



/ FEBRUARY 2022

DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA SOUTH

💡 TALKING POINTS WITH PASTOR

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ
the son of David, the son of Abraham. **MATTHEW 1:1**



Getty Images

Jesus' family tree ... boring?

Biblical genealogies are a curious thing. All those difficult names to say and the endless list of generations all make for some stellar reading. What better way can you think of than spending your time reading an endless list of names? Truth be told, most of us don't much care for reading genealogies unless we need some good bedtime reading to put us to sleep. In other words, they are boring!

However, genealogies can be rather fascinating when you dig into them. With each name mentioned in a genealogy there is a story to tell. If you've ever done a family tree you will recall how that

process allowed you to discover the history behind each family member. Each name has a story to go with it — people, places, events, tragedies and triumphs. What story goes with your name?

The genealogy of Jesus is indeed a fascinating account to read. Still not so sure? Reread that list of names in Matt. 1:1-16. The list starts with a man named Abraham. What's the history on this guy? It reads like this: He leaves his homeland for an unknown country; he and his wife are nearly killed on several occasions; he gets his maid pregnant at his wife's request; is the first to be circumcised and pass on that custom (ouch!), and at age 100 he has a son with his 90-year-old wife. Still bored?

What about some of the women on that list? What's the story about these ancestors of Jesus? Verse 3 mentions Tamar. What's her story? She marries a great-grandson of Abraham who dies. Her father-in-law, Judah (the grandson of Abraham), then pledges to her his youngest son in marriage. He takes back the pledge. She then pretends to be a prostitute, gets pregnant by her father-in-law, and reveals her father-in-law is the father. Still bored? Soap operas can't even match up to this stuff.

Or what about Ruth (Matt. 1:5)? What's her story? She is a Moabite foreigner

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Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford
District President

GENEALOGY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

who marries an Israelite. He dies. She stays with her mother-in-law, Naomi, goes back with her to Israel, looks for leftover grain in a harvest field, meets a guy named Boaz, uncovers his feet one night (a curious marriage proposal indeed), marries him and has a son named Obed, who turns out to be the grandfather of the mighty King David! Still bored?

The genealogy of Jesus appears to be merely a list of names, but in fact is full of God's redemptive history revealing deep truths about our mysterious yet gracious God. Beneath these names there is an incredible story about the people who God uses to bring forth and prepare the way for the coming of his son, Jesus Christ.

Within that list of names there is scandal, loss, pain, rescue, redemption, promise and joy. There are people of wealth and people of poverty, people of virtue and people of vice. Yet God still used them all to bring forth his only begotten Son to redeem the world.

Indeed, the genealogy of Jesus is a fascinating conglomeration of people.

“We all have stories to tell and histories behind us, maybe some not so different from the ancestors of Jesus. And yet we are all equally redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus Christ.”

Likewise, the people of the Minnesota South District are a fascinating conglomeration of people as well. We all have stories to tell and histories behind us, maybe some not so different from the ancestors of Jesus. And yet we are all equally redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Matthew intentionally begins with a genealogy. He shows us

who Jesus came from. Matthew then unpacks the story of Jesus and shows who He came for. He then ends his Gospel account with the record of Jesus sending His disciples to “all nations” (you and I included) to baptize, teach and make disciples (Matt. 28:19).

You might say that it's the continuation of His family genealogy — His baptismal genealogy. As

we are baptismally brought into His family and as we reach out with the Good News of Jesus Christ to bring others into this family, we can celebrate how the genealogy of Jesus continues on, adding all kinds of new names and new stories behind those names, and each part of the redemptive story of our Savior Jesus Christ.



Congregation mission receipts

For the period ending Dec. 31, 2021
(unaudited)

Actual receipts.....	\$354,288
Budget receipts	\$166,674
Over (under) amount	\$187,614

Year-to-date receipts

Actual receipts.....	\$2,289,967
Budget receipts	\$2,000,000
Over (under) anticipated amount.....	\$289,967

Use of mission receipts (YTD-year to date)

50% remitted to Synod (YTD).....	\$846,460
100% remitted to Synod (YTD).....	\$94,659
50% for district operations (YTD)	\$846,460
100% for district operations (YTD)	\$502,388
Total receipts	\$2,289,967

Mission receipts—2021 vs. 2020

Mission receipts — YTD 2021	\$2,289,967
Mission receipts — YTD 2020	\$2,142,109
Over (under) last year	\$147,858

2021 congregational receipts budgeted at \$2,000,000 (Does not include 100% designated to Synod)

LCEF

November 2021

New investments	\$1,179,629
Withdrawals.....	\$1,682,331
Net increase (decrease).....	(\$502,702)

Year-to-date July 1, 2021–Nov. 30, 2021

New investments	\$7,285,350
Withdrawals.....	\$8,302,772
Net increase (decrease).....	(\$1,017,422)



Send submissions for the district supplement to:

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



Slow down!

How many of you have been stopped for speeding? How many of you had some kind of accident as a result of being in too big of a hurry to get things done? If not, you are fortunate.

I wasn't so fortunate recently, but was blessed in two incidents. In November, right before Thanksgiving, I was pulled over for speeding, but was given a warning and told to slow down. A week later, I took an eight-foot fall. Again, God protected me and I received only a small pelvic fracture and a beautiful dark purple eye. Those two warnings forced me to realize to *slow down!*

Our hectic, frenzied world has caused us all to be too busy, and we try to cram too much into our lives. Things we care about and are important get overlooked at times because we are too busy. Sports has become a priority over going to church on Sunday morning. Online worship gives some of us an easy way out of going to church for worship and fellowship. It saves us the time of getting ready and driving to church. All we need to do is turn on the computer, get our cup of coffee and sit in front of the screen, and then turn it off when it's done.

Our life has become too busy for preparing and enjoying time with God and sharing God's love with others. Ps. 46:10 still applies:

Be still and know that I am God.

We need to ask ourselves: "Are we, the people God, too busy to give some of our time for Him?" Have you ever been asked to serve and your answer is "My life is so busy right now." Is your life really so busy that you have little time for God; that there's isn't enough time for Bible studies, devotions and prayer?

God gave us His only Son, who unselfishly gave His life for us. That should be proof enough that God truly cares and is never too busy for us. God is always ready to call us, care for us, save us and listen to us.

My falling accident made me realize that my life was getting pretty hectic. I needed to slow down. Surprisingly, when I was not able to easily get around for six weeks, I recognized that time appeared to go much slower than before the accident and I enjoyed this respite. It has taught me to slow down, to listen to the Lord speak, to enjoy the presence of Christ in my life and to take time for Him daily!



Deb Vinkemeier
LWML District President

MIGHTY MITES



Gary Thies
gives a tour at
Mission Central
in Mapleton,
Iowa.

Our LWML Minnesota South District's \$10,000 mission grant "LCMS Missionary Support (Mission Central)" has been paid in full! To God be the glory!

Mission Central is the largest network providing support for LCMS international and national missionaries. Located in Mapleton, Iowa, this rural campus provides a place for missionaries to stay when on home service and provides facilities for worship and mission events. Volunteers and professional staff members provide support to missionaries as well as raise financial support to meet their needs in the field. There is a strong focus on establishing connections between financial donors and missionaries by encouraging frequent communications from the missionaries on their work.

Among the missionaries who have received funding through Mission Central this biennium is Barbara Rebentisch, a member of King of Kings, Roseville. She has received \$3,000 since August 2020.

Barbara is serving in Taiwan, translating and interpreting between Mandarin and English. Barbara is helping seminary professors, ensuring accuracy of the translations of the Gospel message, and developing more theological resources in the Chinese dialect.

Tours of Mission Central (on your own or with a group) are available by contacting Gary Theis, director, at gary.theis@lcms.org.

Carol Hubert
Vice-President of Gospel Outreach



Barbara Rebentisch

Standing up for life



LCMS pledges \$1 million to **BEGINNING-OF-LIFE CARE**

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, recently announced the launch of the 1 John 3 Initiative Million Dollar Life Match, a new grant program that will provide up to \$1 million in matching funds to LCMS congregations involved in upholding the sanctity of life in their local communities.

The program is specifically aimed at providing care for those facing beginning-of-life challenges. The amount of an individual grant will depend on the amount pledged by the congregation. More details about the application process will be announced soon.

Deaconess Tiffany Manor, director of LCMS Life Ministry, said, “The purpose of the Million Dollar Life Match is to build and expand the network of LCMS congregations and individuals who are working to support those who uphold life in their immediate vicinity — for example, a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) that cares for needy families or a mercy organization that supports single parents or unwed mothers.

“The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod wants to help congregations support RSOs and other groups that are doing the hands-on work of defending life at the local level. And ultimately, we want to point people toward what is most needful: the life-giving nourishment of Word and Sacrament ministry.”

The theme for the Million Dollar Life Match is from 1 John 3: “Christ laid down His life for us. We love in deed and truth.” The theme reflects the

initiative’s commitment to helping LCMS individuals and congregations have a greater impact on the cause of life as they walk with, strengthen and support local families.

Harrison recently interviewed Manor for the Synod’s “Life Together” News Digest, which is released monthly by the LCMS president’s office. In the interview, Manor emphasized LCMS Life Ministry’s ongoing commitment to facilitating greater collaboration and mutual learning between those in the Synod who want to support the sanctity of life.

“We have thousands of people in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who are passionate about and engaged in life ministry,” Manor said, highlighting the LCMS Office of National Mission’s (ONM) new volunteer website at lcms-onm.org. Life Ministry is one of several ONM ministries that are using the new website to help volunteers stay informed about opportunities to serve. “We’re going to continue to help connect people to one another,” Manor said.

Harrison noted that the LCMS — along with other churches and organizations that advocate for life — is often accused of caring for life only in the womb and not beyond. “That’s just false, isn’t it?” Harrison asked.

“It is,” Manor said. “The church, throughout the ages, has cared for women, their children [and] families. ... We are continually walking with people who are facing difficult family situations, with women who have life occurrences while they’re pregnant that cause them to be frightened. We’re here to walk with them as they’re pregnant, when the babies are born and afterwards.”

Watch Harrison’s announcement, download a bulletin insert and learn more about the Million Dollar Life Match at lcms.org/life-grant.

— “**We are continually walking with people who are facing difficult family situations, with women who have life occurrences while they’re pregnant that cause them to be frightened. We’re here to walk with them....”**

— Deaconess
Tiffany Manor