
Table of Contents

DISTRICT NEWS

* *Planting Together* * - please share in your bulletin and/or newsletter

1. Education, Youth, and Family Life—Rhonda Mohr
2. Business Manager News—Roger Curtis
3. LCEF—Carole White
- 4+. Mission Opportunities (Missions Banquet)—Rev. Mark Gerken
- 5+. IOWAY (Moulton School Outreach)—Ellie Menz
- 6+. Mission Central (Events at Mission Central)—Gary Thies & Rev. Brent Smith
7. Hispanic Outreach in Siouxland—Rev. Henry Witte
8. The Lamplighter—Rev. James Travis

MINISTRY PARTNERS

Camp Okoboji (Bus Trip to Kansas Speedway)
Lutheran Family Service

ALSO INCLUDED...

Operation Barnabas Conference
Reaching Rural America for Christ Newsletter



CALLS RECEIVED

Rev. David Dahlke, SOTV, West Des Moines, to Lake Side, Venice, FL.
Rev. Ken Davidson, Zion, Atlantic, to Atonement, Omaha, NE.
Rev. Jason Letsche, Blessed Redeemer, Brandon, SD, to First, Kingsley.

CALL DECLINED

Rev. Lance Klamer, St. Paul, Fowler, MI, to Trinity, Marcus.

TRANSFERRED OUT

Rev. Jonathan Watt, Candidate, to Minnesota North District, 9-23-2018.
Rev. David Zimmer, Candidate, to Northern Illinois District, 8-13-2018.

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Jenn Fuller, DCE, Messiah, Johnston, to Gloria Dei, Urbandale.
Emily Gierse, St. Paul's, Fulda, MN, to Zion, Denison.

TRANSFERRED IN

Jai Millen, Candidate, Ames, from Michigan District, 8-3-2018.

Calendar of Events

October 6...Operation Barnabas, St. Paul, Carroll

October 25-26...IDE & IDW Teachers Conference, Gloria Dei, Urbandale

October 27-28...Jr. Youth Gathering, Sheraton, West Des Moines

Follow Iowa District West on these social media websites.



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iowaWest](http://www.twitter.com/iowaWest)



[www.youtube.com/user/
iowaDistrictWest](http://www.youtube.com/user/iowaDistrictWest)

Iowa District West, LCMS
409 Kenyon Road, Suite B
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

515.576.7666
sue@iowadistrictwest.org
www.idwlcms.org

Please note: The inclusion of items from outside sources in *The Messenger* is for information purposes only. Inclusion of such items does not constitute District endorsement.



Planting Together October 2018

409 Kenyon Road, Suite B — Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
515-576-7666 Fax 515-576-2323 www.idwlcms.org
Contact email: sue@iowadistrictwest.org

On a Mission to Support Christ's Mission!

"By Grace...Access for All"



Though church extension has been around since 1902, Lutheran Church Extension Fund is celebrating its 40th Anniversary since incorporation in 1978! And the need for church extension continues to grow; loan demand is the highest in ten years and projection for the future forecasts a need for \$100 million in new deposits to support additional growth. Thank you to our current investors for your support of ministry; your invested dollars are at work in Iowa District West and throughout the LCMS. Additional dollars and new investors are needed to help meet the growing demand. Watch for LCEF's 40th Anniversary Note available for a limited time beginning October 1, 2018 at lcef.org. Your LCEF investment is a good example of spiritually responsible stewardship: saving for your personal future financial needs while supporting the work of LCMS ministries in our district and across the Synod.

LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. Neither LCEF nor its representatives give legal, accounting or tax advice. Consult a tax advisor as to the applicability of this information to your own situation. UMB Bank n.a. serves as the custodian of the LCEF IRA program.



Carole White
LCEF Vice President Iowa East & West
515-240-2220 | carole.white@lcef.org

High School Youth Needed!

The IDW Youth Services Committee is seeking four youth entering 9th-11th grades for the 2018/19 school year to be involved and offer their voices in our district's youth ministry happenings. Information of what the Youth Services Committee is and does, expectations for youth involvement, future scholarships for service, and an application form with instructions can be found at

<http://www.idwlcms.org/gotodownloadfile.php?file=1205>.

If you have questions, please contact Pastor Jon Riggert, Youth Services Chairman, at pastorriggert@trinitycherokee.org or 712-225-4332.

Ministry Excellence Fund - Education Debt Assistance

The District provides post-college assistance to pastors and professional church workers for the sole purpose of providing grants to reduce educational indebtedness. Funds will be disbursed directly to the lender. This is the fifth year of providing grants. Applicants must complete a detailed application (www.idwlcms.org and click on "Resources" and "Forms & Links") as well as the worker's congregation and financial planner. Applications are due October 31. Any questions, contact Roger Curtis or Rev. Thomas Schlund (515.295.3518 or pastorschlund@trinityalgona.org).

October is Clergy Appreciation Month

Clergy Appreciation Month is a special time when congregations honor their pastor(s) and his family for their hard work and sacrificial dedication. You might consider a special service of affirmation, a potluck event, or planting a tree in their honor. The sky's the limit! It is usually scheduled in October, but can be held at any time that is convenient for the church. Brainstorm ideas now so you can celebrate later this fall. For additional ideas, download details from Focus on the Family's Clergy Appreciation Month Planning Guide (www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian-worldview/clergy-appreciation-month).

Missions Banquet

You are invited to attend the Missions Banquet, Sunday, November 11 – 4:30-7pm at Zion Lutheran Church in Manning. The program will begin at 5pm. Register at www.idwlcms.org or call 515-576-7666. This event, including the banquet dinner, is complimentary with your pre-registration thanks to our partnership with LCEF. Mission Grants will be awarded.

Calendar of Events

October 6...Operation Barnabas Conference, St. Paul, Carroll
October 25 & 26...Teachers Conference, Gloria Dei, Urbandale
October 27 & 28...Jr. Youth Gathering, Sheraton, West Des Moines

For more information on Iowa District West activities,
view *The Messenger* at www.idwlcms.org/publications.php

Education, Youth, and Family Life

Rhonda Mohr, Assistant to the President

rhonda@iowadistrictwest.org

515-576-7666 office

515-573-0010 cell

YES (Youth and Education Servants) Meetings

These meetings are for those serving as professional church workers supporting the areas of youth and education in congregations. Meetings begin at 10 am at the District office and conclude with lunch.

Thursday, October 11

Monday, November 5

Thursday, December 6



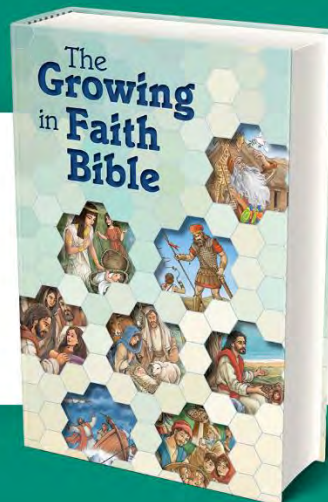
The Youth Services Committee is still looking for high school youth to apply to serve on the Committee. Scholarships are available as a reward for serving on the Committee. If you know a youth that would make a great Committee member, share the application with them. Here's the link. At the bottom of the page you will see the opportunity to download the link to the Sr Youth involvement form.

<http://idwlcms.org/youth-ministry.php>

Consider these resources from CPH

The Growing In Faith Bible For children ages 6–10.

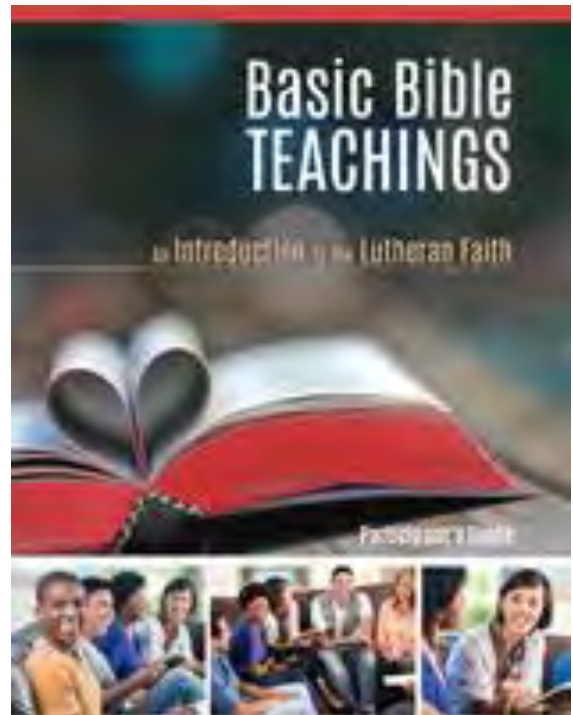
- Colorful artwork
- Full ESV Bible text
- 125 Bible Narratives
- Big Words
- Big Questions and Answers
- Verses for Life
- Character Sketches
- Christ Connections
- Parent Connections
- Luther's Small Catechism
- Prayers
- Topical Index



Basic Bible Teachings is specifically designed to teach the basics of the Christian Faith, as found in Luther's Small Catechism, in easy-to-understand terms and in a highly visual format. Young adults or adults who are new to the faith, Lutherans looking for a refresher, and pastors will appreciate this simple synopsis of the Lutheran belief system.

Five chapters encourage readers to look at themselves and their lives in the framework below:

- Living with Expectations
- Living with Jesus as Savior
- Living as God's Child
- Living the Christian Life
- Living Forever with Jesus



Looking for new material for Sunday morning or weekday Bible studies? CPH has a new study on **Galatians**. In each of these 6 video-based lessons, author A. Andrew Das will walk you through the Book of Galatians, guiding your study of this epistle and leading you back to the Truth revealed in Scripture.

Advent Devotions: What Child is This?

37 days of devotions guide you from December 1 through Epiphany (January 6). As you journey through this season of Advent, each of these devotions connects with the corresponding Advent sermon series, drawing you closer to your Savior, the blessed Child!



BUSINESS MANAGER NEWS
Iowa District West Congregations' Mission Receipts



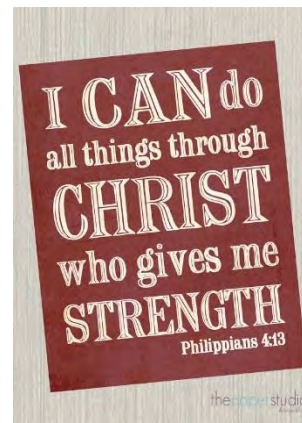
For the Month Ending August 2018	
Anticipated Amount	\$125,000
Actual Receipts	\$120,450
Fiscal Year-to-Date Receipts	
Anticipated Amount	\$875,000
Actual Receipts	\$853,493
Over (under) anticipated amount	\$(21,507)
Use of Mission Receipts	
Remitted to Synod (50%)	\$437,500
Balance for District programs/operations	\$415,992
Total Receipts	\$853,492
Mission Receipts Compared With Last Year	
Month ending August 2018	\$853,493
Month ending August 2017	\$861,004
Over (under) last year	\$(7,511)

Stewardship Corner - Stewardship Advisors - www.stewardshipadvisors.org - 888-783-2790

In Proverbs 14:26 we read, *“In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.”* The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10), and wisdom is given to us by God. With God’s wisdom, we have assurance of the future. The question of our future was brought up at a meeting between Rev. Dr. Billy Graham, who was on an evangelistic crusade, and the Prime Minister of England, Winston Churchill. Mr. Churchill asked Reverend Graham, “Is there any hope for this world?” Dr. Graham replied, “Yes! I have read the last chapter of the Bible and it says we win.” We need not fear the future. God’s wisdom gives us the confidence to face a deteriorating world with hope and courage. The fear and love of the Lord prompt us to continue to be about His work, knowing that God’s people win.

GOD’S STRENGTH FREES US FROM THE ENDLESS PURSUIT OF FINDING MEANING THROUGH MATERIALISM.

“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 16:26)



Stewardship Spark / Monthly Mission Moment

Did you know that your congregational mission dollars support the District budget in a variety of mission, ministry, and administration areas? The District budget includes 60% for missions, 23% various ministries, and only 17% for administration and support services (only 17 cents of every dollar goes towards administration expenses). Just like in the church, District has many of the same administrative expenses. Some of these areas include office staff salaries, benefits, and travel; annual audit; office equipment/supplies; utilities, maintenance, and insurance (note your congregation could receive insurance savings with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance – check out this website for more details: www.idwlcms.org/insurance-resources.php.)



Synod Convention Assessment

Plans are underway for the 67th Regular Convention of the LCMS on July 20-25, 2019 in Tampa. The national convention provides an opportunity for worship, nurture and inspiration, fellowship, and the communication of vital information. The convention is the principal legislative assembly which amends the Constitution and Bylaws, considers and takes action on reports and overtures, and handles appropriate appeals. For more information on the upcoming Synod Convention, go to www.lcms.org/convention.

Planning your budget for 2019? Remember to budget for the Synod Convention. The estimated assessment will be between \$1.80 - \$2 per communicant member. This covers the costs of the Synod's assessment of \$62,990 and the travel expense of 38 District delegates.

Revised Compensation Recommendations

The District, in Convention this summer, approved an updated salary guidelines for ordained pastors and commissioned workers. The guidelines were revised significantly at the last convention and still includes a \$3,000 bump for pastors for 2019. Note the pulpit supply compensation/remuneration remains at \$150 for conducting one service with sermon plus \$50 for each additional service and Bible class. The revised salary schedules are online at www.idwlcms.org under Ministry Areas - Stewardship.



As a comparison, pastors will learn at the September 2018 Pastors Conference of another terrific resource from Concordia Plan Services. Because it is based on live data trends and geographic location in the District, the information is very current. To explore the CPS Compensation Decision Support Tool, [click here](#).

Church & Clergy Finance/Treasurer's Workshop

Plan now to attend the workshop on **Saturday, November 3** at **Mission Central, Mapleton** from 9 am to 3 pm. If you have never been to the world famous Mission Central, this will be an awesome opportunity to attend a workshop! Pastors and any individuals within the church having financial responsibilities should attend. The guest speaker will be Paul Pettit, CPA. He is the Business Manager at the Nebraska District and brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise. Each congregation will receive one FREE Congregational Treasurer's Manual of Volume 1 and 2 (a \$10 value).



A second workshop is planned for January 19, 2019 at Zion Lutheran Church, Humboldt. The guest speaker will be Mr. Bob Joy, CPA. He has a wealth of knowledge and has nearly 30 years of financial experience. Bob owns his own accounting company specializing in clergy taxes and is the financial manager for a large church.

Thanks to Carole White and Lutheran Church Extension Fund for providing lunch. Entire program expenses are paid by a grant from the District's insurance provider (American Church Group & Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company). Any questions, contact Roger Curtis at the District office (515.576.7666 or Roger@IowaDistrictWest.org). The brochure and registration form are available online.



October is Clergy Appreciation Month

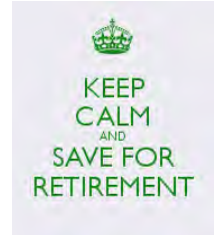
Clergy Appreciation Month is a special time when congregations honor their pastor(s) and his family for their hard work and sacrificial dedication. You might consider a special service of affirmation, a potluck event, or planting a tree in their honor. The sky's the limit! It is usually scheduled in October, but can be held at any time that is convenient for the church. Brainstorm ideas now so you can celebrate later this fall. For additional ideas, download details from Focus on the Family's Clergy Appreciation Month Planning Guide (www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian-worldview/clergy-appreciation-month).



Attention lay leaders – read this great blog article written by Rev. David Muench, Director of Ministerial Care at Concordia Plans - www.concordiaplans.org/blog/appreciating-pastors. What can you do to support your pastor?

National Save for Retirement Week

National Save for Retirement Week, October 21-27, is an effort to raise public awareness about the importance of adequate retirement savings. No matter what the worker's age or income, saving for retirement is not an option, it is a necessity! That makes it the perfect time to review your plan and see if you are on track for your goals and make any necessary changes. Employers can distribute copies of the Concordia Plan Services Salary Deferral Agreement to employees (available at www.concordiaplans.org - Click here for direct link to form).



CPS makes saving for retirement easy with their online form - just three steps to start saving in the CRSP, CPS 403(b) retirement savings plan <https://crspsignup.concordiaplans.org>. Employers can implement a new saving program called AutoSave. Information can be emailed by contacting Roger at Roger@IowaDistrictWest.org.

Also on the CPS website under the "Financial Planning & Retirement" and Financial Wellness link are many resources to help you with money management, budgeting, and debt.

Be Well Serve Well - Let's Walk!

How are you doing keeping up on your Vitality points this year? The Concordia Health Plan "Be Well" Vitality Wellness program is a great incentive to stay in shape. The program offers a menu of healthy activities and wellness programs that not only help you (and your spouse) set and reach your health and wellness goals but also rewards you with points.

Continue your physical activity by signing up for the Iowa Healthiest State Walk on **October 3, 2018**. The Healthiest State Initiative is a privately-led public initiative intended to inspire Iowans and their communities throughout the state to improve their health and happiness. To achieve our goal, individuals, families, businesses, faith-based organizations, not-for-profits and the public sector will unite in a community-focused effort to walk. Walking is one of the best ways to stay healthy. Walking together gives us an opportunity to catch up and refresh our minds, and the physical benefits add up, too! How awesome is walking? Walking improves memory, curbs inflammation, spurs creativity, increases physical performance, improves attention and concentration, lowers stress, and helps you lose weight.

Join me and plan to walk on October 3! To learn more, go to www.iowahealthieststate.com/events/annual-walk and/or www.facebook.com/HealthiestIowa.



Vitality Wellness Points Taxable

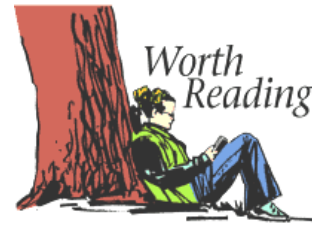
Concordia Plan Services has made the determination that the rewards individual participants earn through the Vitality Wellness Platform are taxable benefits to those employees enrolled in the health plan. Individual employers should report these taxable benefits on the workers' paychecks and W-2s. Workers who are considered self-employed will be responsible for their SECA (Self Employment Contributions Act) tax. The year-end cut off for reporting Vitality rewards on W-2s will be October 31 in order to allow adequate time for W-2 preparation.

Taxes and Ministers

The 2018-2019 edition of TAXES AND MINISTERS, a 32-page document, will be available soon at www.lcms.org/churchoffice (scroll down to Financial Matters).

This booklet, designed for ordained and commissioned ministers of the LCMS, includes:

- ❖ The IRS's definition of minister
- ❖ Employment status: W-2 or 1099
- ❖ Housing/parsonage allowance
- ❖ Reporting income and expenses
- ❖ Paying federal and state taxes
- ❖ Social Security taxes
- ❖ Tax-favored savings plans



Budget Tip – Creating “R & D” (Research and Development/Emergency) Fund

As your congregation prepares your budget for the upcoming year, consider setting aside some money for emergency needs. One of the challenges that non-profit organizations have is maintaining adequate cash reserves for liquidity. Many congregations are under the false impression that all money must be spent each year in order to remain a not-for-profit organization. Spending all funds is simply not good stewardship, as well as a bad business practice. A healthy organization should carry over a small portion of net income each year to build up adequate cash reserves. In accounting terminology, these reserves are called “Net Assets.” The rule of thumb is that a congregation should maintain its Unrestricted Net Asset level at between 30 and 90 days of average cash receipts.



Another recommendation is to set aside 2-3% of the budget for major maintenance (roof repair, HVAC mechanical replacements, parking lot repair, etc.). It also is a good idea to have a ministry emergency fund for new ideas that come up in the middle of a budget year. New opportunities may arise for curriculums/programs, training/conference, or other ministry ideas.

To assist in your budget planning, read some good basic tips from the article titled “7 Effective Church Budget Tips” at www.freechurchaccounting.com/church_budget_tips.html.

Group Purchasing Agreement

Group Purchasing Agreement (GPA) is a free service provided by the Synod to help save you time and money in purchasing. GPA has negotiated discounts on products you use the most by combining the buying power of over 8,000 organizations. There is no sign up and each company has an LCMS contact. Visit www.lcms.org/gpa for more information and current specials. Check out the newest partner company called 4imprint. 4imprint offers thousands of products — including clothing, signage, stationery and awards — to promote your church, school or organization. LCMS affiliates are eligible for a 10% discount through the Group Purchasing Agreement.

Register to File W-2 Forms Online

Fall has arrived which means it's time to start thinking about end of year “to dos.” The Social Security Service now offers your church the ability to go to a website, complete W-2 Forms online, and submit them electronically to SSA. This is a great convenience for many churches since it means no more filling out and mailing paper forms to SSA. W-2 Online even prepares the W-3 for you and allows you to print copies of the W-2s suitable for distribution to your employees.

A simple registration process is required. You will receive a PIN (Personal Identification Number) immediately and a password about two weeks later. You can register online at www.ssa.gov/employer or call 800-772-6270.

Electronic filing has several advantages: the deadline is March 31 (not February 28), you will receive an electronic receipt for proof of filing, you have the ability to track the status of your receipt, and best of all it is free! Pass this information on to the individual who prepares the church's W-2 Forms.



“By Grace . . . Access for All!”

For more than 140 years, Zion Lutheran Church, Atlantic, Iowa, has been blessed to be God’s instrument. The congregation helped bring access to the Gospel for generations and was instrumental in several church plants. However, the ministry was not without its challenges over the years. Zion lacked accessibility; the church needed an elevator and an updated restroom on the sanctuary level.

Increasingly over the years, attendees found the multi-level (think “many steps”) facility was not easily accessible for many elderly and people with physical impairments. Pastor Ken Davidson and congregational leaders decided it was time to respond to the challenge.

Zion’s Journey

In 2012, Zion contacted the Lutheran Church Extension Fund Architectural Advisory Committee to explore options to enhance access. LCEF’s AAC consists of professional Lutheran architects and liturgical artists who advise on architectural design, planning, construction and preservation of facilities.

Architectural assistance provided a plan for an ADA compliant entry to the church and fellowship areas as well as a lift to enable all members and guests to enjoy all levels of the facility. One of the challenges initially was finding out how to finance the improvements. It was projected to cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. In order to learn more about the feasibility of a capital campaign, the congregation reached out to Carole White, LCEF District Vice President – Iowa East and West, and Rev. Bob Riggert, LCEF Immeasurably More Campaign Consultant.



By the fall of 2016, the congregation voted to enter a partnership with LCEF to develop a campaign based on Gospel-powered, biblically-based stewardship principles. The capital campaign would also be reflective of Zion’s history and culture, unique to their needs and provide significant gifts toward the project.

Consultant Riggert and a team of dedicated Zion volunteers immediately went to work to plan a campaign for early 2017. The team chose the campaign theme— “By Grace . . . Access for All!” — with Romans 5:2 as the biblical base.

A Generous Response

After a Lenten season of prayer and Bible study, including communicating the need and opportunity to fellow Zion members, the congregation gathered for a Commitment Celebration on April 2, 2017. Congregation volunteers made a special effort to invite those who would be blessed by the improved accessibility to attend, thus, there were numerous wheelchairs and walkers in the sanctuary.

The response of Zion members was generous. Over three years, more than \$250,000 was committed toward the facility improvements. A celebration banquet at the local high school was a congregation highlight.

“Working with Bob was great,” said Pastor Davidson. “It helped as we continued to move forward and unify around the goal of providing access for all in our church building so that the Gospel could be better shared.”



Digging Began!

Zion’s construction of the improvements began this summer. “God-willing there will be access for all—members and community—to the means of grace shared in and through Zion Lutheran Church,” said Riggert.

Based on Ephesians 3:20-21, “Immeasurably More,” is a process for trained LCMS consultants to walk alongside congregations as they grow as stewards and respond to opportunities including updating facilities,

helping to grow ministry, reducing debt and other endeavors requiring capital funding.

To learn more, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations in the Iowa East and West Districts should contact Carole White at Carole.White@lcef.org or 515-240-2229.



Mission Opportunities

A newsletter of resources, events, and ideas to help God's people passionately, intentionally, and faithfully extend the Gospel within our communities, throughout the District, and into all the world!

October 2018



Join me in prayer!

Set your alarm daily (except Sunday!) for 10:02 am and pray for workers in the harvest field – beginning with yourself!

May what follows encourage you in joining Jesus in preparing for the harvest

Deadline for District mission grant application.

Download at

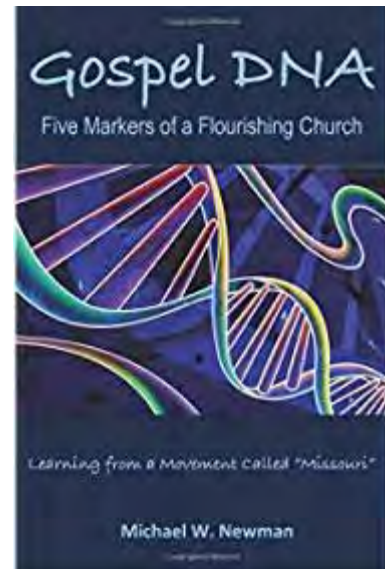
www.iowamissions.org



Need an annual stewardship program? Download from the District website the latest offering from Stewardship Advisors. Everything you need for a whole-life stewardship emphasis!

Help make outreach a priority!

In addition to Bible study, consider a video-based study of Gospel DNA which explores the history of the LCMS to identify five markers that lead to a flourishing church. Contact Mark Gerken for more information!



Mark your calendar – There are some great opportunities for ministry support with these upcoming events. District scholarships are available where needed!

- **Operation Barnabas** District Conference, St. Paul, Carroll, October. 6. Support your military personnel and their families in your community. See enclosed flier for more info.
- **Best Practices for Ministry Heartland Conference** - Indianapolis (actually Columbus, Indiana, but who knows where that is!) – October 10-12. A wealth of workshops on just about every facet of ministry and great networking. Free! Click [here](#).
- **District Missions Banquet** – Sunday, November 11, Zion, Manning – see flier in this Messenger packet for more information and to register.
- **Best Practices** Conference, Phoenix, Arizona – February 21-23, 2019. *“The BEST conference I ever attended – practical, inspiring and free!” (IDW attendee)* Click [here](#) for more information.

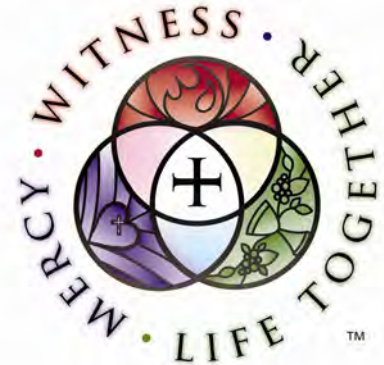
Cancer Companions – Designed to help you love those in your community either battling or caring for someone afflicted with cancer. IDW will cover half the cost for six congregations to participate. All training conducted online. Click [here](#) for more information.

Raise awareness of your missionary partners – Two-minute videos of each of our District missionary partners are available on the District website. Click [here](#).

Rev. Mark Gerken, Assistant to the President
Missions, Human Care & Stewardship
Mark@iowadistrictwest.org or 515-570-2331



Missions Banquet



Zion Lutheran Church, Manning
Sunday, November 11, 4:30 - 7pm
(Program will begin at 5pm)

To register: www.idwlcms.org or 515.576.7666

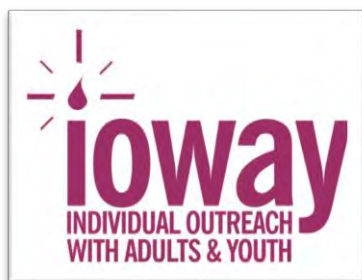
(This event, including the banquet dinner, is complimentary with your pre-registration thanks to our partnership with LCEF.)

Awarding of Mission Grants

*** Be informed * Network * Dream ***

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Getting out of the Pew



Dale and Deb Schmidt, members at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Carroll, saw a note from IOWAY that offered ways for people to get involved in helping others. Deb “got out of the pew” and called me. To my surprise, she said, “Dale and I are going to West Virginia. We can deliver a load of school supplies for you. On our bucket list to visit all 50 states, we have Delaware and West Virginia left to visit.”

Wow! What an answer to prayer! I was considering not collecting school supplies this year for West Virginia because of the high postage cost. After working out the details with Pastor Richard Lohmeyer, pastor at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Alderson, I put out the word that school supplies and backpacks were being collected. In a few short weeks, with help of a large donation of items from the Orphan Grain Train in Ida Grove, the following items were collected: 76 filled backpacks, 23 empty backpacks, 312 pocket folders, 57 boxes of crayons, 6 boxes colored pencils, 10 boxes markers, 17 packs loose-leaf paper, 51 glue sticks, 87 spiral notebooks, 13 scissors, 37 rulers, 805 pencils, 49 black Sharpies, 153 pens, 6 highlighters, 49 erasers, 1 tablet, 1 ream of elementary writing paper, 21 packs of stickers, 9 coloring/activity books, 11 pencil sharpeners and 46 bottles of glue. After Dale and Deb loaded their vehicle they had just enough space for their three suitcases! (Pictured is Dale Schmidt)



They delivered the precious cargo to Pastor Lohmeyer who is planting a church in West Virginia, a state with only four LCMS churches. Pastor Lohmeyer invites the community to an event where the congregation serves snacks, blesses the backpacks, and prays. The parents fill out an informational sheet and this serves as a great way for Pastor Lohmeyer to reach out into the community. He also works with the local school and helps supply items as needs arise. He shared his thanks in the following letter.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ in Iowa West,

Greetings in the name of Jesus!

Words cannot begin to express how I felt after receiving the wonderful shipment of school supplies from the good people of Iowa West. When we had finished packing my pickup, it was literally full! There was everything needed to help the needy children of our community begin the first day of school lacking nothing in terms of school supplies!

As St. Paul so often says in his letters to the early church: "I thank God for all of you!" The love you have for Christ Jesus is so obvious in your great effort to help the needy children of southern West Virginia. Many of the children in our community come from homes that are well below

the poverty level. Often drugs have destroyed their family life with their parents using their funds to feed their habits. Without generous contributions from concerned and providing people like you, their future is not one of hope but rather embarrassment and failure.

Our mission at Christ Our Savior Lutheran is to provide hope, build relationships, and through this effort share the Gospel of God's love and forgiveness. We as a congregation are honored that you have chosen to join us in this outreach effort. We thank you and pray for you. We ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers as well.

May God bless and keep!

Rev. Dr. Richard Lohmeyer
Christ Our Savior Lutheran
Alderson, West Virginia

(Pictured are Pastor Richard Lohmeyer and Deb Schmidt)



Ellie Menz, IOWAY Director
807 West South Street, Jefferson, IA 50129
515-370-1159 | ellie@iowadistrictwest.org

You Are Invited!

10th Annual IOWAY Banquet

Who **You! (and your friends)**

Where **Trinity Lutheran Church**
801 W. Lincoln Way
Jefferson, IA 50129

(Note location change from last few years)

When **Saturday, November 3**
Registration at 4:30 PM

What **Speakers**
Dustin Ibarra, Moulton
Jerry Hetrick, Council Bluffs
IOWAY Coordinators
Mission team members

Why **Hear what God is doing in**
various mission areas:
Omaha, Los Angeles, Des
Moines, Pasadena and Haiti.

*FREE yummy, meal catered at 5:00 PM,
compliments of Carole White with
Lutheran Church Extension Fund.*

- *Relax for an evening of fun—celebrating all that God has done through IOWAY!*
- *Hear firsthand about the poverty in Omaha as seen by the Omaha mission team members.*
- *Hear the reaction of those seeing Skid Row for the first time!*
- *Learn about the challenges and joys of teaching at Moulton Elementary School in Des Moines where 31 languages are spoken by the students.*
- *Get a ‘behind the scene’ look at the Rose Bowl Parade at Pasadena.*
- *Fun night of food, friends, laughs, and memories!*

RSVP needed! Please register at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ioway_banquet

Or call Ellie at 515-370-1159

MAKE A DIFFERENCE! VOLUNTEER SATURDAY, October 13!

YOU are invited to be part of an exciting IOWAY outreach to hundreds of children and parents at Moulton Elementary School on Saturday, October 13, from 8 a.m.-Noon at 1541 8th Street in Des Moines. Of the 515 elementary students in grades K-5, a majority of them are refugees and immigrants from many countries. There are currently 31 languages spoken in the school.



Be part of bringing a few hours of fun, food and games into their lives. This will provide a unique opportunity for all ages.

Bring kindergarten age (and older) children and grandchildren. Bring your youth group. Bring your neighbors. Bring your **ladies'** group. Bring your roommate. **Bring your men's group.**

MANY VOLUNTEERS are needed because we have no idea how many children and parents will come. Let us know your volunteer preference of sports, music, crafts or food by registering online:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/moulton_elementary

- 8 a.m. Volunteers arrive and set-up. Come in northwest door.
- Park in parking lot south of the school.
- 9 a.m. Students arrive and are served a quick breakfast.
- 9:15-11 a.m. Judy Newhouse and ISU music students will conduct a Music/Crafts Camp and Pastor Aaron Hannemann will lead the Sports Camp.
- 11 a.m. Serve lunch, clean up, and finish by noon
- Food: Sponsored by Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company and American Church Group (through IDW Group Partnership Program)
- Items needed by the students: hygiene items, mittens, sweatpants, socks and underwear for ages K-5th grade.
- You are welcome to bring some of these items on October 13.

Register online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/moulton_elementary or contact Pastor Aaron Hannemann at 515-554-4615 or Ellie Menz at 515-370-1159 or ellie@iowadistrictwest.org.

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ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN OFFICIALS COME TO MISSION CENTRAL

It was indeed a very special day. A group of dear friends and co-workers for the Lord Jesus, the leadership people of the Orphan Grain Train from Norfolk, Nebraska, came on August 28 to visit Mission Central and discuss a wonderful new partnership between Mission Central and the Orphan Grain Train in connection with some possible new ministry in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Pictured is the leadership team that the Lord sent to discuss the possible establishment of a new ministry called the “Hannah House” in St. Petersburg.

What a blessing to have these dear friends come and work together for the Lord’s kingdom.



REV. DENNIS AND BARB ANGLAND VISIT MISSION CENTRAL

Yes, longtime friendships are a special blessing in this life! About 24 years ago, Old Missionary Gary had the privilege of meeting Rev. Dennis and Barb Angland at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Emmetsburg, Iowa.

They were called to Russia to serve the Lord Jesus there, and what a blessing it was to work with this amazing NOT NORMAL couple.



On August 22, 2018, these dear folks drove all the way from Alexandria, Minnesota to visit Mission Central and to see their nephew, Rev. Matt Wood and his family. The Wood family is on their way to a special assignment in Indonesia!

It was wonderful to have these dear friends visit this NOT NORMAL place. Here you see this couple in front of our Boss here at HIS Mission Central.

SHARP AND WOOD FAMILIES VISIT MISSION CENTRAL

It was truly a special evening on August 22, 2018 to welcome two special families that came to visit this MIRACLE PLACE!

Rev. James Sharp and his wonderful family came all the way from Uruguay South America to tell of their work and outreach programs in this land of darkness. They were here on vacation and were staying with their family in Denison, Iowa.



Rev. Matt Wood and his family were also here to report on their upcoming assignment to be workers in Indonesia. It was a blessing to have Rev. Wood's Uncle and Aunt (Rev. Dennis and Barb Angland) here from Alexandria, Minnesota.

The group enjoyed a brief tour of the Creation Museum and the Barn Museum, and then the Sharps and the Woods family were able to show pictures and tell of their assignments.

We all were able to pray for and send these special people, who have the most important callings in the entire world!



Mission Central – LCMS World Mission

40718 Highway E16
Mapleton, IA 51034
712-882-1029

Gary Thies (gary.thies@lcms.org)
Rev. Brent Smith (brent.smith@lcms.org)
www.missioncentral.us

**MISSION CENTRAL EVENTS
PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Rev. David Preus and Family
Dominican Republic
Monday, October 1, 2018
1:30 PM



Rev. Dale & Suzanne Kaster
Ghana West Africa
Monday, October 8, 2018
1 PM

Rev. Gary & Stephanie Schulte
West Africa
Saturday, October 20, 2018
1 PM



George & Margot Fretz
Bangkok, Thailand
Tuesday, October 30, 2018
1 PM

Rev. Jonathan & Cheryl Naumann

Latin America

Thursday, November 8, 2018

1 PM



Rev. Herb & Markie Burch

Belize, Latin America

Saturday, November 10, 2018

1 PM

Shara Osiro

East Africa

Saturday, November 10, 2018

1:45 PM



Rev. Charles St. Onge and Family

Canada and Latin America

Saturday, November 10, 2019

1:30 PM

Mark and Megan Mantey
Uganda East Africa
Saturday, February 9, 2019
1 PM



Dr. Martin and Marie Dicke
Papua New Guinea
Saturday, June 1, 2019
1 PM

Mission Central-LCMS World Mission

40718 Highway E 16
Mapleton, Iowa 51034
Phone: 712-882-1029

Gary Thies - gary.thies@lcms.org
Rev. Brent Smith - brent.smith@lcms.org
www.missioncentral.us

HISPANIC OUTREACH IN SIOUXLAND

Rev. Henry and Ruthie Witte
 1013 South Newton Street
 Sioux City, IA 51106
 712-202-4751
 handrwitte@gmail.com



October 2018

***My brothers show no partiality as you hold the faith
 in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. James 2:1***

When James wrote his letter, the congregation had a problem of showing preference to the rich, well-dressed visitor over against the poor man in shabby clothes. Likewise, at the beginning of their ministry, Peter and the apostles made a distinction between Jews and Gentiles. They thought that the Gospel was primarily for the Jews. God gave Peter a vision to show him that he was wrong. Peter recognized his error and said to Cornelius, a gentile centurion, "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality...everyone who believe in him (Jesus) receives forgiveness of sins through his name." (Acts 10:34a and 43b)

Jesus saw all people as sheep without a shepherd and He wanted all to be a part of His sheepfold. He died for the sins of partiality, discrimination, and preferentiality whereby we wrongly judge others by human standards and devalue them as persons. God shows no distinction. All are sinners. All need a Savior. In His name God forgives and makes us His children. All have access to His throne of grace in Jesus Christ His Son.

We struggle to make our churches a welcoming place for all people. Yet we are tempted to focus on ourselves and give preference to our friends and families. We can fall into the trap of making our church a social club or heritage club of our inherited nationality. We can easily judge others and miss who they really are. May God help us to see the opportunities to meet new people and be impartial and welcoming to them. May God fill us with His love and understanding so that we may shine His Word to others.

On August 26 I was installed at Hope Lutheran Church (South Sioux City, Nebraska) to serve part-time in their Hispanic outreach to the Siouxland region. They hope to call a fulltime bilingual worker in the near future to expand the ministry. We thank the many donors and congregations for their support and prayers in this endeavor.

Our English classes began the last week of August with over 50 adults attending and over 20 children in childcare. Please pray that we may freely share God's Word with them in the opportunities that He gives to us.

We also hosted a presentation regarding immigration issues. This was led by a representative from the local community center. One of the English students attended and was able to get a number of her questions answered and receive advice as where to go for further help. We will use the handouts for the other students who could not attend.

Please pray for those going through the immigration process that they may get the proper help they need. Please pray for the Latin American countries that are suffering from economic and social difficulties. May God's message of peace come to them.



Farewell service at Concordia



Installation at Hope – August 2018



English classes at Hope

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit! Amen!

L O Lord, open my lips.

P And my mouth will declare your praise. (Psalm 51:15)

L Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

P Make haste to help me, O Lord. (Psalm 70:1)

L Oh, give thanks unto the Lord for he is good,

P For his steadfast love endures forever. (Psalm 118:1)

All Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen!

Bible Reading: James 3:3-12

³ When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴ Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵ Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶ The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

⁹ With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹² My

brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Devotion:

Do you realize how powerful your tongue is? You can change the course of someone's day for the better or the worse! Yes, you! By greeting a nurse or a staff person and asking how their day is going and how you can pray for them, you can make their day go better. If you curse them and tell them how bad they are, you can make their miserable day grow worse.

Our tongue receives its source from either heaven or hell. Hell would set a fire to destroy the people around us, whereas heaven would seek others to know Jesus. Who will control your tongue today?

The final verses of our reading give a solution to our problem tongues: "Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?" The answer of course is "No!" So simply biting your tongue to control your speech will probably only work temporarily. In fact, dumping fresh water into a salt water spring will only work for a short time before the salt water overwhelms the spring. No, the only solution is for the old source to die and a new source to arise. In the Bible, we call this dying to sin and arising to new life in Christ Jesus. This is better known as repentance and belief in Jesus who desires to make all things new in you!

As you turn to Jesus, He completely forgives you of all the "not so well thought out" words that have come out of your mouth. Paul writes about the new course of life after Baptism, "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rejoice with your mouth as Jesus has saved you and given you new life!

We confess the Apostle's Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Psalm 15:1-3

LORD, who may enter your Temple? Who may worship on Zion, your sacred hill? ² Those who obey God in everything and always do what is right, whose words are true and sincere, ³ and who do not slander others. They do no wrong to their friends nor spread rumors about their neighbors.

The grace of + Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the

Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all! Amen!

Pastor James Travis
Calvary Lutheran Church, Sioux City, Iowa

THE LAMPLIGHTER



Theme: Our Tongue

October 2018

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing to You Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. AMEN

*A Publication of The Lutheran Service Auxiliary
Sioux City, Iowa*

**The Good Shepherd Hour airs every Sunday morning
on the following radio stations.**

- KSCJ** – 1360 AM & 94.9 FM Sioux City at 8 am
- KLEM** – 1410 AM & 96.9 FM Le Mars at 8 am
- KAYL** – 101.7FM Storm Lake at 8:30 am
- KVFD** – 1400AM Fort Dodge at 8 am

What's Happening at Camp Okoboji



Fall Volunteer Weekend

THANK YOU

To all the volunteers, we were able to accomplish so much more with your help!



There is still time to register for the bus trip to Kansas Speedway October 20-21, 2018. At this time we have 20 spots left! For more information and to register please go to our website www.campokoboji.org

Cost is \$300 per person which includes transportation, lodging, and admission to the race including The Pre-race Package (a \$75 value).

For an additional \$50 you can do the garage tour as well.



- October 5 Jennie Williamson Concert
- October 6 Women's Event featuring Jennie Williamson
- October 7 Omelet Brunch
- October 20 Camp Okoboji Board of Directors and Auxiliary Meeting
- October 20-21 Bus Trip to Kansas Speedway

October 5-6, 2018

Friday Night Supper will be served from 5:30-6:30 PM

Friday Night Concert by Jennie Williamson 7 PM with guest appearance by IGLLS children - Open to the public

The Saturday event will include a Day with Jennie Williamson!

You have the option to choose all or part of the event.

Costs per person

Friday Supper: Freewill offering

Concert: \$10 adults, \$5 ages 5-12, Free ages 4 and under

Saturday Only: \$35 (1), \$25 (2), \$20 (3 or more)

Full Event: \$100.00 (includes: Friday supper, concert, and lodging, Saturday breakfast, lunch, and program fee)

There is Campership money available for those attending the full event.

The event is for all women high school aged and above! Moms bring your daughters, Grandmas bring your granddaughters, aunts bring your nieces, bring your friends - this is going to be an awesome and inspiring day!

Here's a snippet of what is to come!

Jennie Williamson, Christian Speaker and Recording Artist from Nashville, Tennessee, delivers an inspiring message about finding the Beauty from the Ashes in our lives and the joy that comes from finding God's peace. Jennie will share many of God's wonderful promises; how those promises bring balance to our life, as well as the beauty that comes when His promises are fulfilled. **This event is for all women from high school to senior adults!** We look forward to seeing you!



Funds Needed!

Camp is in need of funds to provide a new housing facility that will be used for smaller retreats or youth groups in the non-summer season and for lodging for our summer staff. The current facility has outlived its useful life and will be torn down this fall.

For more information contact Kellie Jones or Kirk Warnke at the Camp Office: 712-337-3325 or camp@campokoboji.org.



It seems like summer just ended, but planning and recruiting for summer 2019 has already begun! We will be seeking college-aged people to serve on our team for 2019. We are seeking people who are willing to work in all areas of Camp life. The NEW job descriptions are in the process of being written and we are excited about the opportunities for 2019! Applications will be accepted in November 2018 at www.nloma.org If you know of young people who love Jesus and want to serve in a Christian environment, please spread the word, have them check our website or contact the Camp Okoboji office.

Our Vision

Refreshing Body & Spirit

Our Mission

We provide Sanctuary which connects guests with God and His Creation

Our Values

Gospel, Safety, Excellence, Wellness, Stewardship, Legacy

Contact Camp Okoboji

Office Phone: 712-337-3325

Office Email: camp@campokoboji.org

Kirk Warnke – Executive Director: kirk.campokoboji@gmail.com

Lori Gamble – Ministry Director: lori@campokoboji.org

Kellie Jones – Interim Camp Site Director: kellie@campokoboji.org



NASCAR

October 20-21, 2018

Bus Trip to Kansas Speedway!

ONLY 20 TICKETS AVAILABLE!

Cost: \$300.00 per person

Includes the following:

- ⇒ Ticket (which includes the Pre-race Pass)
- ⇒ Bus Cost
- ⇒ Hotel for Saturday Night (arrangements made by Camp Okoboji)

All meals are on your own.

For an extra \$50 you can also sign up for a garage tour.

The bus will have pick up stops along the shortest route based upon **registrant's home location and to be announced closer to the event.** For more information and to register go to the webpage listed below.

www.campokoboji.org



Lutheran Family Service

For Nothing is Impossible with God

Administrative Office
409 Kenyon Road, Suite C
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
515-573-3138
info@LFSiowa.org
www.LFSiowa.org

Join the Free Webinar!

Pastors, please share this information with couples in your congregation who might explore embryo adoption for their family!

Learn how you may be able to experience the joy and miracle of childbirth through embryo adoption.



Register today to attend one of our Embryo Adoption Webinars!

October 11 12:00 pm

October 14 7:00 pm

October 16 7:00 pm

Embryo adoption is an alternative to In-Vitro Fertilization. It gives little boys and girls that Jesus already knows and loves the chance to be born into safe, loving Christian households and bring them to Holy Baptism.

**Register to attend online at:
<https://lfsiowa.org/events/>**

Interested in learning more about embryo rescue through adoption?

Contact Kim Laube at klaube@lfsiowa.org or 515.251.4900. Or, visit our website: <https://lfsiowa.org/adoption-services/embryo-adoptions/>



Lutheran Family Service

For Nothing is Impossible with God

Want to know more about LFS ministry in Iowa District West?

Contact us to schedule an LFS Sunday at your congregation, or invite an LFS worker to speak at your congregational or community event! We're here to serve you and your members, and to help you reach those in your community who don't have a saving faith. To learn more about LFS' Congregational Services, contact Rev. Michael Wolfram at mwolfram@LFSiowa.org or visit us on the web at

www.LFSiowa.org

Introducing Miss Rachel Street...

With a natural, easy personality, bright smile, confident faith and training in social work from a great school, Rachel Street is a wonderful new addition to the LFS pregnancy counseling and adoption services team!

Rachel grew up in Iowa, attended college in Ohio, and is now back home, ready to serve. She is settling in to her new space in the LFS Des Moines office, but is already busy traveling to visit with birth mothers, partner organizations and adopting families throughout the state.

If you know someone who is struggling with an unplanned pregnancy, encourage them to contact Robin today at LFS by phone at 515-251-4900 or by email at rstreet@LFSiowa.org.



*Rachel Street, Pregnancy Counseling & Adoption Service worker
Lutheran Family Service*

Called to *Serve*



Operation Barnabas Conference

Saturday, October 6, 2018

9:30 a.m. — 3 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1844 Highland Drive, Carroll, Iowa

(Enjoy coffee and rolls from 9 to 9:30 a.m.)

Conference is hosted by the Iowa District West Operation Barnabas, along with Lutheran Church Extension Fund. There is no charge for the conference. Lunch will be provided.

Join us as we work together to serve our military families. Hear presentations from national Operation Barnabas leaders and learn how churches can care for those who are *“called to serve.”*

Registration information will be sent to your church office (along with a list of suggested ingathering items) later this month. Or, register now at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RKFBHYS>.

Reaching Rural America for Christ

A newsletter of LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission

Volume 9, Issue 10 • Newsletter

October 2018



Rural & Small Town Mission

Our "Life Together"

- To follow the core beliefs of the LCMS
- To equip rural professional and lay leaders
- To support congregations in community engagement

Remember: RSTM is eligible for Thrivent Choice Dollars!

Please Pray for These Important Dates

Oct. 18 - Webinar
"Ministry to Inactives"
with Rev. Todd Kollbaum, director,
LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission
1-2 p.m. CST

Nov. 15 - Webinar
"Introducing New Hymns in Small
Congregations" with Rev. William
Weedon, director, LCMS Worship
1-2 p.m. CST

Nov. 8-10
National RSTM Conference
Hilton Kansas City Airport,
Kansas City, Mo.
lcms.org/rstm/conference

If you have an idea or story for Rural Outreach, contact Amy at the RSTM office.

Phone: 888-463-5127
Email: amy.gerdt@lcms.org

© 2018 LCMS

"And we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord" (Post-Communion Collect, Divine Service, Setting One-Five, *Lutheran Service Book*).

STRONG FAITH, FERVENT LOVE

It's a Matter of Perspective

I have found, in my years of ministry and in business, that we humans are often very focused on the "how" and for some reason fail to recognize the importance of the "why." Why we are doing something oftentimes has as much or more impact on the thing we are doing as the steps taken to accomplish it. In fact, without ascertaining the proper understanding of the motivation to undergo a certain project or activity, you are often setting yourself up for failure. Miles and miles of print have been produced to tell you how you ought to lose weight, be financially prudent, have better

(continued on page 2)



JUST SO, I TELL YOU, THERE WILL BE MORE JOY IN HEAVEN OVER ONE SINNER WHO REPENTS THAN OVER NINETY-NINE RIGHTEOUS PERSONS WHO NEED NO REPENTANCE.

— LUKE 15:7

RSTM Events Update

Don't forget: RSTM provides free monthly webinars on topics important to congregations in town and country settings. Up next is *Ministry to Inactives* with Rev. Todd Kollbaum on Oct. 18, followed by *Introducing New Hymns in Small Congregations* with Rev. William Weedon on Nov. 15. Find past webinars on our archive. Watch for information on all our upcoming events!

Consider registering for one of our Engaging Your Community events (EYC) or our Engaging the Wandering (ETW) events at lcms.org/rstm. Meant to partner together, each event offers practical resources and skills for reaching out to

wandering members and our communities with Christ's love. Online registration is available for both types of events, and a current date is scheduled in Hastings, Neb., in partnership with the LCMS Nebraska District, on Oct. 6, with more events on the horizon. Contact your district or our office if you are interested in holding an event near you.

Don't forget to pray for the RSTM National Conference!

To see our calendar, visit lcms.org/rstm. Contact our office at 888-463-5127 or rstm@lcms.org.



STRONG FAITH, FERVENT LOVE, *continued*

relationships and on and on and on — yet we spend little time getting to know the motivation behind these activities. We fail to determine the perspective a person has under which these actions take place.

So, instead of enumerating “how” today, we are going to talk about perspective and motivation. These two key components of ministry are often left undiscovered and, when ignored, can have detrimental effects on ministry itself. Specifically, today we are talking about *why* we should undergo a ministry specifically to inactive members of our congregations. Almost everyone agrees that we should do this and that it is a very important part of the outreach work of the local congregation. Since everyone agrees, most folks just dig in and try to figure out how to do it. However, it is of vital importance that we try to get everyone on the same page as to why we should conduct this type of ministry.

For most, if we are being honest, the motivation for a ministry to inactive members would be numbers. If we can just get them back in the pews, they will start contributing their “fair share” and we can have a balanced budget again. While we might not want to admit it, this is an unfortunately accurate assessment. It is proven out in conversations about “giving units” and line items, dead wood and finances. This should not come as much of a surprise. An unfortunate majority of our congregational conversations

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“How comforting, then, would it be to understand that to the local congregation, as to Christ Himself, this person is not just a giving unit but a child of God for whom Christ died and to whom He is reaching out through His Church?”

take place at the level of budget and finance and personal preference. (I’m not talking about all people in all places here but a significant reality that does exist). This perspective and motivation limits our ministry to the realm of conquests and sales rather than wandering and lost souls in need of the healing Gospel.

It is with this in mind that we have an opportunity to change hearts and minds, both inside and outside the church. From within, all ministry endeavors will operate more smoothly when the majority of the congregation is of one mindset. With ministry to wandering sheep, it is imperative. When we keep as our goal the sharing of Christ’s love instead of getting seats in the pews filled, things will go much more smoothly. With budget and finance fixes as our goal, we will only be disappointed and never hit the mark. Yet, regardless of outcome, when we are faithful to Christ’s mission for the Church to share His Gospel, we will always find that we are meeting our intended outcome.

Think, too, from the mind of the one to whom we minister. How valued and loved are you going to feel if you sense that you are nothing more than a conquest, a means to an end? This is often the case even with the best of motives since the Law is working hard upon the heart of the wandering. Their guilt often manifests itself in resistance and opposition. How comforting, then, would it be to understand that to the local congregation, as to Christ Himself, this person is not just a giving unit but a child of God for whom Christ died and to whom He is reaching out through His Church? What a major perspective change on both accounts.

For more information and assistance in these endeavors, please check out our website or give us at LCMS RSTM a call! May God bless you in all of your endeavors in reaching out to the lost, especially those who have wandered away from the church.

Pastor Todd Kollbaum