funding for this new facility.

The congregation and school ministries are partnering to leverage the new two-story building of nearly 20,000 square feet. There will be 18 classrooms — plus 3,000 square feet of shared space, including a media center, two teacher work areas, a conference room, nurse's office, counselor's office and three administration offices.

Rocky Sandcork, Hope Lutheran High School (HLHS) principal and Activities director sees more than a building going up. He sees wonderful opportunity in expanding Christian education.

“This new building will allow additional and new offerings of art classes; pottery 1 and 2, drawing, graphic design, broadcasting and multimedia,” Sandcork says. “An actual room dedicated to music and the arts will make a lasting impact on students who desire to serve God in these areas. The church is in desperate need of workers in this area.

“With respect to leadership, God is raising up leaders in our schools. These future leaders are being impacted by how their current leaders — church, parents, teachers — view the church. Is it important? A new building sends a message to our own families and the community at large that we are serious about raising up leaders. Leaders in the church and also leaders within their families; leaders in the community and the world.

With a new building, more and more students will be able to hear the Word of God daily. The seed, the Word, is planted in the hearts of all students.

See **SCHOOL**, Page 4

DISTRICT NEWS

SCHOOL

(Continued from page 3)

Daily devotions, chapel and prayer will help preserve and extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Our exchange student program can be expanded. Many of these students do not know Jesus as their personal savior.”

“LCEF is grateful to all of our investors for making this loan possible,” said Kai Larson, LCEF Minnesota South District vice-president. “We are thrilled to partner with St. Martin’s. It’s great to see such a strong commitment to Christian education from the congregation and community.”



Jewelry exchange brings women of all ages together

The Women of Immanuel, Fairmont, hosted Jewelry Exchange 2019 for women of all ages. The ladies brought in their unwanted or used jewelry, scarves and handbags, and took turns finding new pieces to take home to be worn, used and loved.

This event brought young and old together as they made special memories, got to know each other, enjoyed delightful treats and shared in God’s Word with “jewel-themed” devotions. The younger girls enjoyed making heart-shaped jewelry boxes and included their favorite hand-picked selections for other young girls their age to include in Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.



Congregation mission receipts

For the period ending Aug. 31, 2019

Actual receipts	\$149,172
Budget receipts	\$175,000
Over (under) amount	(\$25,828)

Year-to-date receipts

Actual receipts	\$1,394,425
Budget receipts	\$1,400,000
Over (under) anticipated amount	(\$5,575)

Use of mission receipts (YTD-year to date)

50% remitted to Synod (YTD)	\$512,999
100% remitted to Synod (YTD)	\$58,970
50% for district operations (YTD)	\$512,999
100% for district operations (YTD)	\$309,457
Total receipts	\$1,394,425

Mission receipts—2019 vs. 2018

Mission receipts — YTD 2019	\$1,394,425
Mission receipts — YTD 2018	\$1,361,203
Over (under) last year	\$33,222

2019 congregational receipts budgeted at \$2,100,000

MINNESOTA SOUTH DISTRICT LCEF

June 2019

New investments	\$2,552,858
Withdrawals	\$1,595,016
Net increase (decrease)	\$957,842

Year-to-date July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019

New investments	\$24,286,251
Withdrawals	\$19,750,837
Net increase (decrease)	\$4,535,414

Send submissions for the district supplement to:

- sarabeth.marcello@mnsdistrict.org
- 14301 Grand Ave. South Burnsville, MN 55306

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