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

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MINISTRY PARTNERS

Camp Okoboji (C.H.A.O.S.)
Lutheran Family Service

ALSO INCLUDED...

Engaging the Wandering Workshop
Lutherans For Life Essay Contest
Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Symposium

CALLS RECEIVED

The Rev. Jonathan Conner, Manning, to Holy Trinity, LaGrange, KY.

The Rev. Joshua Lowe, Blue Hill, NE, to Hawarden.

The Rev. Jonathan Vierkant, Lake Zurich, IL, to Ayrshire/Mallard.

CALL DECLINED

The Rev. Dennis Martens, Remsen, to Associate Pastor, Mt. Olive, Des Moines.

CALL ACCEPTED

The Rev. Neil Wehmas, May City & Ocheyedon, to Associate Pastor, St. Paul, Ida Grove.

COMMISSIONED MINISTER

TRANSFERRED OUT

Anna Foley, Placerville, CA, Candidate to California-Nevada-Hawaii District, 12/28/2016.



Calendar of Events

February 11...VBS Best Practices Workshop, Ankeny

February 11-12...Churches Planting Churches, SOTV, West Des Moines

February 16...District Board of Directors, Fort Dodge

February 17...Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Symposium, St. Paul, Fort Dodge

Follow Iowa District West on these social media websites.



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

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

515.576.7666 Phone
515.576.2323 Fax
sue.light@idwlcms.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 February 2017

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

On a Mission to Support Christ's Mission!

United in Christ



The mission statement of Iowa District West is; On a Mission to Support Christ's Mission. That mission takes place in your congregations and communities. Christians see our unity with each other on the Cross. Jesus takes on Himself your sins and mine. That means all of us are there on Calvary. Connected to Christ and therefore connected to each other. Think for just a moment how very intimate that connection is. Jesus dies a horrible and painful death so that He might exchange His righteous perfection for our sin. Unity lies at the very heart of the Gospel.

Jesus wants this unity to be about Him. We are to be united around Jesus, the real Jesus – who comes to us in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper offering His Body and Blood for the forgiveness of our sins and strengthening our faith. We are united to Christ in the preaching of the Gospel. He comes to us in the words of absolution, "I forgive you." This takes place in your congregations with your pastors, teachers and fellow members joining together to demonstrate Christ-like love and charity in your communities.

Rev. Dr. Steve Turner, President
steve.turner@idwlcms.org

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

Someone hospitalized in Sioux City or Des Moines?

Call 712-212-5482 (Sioux City) or 515-707-9195 (Des Moines, Chaplain Jim Brammeier) and a pastor will visit and report back to you as an extension of your ministry.

Prison/Jail Ministries

Rev. Glenn Bohmer (Estherville) is the Coordinator of Prison/Jail Ministries in Iowa District West. If you are involved in or aware of an active ministry, we ask that you share that information with Rev. Bohmer (gsbohmer@gmail.com). If you are interested in establishing such a ministry please contact him directly for resources that may prove helpful.

Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization

The Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization (ILSTO) reached its goal for 2016. We appreciate the support of the many people who helped raise money for tuition assistance for Lutheran students across the state of Iowa. What a blessing for the students and families in Iowa West and East who will have financial assistance for 2017-2018. Blessings to you all and have a Christ-filled New Year!

Dewey Torkelson, ILSTO Program Manager

VBS Best Practices Workshop

This workshop will focus on best practices from VBS volunteers around IDW, focusing on ways to help make your planning, decorating, teaching, communicating and leading extraordinary and intentionally focused on Jesus! Gain new ideas, network with others, and be inspired as you plan for VBS at your congregation.

When: Saturday, February 11, 9-12:30 a.m.

Where: St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1100 SE Sharon Drive, Ankeny, Iowa

Cost: Free and lunch is included

To register, contact Sue Light (sue.light@idwlcms.org or 515-576-7666) at the District office by February 6, 2017. Please include your church name, city, and the names of the people who will attend the workshop.

Churches Planting Churches Workshop

Churches Planting Churches is designed to empower your congregation to give birth to daughter and/or multi-site churches and/or new ministries with biblically missional and organizational integrity. This two-day seminar (February 11-12) includes process time for teams to develop initial plans for multiplication. Register online at www.iowamissions.org.



Calendar of Events

February 11...VBS Best Practices Workshop, St. Paul, Ankeny

February 11-12...Churches Planting Churches Workshop, SOTV, WDM

February 17...The Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Symposium, St. Paul, FD

Education, Youth, and Family Life

Rhonda Mohr
rhonda.mohr@idwlcms.org
 515-576-7666 office
 515-783-5010 cell

High School and Junior High Events



High School Gathering—November 17-19
Omaha, Nebraska

“Nailed It”

Junior High Gathering—October 21-22
The Sheraton, West Des Moines

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VBS BEST PRACTICES WORKSHOP

It's not too late to register!

Don't miss this special Vacation Bible School workshop where you can gain new ideas, network with others, and be inspired as you plan for VBS at your congregation.

WHO: VBS directors; those with a heart for sharing the Gospel with children; ALL who are interested in planning VBS

WHEN: Saturday, February 11, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

WHERE: St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1100 SE Sharon Drive, Ankeny, Iowa

WHAT: You'll hear ideas on how to work as a team, working within a budget, communication, follow up, recruiting volunteers, decorations, safety, volunteer training and more

COST: Free and lunch included

This workshop will focus on best practices from VBS volunteers around IDW, focusing on ways to help make your planning, decorating, teaching, communicating and leading extraordinary and intentionally focused on Jesus!



Please register in advance so we can provide enough materials.

Register by emailing Sue Light (sue.light@idwlcms.org) at the District office by February 6, 2017. Please include your church name, city, and the names of the people who will attend the workshop.

It is our prayer that many congregations will take advantage of this workshop.

Iowa District West Congregations' Mission Receipts

For the Month Ending December 2016	
Anticipated Amount	\$125,000
Actual Receipts	\$141,197
Fiscal Year-to-Date Receipts	
Anticipated Amount	\$1,250,000
Actual Receipts	\$1,258,319
Over (under) anticipated amount	\$ 8,319
Use of Mission Receipts	
Remitted to Synod (49%)	\$ 612,500
Balance for District programs/operations	\$ 645,819
Total Receipts	\$1,258,319
Mission Receipts Compared With Last Year	
Year-to-date 2016	\$1,258,319
Year-to-date 2015	\$1,272,843
Over (under) last year	\$(14,525)

Lutheran Church Extension Fund

The mission of Lutheran Church Extension Fund is to provide opportunity to make funds and services available in support of the Great Commission through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

As of December 30, 2016, 1,278 investments in Iowa District West totaled \$32,970,460. These investments are providing opportunity for 26 loans totaling \$8,940,730 plus commitments totaling nearly \$475,631. LCEF puts invested dollars to work in mission and ministry right here in the District.

If you are interested in investing in the ministry of LCEF or if you have questions on the loans and services provided to our congregations, please contact Carole White. **Come, Join the Ministry!**

Pastors and Church Secretaries: How about including a brief note about LCEF in your church newsletter or bulletin? Please use the following short paragraph—thank you!

Open an emergency fund and help ministries!

Get a fresh start financially this year. For those unexpected expenses in life, open an emergency fund that also helps ministries share the Good News. Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) can help you build financial security while helping build God's kingdom through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ministries. LCEF's Family Emergency StewardAccount® is designed to prepare you for those moments when you need funds not allocated in your monthly budget.

Your investment builds over time with electronic funds transfer (EFT) and interest earned. Access funds easily when you need them most. For complete details, visit **lcfe.org** or call 800-843-5233.

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. StewardAccount access services are offered through UMB Bank n.a.

Stewardship Spark / Monthly Mission Moment

Did you know that your congregational mission dollars support the District budget in a variety of mission and ministry areas? The District budget includes \$4,600 for a comprehensive financial audit. This intense review of all financial details assures the District is operating properly and the financials are in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles. For a \$2.3 million budget plus numerous funds and assets, this is a good value. February is audit time at the District office. A review of the church financial activities is healthy for the church. If you choose to do the project with congregational members, the Congregational Treasurer's Manual, Chapter 25 "Financial Review" has a lot of good information.

Financial Quick Notes

- 2017 Mileage Rate: **53.5 cents** per mile for all business miles driven. To read the complete IRS announcement, go online to www.irs.gov and search "2017 Mileage Rates."
- New receipt vouchers were mailed mid-January. Please use these for remittances from February 1, 2017-January 20, 2018. Donations for organizations outside the District (for example Camp Okoboji, Lutheran Family Service, Lutherans For Life, etc.) should be sent directly to the organizations.
- Need a Federal W-4 or other IRS form quickly? Several forms are in the Treasurer's Manual, but you can also download the current forms directly from the IRS website. Go to www.irs.gov/Forms-&-Pubs and download the PDF file.
- Need a new Form I-9? Find the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website at www.uscis.gov/i-9 (new form with an expiration date of 8/31/2019 must be used). All church staff including pastors need a copy on file.
- State of Iowa Form W-4 (IA W-4 Employee's Withholding Certificate and Centralized Employee Registry 44-019) is online at <https://tax.iowa.gov> (search W4). All new employees must complete this Centralized Employee Registry Reporting Form. Questions, email idr@iowa.gov or call 515.281.3114 or 800.367.3388.
- The Iowa minimum wage remains at \$7.25. State and federal posters are no longer provided by Iowa Workforce Center, but posters can be downloaded for free. More information is online at www.iowaworks.org/reqposters.htm.
- Tax calendar: January 31 deadline...
Issue Form W-2 to each employee (employers are not required to submit Form W-2 copy 1 to the state). Complete Copy A of each 2016 Form W-2 Wage and Tax Statement and W-3 Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statement to Social Security Administration (mail to address on summary form or file electronically).

Issue Form 1099-Misc to all independent contractors/self-employed individuals (those that earned \$600 or more during the year 2016).

Complete Copy A of each 2016 Form 1099-Miscellaneous Income and Form 1096-Annual Summary and Transmittal of U.S. Information Returns to IRS (mail to address on summary form or file electronically).
- Complete Employers Quarterly Federal Tax Return Form 941 (be sure to proof the Form 941 totals with W-3 summary statement).
- Form 944 is designed so the smallest employers (those whose annual liability for social security, Medicare, and withheld federal income taxes is \$1,000 or less) will file and pay these taxes only once a year instead of every quarter.
- Complete online the 2016 State of Iowa Verified Summary of Payments (VSP) to the Iowa Department of Revenue. Questions call 800.367.3388.
- Overtime rule changes were expected to have a widespread impact (raising the minimum salary threshold to \$47,476); now in holding pattern. This change was originally scheduled to take effect December 1, 2016, but a recent court injunction has delayed implementation until further notice.

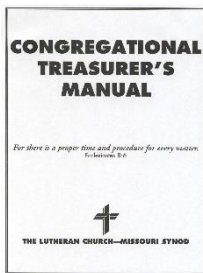


Biennial Report for an Iowa Non Profit Corporation

It is time to complete the 2017 Biennial Report for an Iowa Non Profit Corporation. The registered agent contact at every congregation should have received in January an email from the Secretary of State (SOS) office. At their website (sos.iowa.gov/br) enter your ID/corporation number and password/temporary code and update your registered agent and officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer and registered agent). To keep your incorporation status active, you must complete this form every other year. It is important to complete this form to provide legal protection for your leaders. It is due April 1, 2017. For more information, contact the SOS at 515-281-5204 or email sos@sos.iowa.gov.

If the church has not received a form, it is possible your church is no longer incorporated or the status has expired. A simple way to verify is to go to the Iowa Secretary of State website and do a search for your congregation. It should be active and list the current registered agent. A registered agent can be any staff person, attorney, church council leader, or other responsible member. Paul Pate, Iowa Secretary of State's office, has more information about this topic at www.sos.state.ia.us/business/nonprofits/index.html. The Secretary of State's Office can be contacted Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at 515-281-5204 or email sos@sos.state.ia.us.

"Why Incorporation?" The LCMS Congregational Treasurer's Manual, Chapter 13 states: "Incorporation is a method by which individuals unite under a common purpose and thereby acquire certain advantages and protections. Every congregation of the Synod should be incorporated. The value of corporate status lies in the protection from legal liability it affords for the individuals who belong to the organization. Without this status, the members are individually responsible for acts of the organization that might cause injury to someone or for defaults by the organization such as on loans." (www.lcms.org/ctm Chapter 13 - [Organizing and Incorporating](#))



Congregational Treasurer's Manuals

A few *Congregational Treasurer's Manuals* with CD are available for only \$10 (shipping charges will be waived). This manual is an extremely helpful tool for staff, treasurers, and church leadership to better understand many aspects of the congregation's business needs. Available while supplies last!

Substantiation of Contributions

A donor cannot claim a tax deduction for any single contribution of \$250 or more unless the donor obtains a written acknowledgement. Publication 1771 issued by the IRS explains the proper documentation necessary for recognizing cash and non-cash gifts. The document can be found at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1771.pdf. If you receive non-cash contributions over \$250, the value of the item/property donated should not be stated in the acknowledgement, only a description. For complete details, consult the Congregational Treasurer's Manual, chapter 10, section 10.500.

Submit your LCMS Statistics Report

Now is the time to complete the 2016 Congregation Statistics Report. Congregations received a notice from the Synod in January regarding the requirement to submit their annual data online. The Statistics Report is due February 28. The report includes membership data, gains/losses, education enrollment figures, and financial information. It is vital that all congregations complete the report. Not only is the form necessary for the Synod statistics, and is open to the public, but the number reported for confirmed membership is also used for convention assessments. Return the completed report to the LCMS Office of Rosters and Statistics.

The Lutheran Witness Subscription Rate

The rate for *The Lutheran Witness* remains almost the same for May 2017-May 2018. Including the insert, the total is \$22.67. The LW is available as an app, online, and in print. The flagship magazine of the LCMS, *The LW* is a monthly publication (11 issues per year) that offers Synod news, features, columns, Q & A, and more. The deadline for changes is March 1. If you have any questions, contact Concordia Publishing House circulation at 800.325.3040 ext. 1419 or email Becky.Laumand@CPH.org. For more information or to read web-exclusive stories, you can also go to www.lcms.org/witness.

The Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Symposium on Preaching

Pastors are encouraged to attend the upcoming Kapfer Symposium in Fort Dodge on Friday, February 17. More details in the monthly Messenger. Why does this event exist? The Iowa District West Board of Directors initiated an Endowment Fund in 2001 in memory of our late District President, Richard Kapfer. The purpose of this fund was and still is to promote excellency in preaching among the pastors of the District. Proclaiming the Word of God, Law and Gospel, was a special strength and passion for Dr. Kapfer. The purpose of this endowment fund is to provide a homiletics seminar every few years for pastors of the District and to provide financial support for seminary students. To date, the fund has provided 15 scholarships totaling \$11,250 to support vicars in the District. The current balance in the fund is almost \$119,000. To foster the continued growth of the Kapfer Endowment Fund, the Endowment & Legacy Committee encourages each congregation, as well as various auxiliaries within each congregation, to consider having a door offering for this fund. Be creative in finding other ways to collect a monetary gift to contribute. Donations collected should be sent to the District office or brought along to the February program. Checks can be made payable to IDW Kapfer Endowment.

Thrivent Choice Update

Thrivent Choice dollars for 2016 will be expiring soon! If you are a Thrivent member, you may be eligible to participate and direct Thrivent Choice dollars to Iowa District West and other LCMS organizations. Simply go to www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836) before March 31 and say “Thrivent Choice.”

If you have a specific ministry you want to support (a mission in the District, Joy in Ministry Scholarship Fund, IOWAY, Disaster relief/LERT fund, Building fund, etc.) let me know the ministry and the amount. Thank you to the many members who have already supported IDW!

Payroll Assistance Services

Although January is nearly over, the beginning of a new year is a good time to review your payroll set-up. A tax situation several congregations experienced last year was issuing a Form 1099 Misc to custodians when classified as independent contractors. The Iowa Department of Revenue will expect to see sales tax collected in these situations. Unfortunately congregations and/or the worker are being assessed penalties. When not sure if a worker is an employee or independent contractor, it is preferred to treat everyone as an employee and withhold taxes. Consult the District Business Manager or Congregational Treasurer's Manual for more information.

Processing payroll can be challenging for many volunteer treasurers (as discovered at the recent Treasurer Workshop). If assistance is needed, there are a couple of good ministry-friendly payroll services available (for a small fee). Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company (www.MinistryWorks.com) and Concordia Plan Services (through Paychex www.concordiaplans.org/paychex) will complete all your payroll service needs including end of year tax forms.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Credit Union

Have you heard that the LCMS opened its own credit union a year ago? Thanks to LCEF who provided significant funds to get it started, it is open for business. The credit union offers the same services that your local credit union or bank offers and your funds are insured.

Recently a significant milestone was achieved as The Lutheran Federal Credit Union reached 2,000 members. We thank God for His blessings! To those of you who already are members, we look forward to continuing to serve you with exceptional financial services and products within a faith-based environment. To those of you who are not yet members, we graciously invite you to visit LutheranFCU.org and join this movement that blesses individuals, ministries and the church body as a whole.

To learn more and join the movement, go to www.lutheranfcu.org or call 877.737.3576.



IOWA EAST & WEST LCEF



For more information on LCEF loans, investments, and services, please contact:

Carole L. White LCEF
V.P. Iowa East & West
1404 West 6th
Storm Lake, IA 50588
carole.white@lcef.org



Ruth Gerken
Promotions Director
Iowa East & West
ruth.gerken@lcef.org

For current rates visit
lcef.org



Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> where investments build ministry



Open an emergency fund that also helps ministries

Get a fresh start financially this year. For those unexpected expenses in life, open an emergency fund that also helps ministries share the Good News.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) can help you build financial security while helping build God's kingdom through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ministries. LCEF's Family Emergency StewardAccount® is designed to prepare you for those moments when you need funds not allocated in your monthly budget.

Your investment builds over time with electronic funds transfer (EFT) and interest earned. Access funds easily when you need them most. For complete details, visit lcef.org or call 800-843-5233.

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. StewardAccount access services are offered through UMB Bank n.a. The StewardAccount is not available to investors in South Carolina. The Family Emergency StewardAccount is known as the Family StewardAccount in the State of Ohio.

Rethwisch Receives Iowa District West 2016 LCEF \$1,000 Scholarship

Rachel Rethwisch received her Iowa District West Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) \$1,000 scholarship from LCEF Vice President - Iowa Districts East & West Carole White on Sunday, December 18, 2016 at Rachel's home congregation.

LCEF is thankful for Rachel and the generations of her family who have supported ministries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by investing in LCEF over the years.

There is still time to apply for the 2017 LCEF upper Midwest districts scholarship due February 28, 2017. Learn more and apply at www.lcefuppermidwest.org/scholarships.



Rachel (center,) her parents, Steve and Mary (back,) and her siblings, Nathan and Sarah.

\$1,000 LCEF Scholarship

APPLY BY FEB. 28, 2017

Each year, a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod student in Iowa District West is awarded a \$1,000 Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) scholarship. **Apply by February 28, 2017 at lcefuppermidwest.org/scholarships.**

(pictured) 2016 LCEF Scholarship winner Rachel Rethwisch, a member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Fort Dodge, Iowa, and a graduate of Fort Dodge Senior High School, Iowa.

Subscribe to LCEF's upper Midwest districts' newsfeed at lcefuppermidwest.org/news-feed or follow [Facebook.com/LCEFuppermidwest](https://www.facebook.com/LCEFuppermidwest) for annual applications and announcements.

Read more about Rachel's story using this QR code.



Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> iowa district west

Carole White
District Vice President
Iowa Districts East & West
877-439-5233
carole.white@lcef.org

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!

February 2017



Extended Epiphany! – With a later Easter celebration, we have the advantage of an extended Epiphany season—running through February. As our Lord's "lights," what or whom are we making known? What do others see in us and our members? Do we desire to connect them to our congregation/church or to Jesus? There's no question the charge is great and crucial! Which is why the place to begin is on our knees!

Prayer! - Remember that you can submit a prayer request for your local mission outreach efforts to Jill Davis (jill.davis@idwlcms.org) at any time! We covet your requests and your prayers. In fact, download a bulletin insert inviting your members to join our over 300 District mission prayer partners. Click [here](#).

The Institution, not the Savior! – Oftentimes, younger people today have said "no" to the institutional church, but are open to spiritual matters, including Jesus. According to a recent study by Lifeway, 79% agree with the statement "If a **friend** of mine really values their faith, I don't mind them talking about it." Key word – friend! Help your people see their life as a constant mission trip with Jesus, focused on building loving relationships. Contact the District to access a video-based study on the book, [Joining Jesus On His Mission](#).



Discipleship to Missional Community – Thanks to a grant from the Dunklau Foundation, the Nebraska and Iowa West Districts are able to offer (at half price!) the learning community, "Discipleship to Missional Community," from Pastoral Leadership Institute. The pastor, his spouse, and key leader(s) of your congregation will learn a rhythm of life that can be repeated and helps people become closer followers of Jesus Christ – and to disciple others! First immersion will be Oct. 12-15 in the Omaha area. Contact me or check out www.plileadership.org for more information.

Targets! The five targets of IDW mission efforts are unbelievers, former LCMS, vocation, men and technology. Here are some resources to assist in those areas:

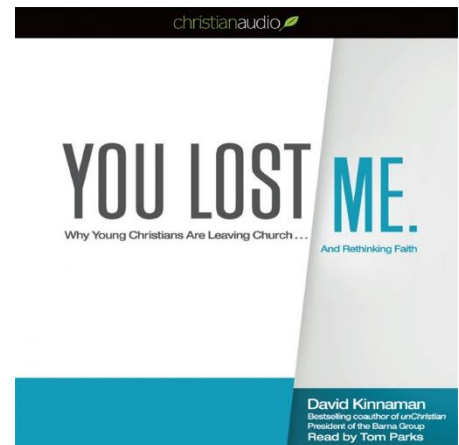


- **Technology** – Coming in early 2017 – www.thred.org. Bookmark it now! This is Lutheran Hour Ministries' latest tool for connecting with a new culture that lives on social media and the internet, but craves conversations and help with their lives.
- **Technology** – Click [here](#) to read "8 Tech Tools Every Growing Church Staff Needs." Interested in your thoughts and suggestions for other tech resources that enhance ministry!

- **Unbelievers - "5 Surprising Insights about the Unchurched"** – "There has never been a more opportune time to connect with the unchurched and lost," says Thom Rainer, President of LifeWay. Click [here](#) to read his insights based on a recently completed comprehensive study.

- **Unbelievers** – Click [here](#) to read a post by Ohio District Mission Executive, Kevin Wilson, "5 Shifts to Reaching the Never Churchd."

- **Unbelievers and Former LCMS** – Two helpful books are "You Lost Me" and "Unchristian," both by David Kinnaman. IDW has a video-based study resource on "You Lost Me" available for use. Contact me!



- **Former LCMS** - "Engaging the Wandering" Workshop will be held in Wall Lake on Sunday, March 19 by the Office of National Mission. Participants are led through Scripture and given practical tools to equip them to re-engage with those who have wandered away from the church. See the flyer included in this month's Messenger for more information!



Have stole, will preach! I'm available to preach at no charge for a mission emphasis Sunday. I'd be honored to come alongside you and your congregation in whatever way to help carry out your mission of making disciples and being Christ's witnesses beginning in your community. If not preaching, contact me today to pray, present, plan or put you in contact with other ministries or resources to bless your ministry.

Rev. Mark Gerken
Executive Assistant for Missions, Human Care & Stewardship
Iowa District West
515-570-2331
mark.gerken@idwlcms.org

Celebrate Jesus

5

Celebrate Jesus! In true Lutheran fashion, we ask, “What does this mean?” Does this mean that we are sharing the excitement of the love and grace that God has shown us? For thirty-five IOWAY Petal Pushers the answer was, “Yes, and much more!”

On the back of the bright red sweatshirts that we wore for seven days, we were a billboard to everyone who saw our backs. What an interesting reality! As we walked past people in the airport, at restaurants, at the hotel, while we decorated floats, on Skid Row and everywhere we went for seven days they saw “Celebrate Jesus” on the back of our shirts. They saw it as we walked past them on our way to our next adventure. One sweatshirt may make an impact, but when thirty-five matching shirts, worn by smiling Christians, go together through the airport, a statement is definitely made. We were asked by many people what we were doing and we had an opportunity to share that we were on a mission trip to share Jesus.



The IOWAY group headed out from the Kansas City airport loaded with extra suitcases of items to be distributed to the homeless on Skid Row. We were joined by our Indiana team at the hotel. The adventure started on December 29 and we returned on January 5. Those days were packed with two very full days at the Rose Palace decorating the Lutheran Hour float and others for the famous Rose Parade and one day enjoying the finished floats at Rosemont. Some evenings were spent sorting, counting and organizing the many thousands of items that we distributed at Skid Row. One morning was spent at the 99 Cent Store spending \$2,400 on items for the homeless. This money was lovingly given by individuals and church groups, some was given using Thrivent cards. We also drop shipped Bibles, 1,000 tote bags, hundreds of washcloths, deodorant and 1,000 pairs of athletic socks directly to the Union Rescue Mission building on Skid Row.

Instead of renting eight vehicles as in the past, this year I reserved three shuttles that took us everywhere and we “left the driving to them.” It worked great. The drivers were amazing. At one point, our driver was asked who he was a driver for in the fancy shuttles. He gave them an attitude and replied, “Some very wealthy, older women from Iowa.” We gave him a bad time for the next three days for his “older women” comment.



When the three impressive black shuttles pulled up to where we would normally get out and walk to Colorado Boulevard to view the famous parade, a gentleman assumed we were important so he moved a barricade and we parked half a block from our seats and the drivers parked for free. That was fun. It was also fun for the drivers as they sat with us as two of them had never seen the parade in person before.

Each year for the past fifteen years that I have led this mission event, I am blessed to see how God takes the team of strangers that He has chosen and bonds them together in such a short time to be His 'hands and feet' in such a unique situation.



The Lutheran float was absolutely beautiful! It celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the nailing of the 95 thesis on that famous Wittenberg Castle door. It also honored the 100th anniversary of Lutheran Laymen's League. Pastor Greg Seltz, LHM speaker, and his wife, Yvette rode on the float. I had fun working with Yvette as we ran rice through a kitchen blender to make just the right consistency for use on the float. As you probably know, every inch of the float has to be covered by materials that are or were alive. It's interesting to see all the different types of materials that they use to decorate the only Christian float in the parade. We used to say we were the only religious float but that is no longer true. We are now the only Christian float.

Brenda Bruggeman shared, "I have grown up watching the parade on TV each year. It started with my dad waking us with, 'The parade is on!' When I heard about this opportunity to actually help with the parade, I jumped at the chance. It definitely hits a bucket list item to sit with my feet on Colorado Blvd. and see the parade in person. It will always be more meaningful since I know all that goes into the construction of the floats. Each part of that process from the assembly of the floats, meeting other people working on the floats, and watching the final product was beyond my expectations. I loved being on the scaffolding. Perhaps the mountaintop experience for me was meeting these incredible people of God. We have shared laughter, tears, prayers and abundant joy. We have served together and become knit together in heart and friendships. I will miss these sweet, bubbly, wise, caring and energetic people."

Connie Mekus shared, "I had looked forward to my first time as a Petal Pusher all year. I wasn't disappointed. It has been a wonderful experience. From meeting everyone for the first time to walking into the Rose Palace for the first time and all of us working together, supporting each other and sharing our faith. It is heartwarming to hear how well-respected the Petal Pushers are and how God has shown us a way to serve Him. It was truly an honor to have worked on the Lutheran Hour float."

Gayle McGilvrey reflected on the Skid Row experience, "Makes me appreciate my life much more. I'm glad these people have someone to help them. They were friendly and said 'thank you' for what we gave them. The kitchen people appreciated the help from us. It is sad to see the tent homes along the streets. It was a good day."

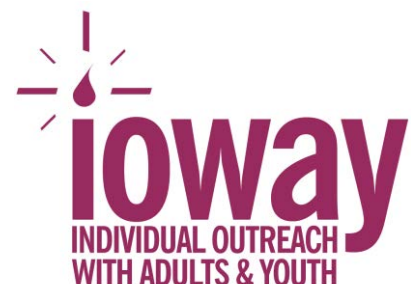
Sam Lee recalled, "It made me cry. I have never seen anything like this before. The people were so kind when they came up for their lunch. I was fortunate to be able to hand their food to them. We live in America and to see the streets lined with boxes, chairs and blankets on the sidewalk for their bed – oh, so sad! We are all God's children and I know He will provide."

A team member shared, "My favorite part of any trip is always the people. I am thankful for time with friends from the past and opportunities to make new ones. I feel blessed by the honest stories shared during shuttle rides, over meals and especially during work on the floats. My great thanks to Ellie and Lynn for the hours of 'behind the scenes' work that makes every event flow flawlessly."

Another team member expressed their thoughts by writing this prayer, "Heavenly Father, thank You for the opportunities to serve today. I am overwhelmed by the undeserved blessings You have showered on me and my family. I ask for your protection and healing to be poured out on the Union Rescue Mission. Let Your Holy Spirit take over this place. Give an extra measure of peace, godly wisdom and faith to grow in this place. From the ashes of Skid Row, rise up a powerful group of men and women who strive for You with all their hearts. Grant them a redemption story that brings You glory and makes people around them take notice. Show me how You want me to serve. In Jesus' name. Amen."

For photos and six daily trip updates, please check out www.servinggodbyservingothers.blogspot.com. Any questions on how to get involved with mission trips or service outreaches, please contact me:

Ellie Menz, IOWAY Director
ellie.menz@idwlcms.org | 515-370-1159





HUGE BLESSINGS COME TO MISSION CENTRAL WITH HUGE AMOUNTS OF MAIL!

It is only with the help of the volunteers that God sends to us at HIS Mission Central, that we are able to handle the amount of work at this MIRACLE PLACE! We have many faithful servants of the Lord Jesus that HE sends to help with the huge volume of HIS TOTAL BLESSINGS!

Many people don't realize the volume of work that has to be handled here at this place! Pictured is mail we received on ONE DAY! Each piece is an adoption agreement for a support gift for our dear missionaries. THIS IS AMAZING MIRACLE STUFF, AND SOMETHING THAT ONLY GOD COULD DO. We are humbled by God's blessings.



MISSIONARIES COME FROM GALVA, IOWA AND AUSTIN, TEXAS

What a blessing that God sends the right people at the right place at "just the right time." It was quite a journey for Missionary Olivia Jensen as she traveled to our area from her school at Concordia University in Austin, Texas! She came to Mission Central with her mom, Roxie Jensen from Galva, Iowa.



These two special NOT NORMAL ladies were interested in visiting about the possibility of Olivia becoming a foreign missionary. We were able to make the right connections with the right people to explore what the Lord might have in mind for Olivia.

We enjoyed some special prayer time together and provided these guests with a brief tour of the facilities. God is still "CALLING" His people at HIS time. It will be interesting to see how this story unfolds. Roxie Jensen is pictured with her daughter Olivia in front of our Boss here at the Lord's Mission Central.

HISTORIC EVENT AT MISSION CENTRAL ON DECEMBER 17, 2016

What a JOY and BLESSING to witness the Official Installation of the Honorable Missionary Rev. Dr. Brent Smith as Mission Development Counselor on December 17, 2016 at the world famous Mission Central located in the remote hills of Western Iowa!

It was one of those historic days that we will never forget! What made the event so very special was that it was scheduled on a cold and snowy winter day! Wind chill indexes were in the area of 20 degrees below zero. Churches cancelled services and people were advised to STAY HOME! However, for the people that are a part of Mission Central, they are NOT

NORMAL...and while normal people would have indeed stayed home...a large group of NOT NORMAL PEOPLE did attend this very special event.

What a privilege to sense the presence of the Lord Jesus as The Honorable Missionary Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan, President of the Missouri District, and The Honorable Missionary Rev. Richard Snow, President of the Nebraska District, were in charge of this sacred installation! The Honorable Missionary Rev. Dr. Steve Turner, President of Iowa District West, attempted to arrive for this event, but due to the heavy ice and snow and the fact that he was ill to the point of not being able to speak, better judgment led him to turn around and return to his home. He was missed, but we felt his prayers and presence.

It was a very moving and emotional Installation Service. The message that was presented by Rev. Yared Halche from Ethiopia was one that NO ONE will forget! Yes, he related to the entire group of how his father, who was a Muslim, came to know the Lord Jesus and, as evidenced by the Power of the Holy Spirit, was truly called at "just the right time" to be baptized!

We were blessed by many area pastors and their wives who attended, and quite a number of our faithful volunteers were present. Scripture was read by our volunteers Lyle Kruse from Omaha and Dr. Lee Umland of Dakota Dunes, South Dakota.



The entire group was amazed and so happy to welcome our friends and co-workers from the Office of International Mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and The Mission Advancement Office also. We were so pleased to welcome the Honorable Missionary Rev. Dr. Kevin Robson, Chief Mission

Officer of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod from St. Louis, and also Executive Supervisor for Mission Central, the Honorable Missionary Chandra Thurman and the Department Head of Mission Advancement the Honorable Missionary Mark Hofman.

It was a day WE WILL NEVER FORGET here at the Lord's Mission Central. Rev. Smith will be living in Springfield, Virginia until his home is sold and a home can be purchased in Omaha, Nebraska. The family (pictured at the installation) includes Brent and his wife Jennie, and their children Zach age 16, Katelyn age 14 (future secretary at Mission Central) and special missionary Sofia age 11.



Mission Central – LCMS World Mission

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

Gary Thies
gary.thies@lcms.org
www.missioncentral.us

MISSION CENTRAL EVENTS

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Georgia Witt

Kenya East Africa

Saturday, February 4, 2017

1 PM

Rev. Rex and Linda Rinne

Czech Republic

Saturday, February 4, 2017

1:30 PM



Rev. Greg Seltz

Speaker of The Lutheran Hour

Thursday, May 25, 2017

7 PM

Gail Grieser

Macau

Saturday, June 24, 2017

1 PM





Rev. Chuck Hoffman & Family

Korea

Saturday, June 24, 2017

1:30 PM



Rev. Dr. Steve Oliver & family

Taiwan

Saturday, July 15, 2017

1 PM



Rev. J. P. Cima & Family

Vietnam

Saturday, July 29, 2017

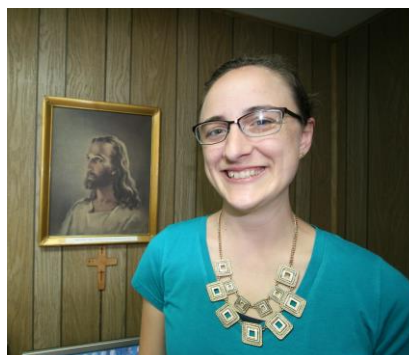
1:30 PM

Alyssa Anders

Russia

Saturday, July 29, 2017

1 PM





Yang family

Asia

Saturday, August 19, 2017

1 PM



Rev. Larry & Tina Matro

Papua New Guinea

Saturday, September 9, 2017

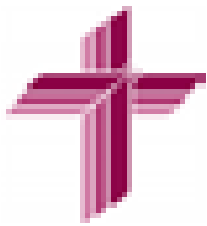
10 AM



Mission Central-LCMS World Mission

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

gary.thies@lcms.org
www.missioncentral.us



!AMIGOS EN CRISTO!

News from ***La Iglesia Evangelica Luterana Amigos en Cristo***: Friends in Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
Pastor Daniel Vogel, Denison, Iowa

Iowa District
West, LCMS

Year 13 Issue 2
FEB. 2017



CHRISTMAS JOY IN DENISON

One of the traditions of our Christmas Eve service at Amigos en Cristo at Denison is the annual photo of the Manuel and Maria Perez family. With Elbert in front as the acolyte, the family gathers to worship the Christ Child. They are a wonderful example of the families that God has brought to our country and to Denison to join us as citizens of our nation. The Perez family is originally from Mexico. Manuel came first and found work at the Farmland pork plant in Denison. Maria and the children came later. I first met Maria as she came to our English classes and later as we worked together at Tyson. The family also studied in our class for preparing to take the citizenship exam. Through our classes, the entire family has become U.S. citizens. The youth are all working and studying: Mayra studies at Creighton Univ. in Omaha; Claudia studies at Iowa Western in Council Bluffs; Luis studies at Iowa State. The others are hard workers, Alma at a Council Bluffs nursing home and Christian and Maricela work at Farmland in Denison with Manuel. Elbert was the first baby baptized in our church and attended our Zion School for many years. Great family!



CHRISTMAS BABIES

On Christmas Eve we celebrated the Baby Jesus with three babies of our member families. Pictured above at left is *Natalie* held by her mother Maricela Perez; *Yaretzy* held by her mother Adriana Mendoza; and *Liam* held by his mother Azucena Gonzales with husband, Merlin. Yaretzy was born on Wednesday of that week and was in church on Saturday. What a Christmas blessing for all of us as we reflected on the birth of Jesus and all that His life means for us and for our families! These young parents are also a wonderful gift for our Hispanic ministry, and for our churches in Iowa District West. We celebrate our young bilingual families that see the importance of their faith and family. Our challenge is to develop them into leaders that will prepare our children and our churches to meet the multicultural need to serve with the Gospel all the diverse groups that God is bringing to our communities.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT our new church.

**For our mission friends, financial support checks should now be sent to:
Amigos en Cristo Lutheran Church, 1004 1st Avenue South, Denison, Iowa 51442**



CHRISTMAS JOYS IN STORM LAKE

Our Christmas Eve service at Grace was a blessing as our families came together to worship and to share their gifts in praise of the Christ Child. One of the highlights was the musicians who led our worship. They were: in front, Humberto Diaz, I played my trumpet, Mike Segebart came with me from Denison to play the piano, Denise Balandran played her flute and Matthew Marroquin played his violin. Not pictured is Briana Marroquin who also played the piano. God bless all of our families that share their talents to praise Baby Jesus. We especially thank our high school students for their willingness to serve and share. God is bringing new families to this ministry at Grace and we are blessed to have long time members committed to sharing the faith in the Storm Lake Hispanic community. At the same time this has been a difficult year of vacancy for the Grace Hispanic members.

As they seek to call a bilingual pastor, they have had to adjust to changing worship hours as myself and Pastor Henry Witte of Sioux City alternate the leading of the Sunday worship services. We thank Grace for their support and commitment to this ministry and pray that God will continue to guide this important work. We also thank the area Circuits and the District for their support and for their partnership in determining the future calling of a pastor for this important work in the Storm Lake area, one of the highest Hispanic minority communities in the state of Iowa.

THANKS FOR YOUR CHOICE DOLLARS FROM THRIVENT

If you have any questions on how you can support our Hispanic ministry with Choice dollars please contact your local Thrivent Financial representative or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836. We thank all who shared their dollars with us in 2016!

TO CONTACT ME

Rev. Daniel Vogel

32678 Aspen Ave.

Manning, IA 51455

Home: 712-653-2354

Cell: 712-309-1292

E-mail:

daniel.vogel@ziondenison.org

**Please forward this
newsletter to a friend from:
www.idwlcms.org**



PLEASE PRAY: + For the exciting new challenges and goals of our Hispanic ministries in the new year of 2017. + For the Grace Hispanic church in Storm Lake as they continue the process for calling a bilingual pastor. + For Rosa in Storm Lake and Dario in Denison as they study for adult membership. + For the blessings of the Advent/Christmas season and the new year ahead for mission work among Hispanic immigrants. + *In thanksgiving for the mission hearts of the many individuals and congregations of Iowa District West who support the Lord's work among Hispanic immigrants in Denison and in our other two missions in Sioux City and Des Moines.*

HISPANIC OUTREACH IN SIOUXLAND

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



February 2017

***“...the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:28***

TEOTIHUACÁN: My wife and I went to Mexico the first part of January to visit our son and his wife who are living and working in Querétaro. One day we went to see the historical site of Teotihuacán, which was a flourishing city in the first centuries AD and rivaled Rome in size and population (according to some). Little is known of the people who built it and of their culture. After the demise of the city in the 5th to 7th centuries, the Aztecs used the site as a holy place for their religion. The name has been translated as “The city of the gods.”

The major features are the three pyramids, the largest of which is the pyramid of the Sun. This is the third largest pyramid in the world, and one can climb the steps to the top. We had a guide who was from the local area, and she explained to us the local belief regarding the religion of the original builders of the pyramids. (There are different ideas regarding the religion of these original inhabitants, because very little written material from them is available.) She said that a young man would be chosen to be the sacrifice for the well-being of the people. He would be treated and live as a king for one year, receiving whatever he wanted. He would consider it a great honor to be sacrificed and would be transformed into a god at his death.

How similar, yet very different, is this from God’s revelation to us in Jesus Christ. Because of sin, we humans should be sacrificed, but we’re not. Instead, God sends His Son who humbles himself to live as a servant on our behalf. He lives under the law of God and takes upon Himself our punishment. He died for the well-being of all people, not just one nation. He died that we all can become children of God, not just one person. His bones are not buried in a pyramid, but are alive, assuring us of our own resurrection. No repetition is needed. No extra duty or sacrifice is required on our part. “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29).

May God help us to be a living “city of God,” serving Him as His children and leading others to a living Savior. We are not an abandoned impressive stone city, but a city of living stones built on Christ. May God help us to show His glory that others be impressed with His architecture and craftsmanship within us, His people.

Please pray for our English classes, which will go from January to May, that we may shine God’s love in these teaching moments.

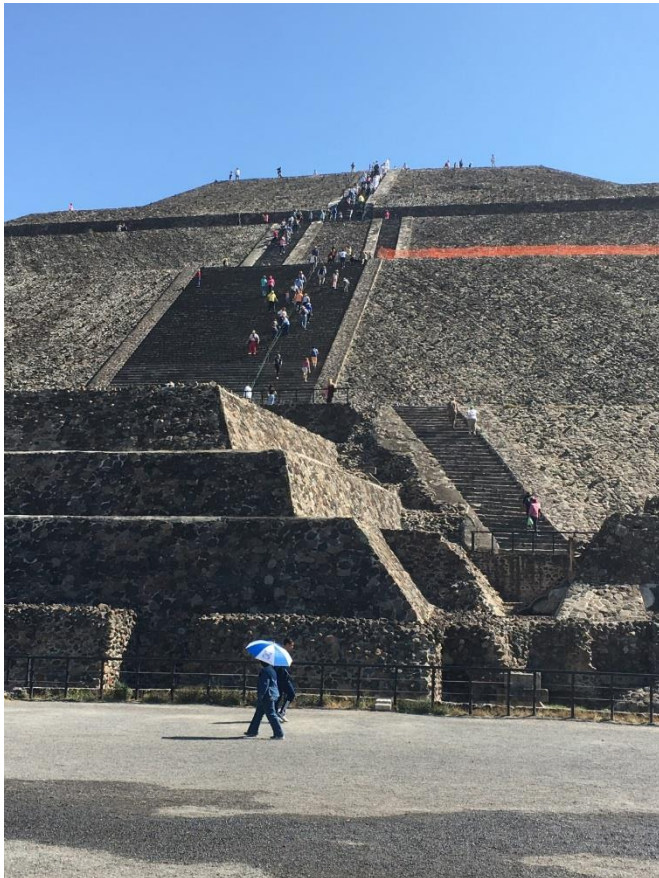
Please pray for the many needy peoples throughout the world that they may have food and clothing and the Good News in their lives.

Please pray for future workers to continue the outreach to Hispanics.



Paul and Francesca (our son and his wife), Roberto and Ingrid (Francesca's parents from Chile), and Henry and Ruthie in front of the Pyramid of the Sun, Teotihuacán, Mexico.
(orange line on pyramid is plastic construction fencing, not original)

Walking up to another level of the Pyramid of the Sun



Pyramid of the Sun, Teotihuacán, Mexico

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!**

February is the month of love. People celebrate St. Valentine's Day by giving the person to whom their heart's affections are turned something to show them their affection; usually a box of chocolates and a bouquet of flowers, perhaps a romantic dinner at a fancy restaurant with a nice bottle of wine to drink or a night at the theatre. That may be an idealistic view of what people hope will happen on St. Valentine's Day, because that is how Hollywood depicts Valentine's Day for us. Valentine's Day is our day for romance because we are just too busy otherwise to think about or take the time to be romantic.

St. Valentine was not just some guy the church picked out because he had a name that sounded romantic to the hearer or because he was the person who exemplified how we are to love one another. What is known about St. Valentine is that he died as a martyr confessing Christ as his Lord and Savior to Emperor Claudius II in Rome around 270 AD.

Church tradition states that Valentine was a doctor and a priest. He was a man who was known for his kindness and care of others in both the body and the soul. In this way he mimicked our Lord Jesus, who healed the sick and yet more wondrously brought peace to the soul with his words of promise and hope through faith in Jesus Christ.

The very day Valentine was to face his martyrdom, he is said to have brought consolation to the daughter of his jailer by writing her a small note of encouragement. The young girl had reportedly come to love this godly man, Valentine, and was grieved at the thought of death. But Valentine knew that death was a defeated enemy because of Christ's death and resurrection. So he comforted the young girl. Hence the custom of St. Valentine's Day notes arose as it is shared by the children in the school rooms and by adults all over the world, not for romance but for comfort and consolation through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This same sentiment is shared in this familiar children's song loved by all because of the comfort and hope it offers.

LSB Hymn 588 (sung for the encouragement of all)

Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so,
Little ones to him belong; They are weak, but he is strong.

Refrain: Yes! Jesus loves me! Yes! Jesus loves me!

Yes! Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! He who died Heaven's gate to open wide.
He has washed away my sin, lets his little child come in.

Refrain: Yes! Jesus Loves me! Yes! Jesus Loves me!

Yes! Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

We might say that Jesus is our true valentine from God because in His death Jesus forgives our sins, offering hope in our grief and consolation in our sorrow. Like Valentine, this hope and consolation are ours to share through the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those around us. What greater joy can there be than to share the greatest love the world has ever known with those who do not know the true meaning of love.

In Jesus' name! Amen!

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 of Thanksgiving

"I will sing of the steadfast Love of the Lord, forever;
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations.
For I said, "Steadfast love will build up forever;
in the heavens you will establish your faithfulness."
You have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one;
I have sworn to David my servant:
"I will establish your offspring forever,
and build your throne for all generations." (Psalm 89:1-4)

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!

Rev. Steven Stoll
Trinity Lutheran Church, Hinton, Iowa

THE LAMPLIGHTER



THEME: Greater love!

February 2017

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you."
John 15:13-14

*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



February 2017 (Please Copy, Post, and Share)

Camp Okoboji News

What is Happening at Your Camp

1531 Edgewood Dr
Milford, IA 51351
712-337-3325

Our Promise of Jesus at the Lake
A friendly, safe, refreshing and relaxing Christian experience
An exceptional value for you and your family



Camp Okoboji 2017

Consequently, you are no longer
foreigners and aliens, but
fellow citizens with God's
people and members of



God's household, built on the
foundation of the apostles and
prophets, with Christ Jesus
himself as the chief corner
stone. In Him the whole building
is joined together and rises to
become a holy temple in the
Lord. And in Him, you too are
being built together to become a
dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

Ephesians 2: 19-22



Under Construction 2017 Programs and Events

Feb. 24-25: Junior High C.H.A.O.S. Retreat
April 22: Annual Meeting & Basket Auction
April 27-29: Wittenberg Home School Retreat
May 5-7: Spring Clean-up Weekend
May 12-14: Youth Volunteer Weekend
May 21-24: Pastors Continuing Education
May 26-29: Veteran's Family Retreat
June 2-4: Kids Kamp
June 8-11: JOY Camp 1 (Special Needs)
June 11-14: Adventure Camp
June 11-17: Girls Sports Camp
June 18-23: Technology Camp
June 24: Quilt Auction
June 24: Paul's Bike-A-Thon Challenge
June 25-July 1: Minneboji Youth Camp
July 2-8: July 4th Family Retreat
July 9-15: Junior High Week
July 13-16: JOY Camp 2 (Special Needs)
July 16-22: Concordia Cub Week Youth Camp
July 23-29: High School Youth Week
July 30-Aug. 5: Family Retreat I Week
Aug. 6-12: Family Retreat II Week
Aug. 11-13: Hispanic Family Retreat
Aug. 20: Golf Outing
Aug. 25-27: Adult Retreat
Sept. 2: BBQ Cook Off Event
Sept. 20-22: Outdoor Education
Sept. 28-Oct. 1: Fall Clean-up Weekend &
Volunteer Appreciation Dinner
Oct. 6-8: Fall Women's Retreat
Sunday Morning Worship: Memorial Day-
Labor Day Weekends
Omelet Brunches: 1st Sundays (May-Nov.)

DISCOVER CAMPAign Okoboji Update

**Campaign Reaches \$1,400,000
Phase One Goal! Praise God!**



To all the
Individuals
Congregations
Organizations
Special Groups
Helpers &
Volunteers

So What Happens Next?

The Camp Board is taking time this spring to conduct a Missional Clarity Evaluation with LCEF. This process will help better prepare Camp for the next campaign phase and the over-all future mission of Camp Okoboji.

In the mean time, construction continues, and fund raising will continue as well. Keep looking for updates!

- Still on the Table -

\$250,000 Matching Gift Challenge:
We're within \$50,000 of meeting this
Challenge! Your Support is Appreciated
and Your Gift Will Still Be Matched!



Members can make a huge Camp impact with
Action Teams and Choice Dollar Designations
Don't Forget: Designations must be
made by March 31



Improved Camp Website and On-line Registration



Feb. 24-25: C.H.A.O.S. Jr. High Retreat

Get your group together for this
amazingly fun winter retreat.



* New for 2017 * Technology Camp: June 18-23

Create and build your
own video game!



Camp Currency!

St. Paul, Ames created and gave Camp Curren-
cy to their summer campers to spend in the
Camp Store. A great encouragement and
reward! Contact the
Camp office for more
information.



YOUR Participation & Support Needed!

We ask our Camp Friends To . . .

1. Pray for the success of Camp Okoboji.
2. Attend Camp programs and events.
3. Support Camp verbally and financially.
4. Share Camp with others and invite them.

**For More Info.
Flyers & Schedules
www.campokoboji.org**

Camp Staff Contact Information

Executive Director: Doug Kading doug@campokoboji.org
Office Director: Kellie Jones kellie@campokoboji.org
Program Director: Lori Gamble lori@campokoboji.org
Min. Advance. Dir.: Paul Golke paul@campokoboji.org

February 24-25, 2017

2017 C.H.A.O.S.



Christians Hyped About Our Savior!

For all 6th—8th Graders and Adult Chaperones

19 hours of Fun, Fellowship, Music and Bible Study!

Bible Study Leader: DCE Tim Kightlinger, Director of Youth Ministry at
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Urbandale, IA

Music Leader: Pastor Richard Merrill from St. John Lutheran Church
in Charter Oak, IA

Activity Leader: DCE Paige Fitzsimons from St. Paul Lutheran Church
in Garner, IA

Cost: \$60 per person, includes an AWESOME T-shirt!

Register online at www.campokoboji.org starting January 20

Check the Website for schedules and what to bring!

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

LFS Welcomes New Staff Member, Rev. Dr. Jim Lamb

Lutheran Family Service is pleased to announce the addition of Rev. Dr. Jim Lamb to the life ministry team!

About his role with LFS, Jim says: "I pray that God will use me to enhance the LFS mission of walking with people experiencing hard times by providing Gospel-based education on life issues. I have been asked to focus especially on end-of-life issues and embryo rescue through adoption. I look forward to interacting with

pastors and laity as we gather around the Word of God."

When you see Jim, welcome him into this new and marvelous rescue work through the church's Lutheran Family Service!

Please pray for Dr. Lamb and for the LCMS legislators who represent us in the Iowa state house.



Remain alert. Keep standing firm in your faith. Keep on being courageous and strong. 1 Corinthians 16:13

LCMS Legislators & Leaders Join LFS at the Capital



Front Row: Rev. Dr. Jim Lamb (LFS); IDW President Rev. Dr. Steven Turner, IDE President Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders; Senator Mark Segebart (Trinity, Manilla); Senator Jason Schultz (Immanuel, Schleswig). Back Row: Quinn Adair (Perry Lutheran Home); Senator Tim Kraayenbrink (St. Paul, Fort Dodge); Kim Laube (LFS); Representative Mary Ann Hanusa (St. Paul, Council Bluffs); Senator Roby Smith (Trinity, Davenport)

LFS' Kim Laube and Jim Lamb were joined by Perry Lutheran Home's Quinn Adair and the Presidents from Iowa Districts East and West at the Capital for a meeting with the 5 legislators who are members of LCMS congregations in Iowa.

Under leadership of LFS' Kim Laube, the group shared information from human care, medical and spiritual perspectives in

support of life at all stages until natural death. The greatest focus was on recent attempts to bring physician assisted suicide legislation to Iowa. All legislators expressed interest in learning more, as well as a commitment to oppose any such legislation.

Efforts to enhance Iowa laws regulating adoption and legislation to recognize

life as fully human from the point of conception were also discussed.

LFS hopes to sponsor meetings of this group periodically to offer input, information, education, advice and resources about topics related to life, family life and religious liberty.

Engaging the Wandering Workshop

Every congregation has members who, for whatever reason, become less involved in worship attendance and other congregational activities. Reaching out to inactive members is an important part of the mission work that the Lord calls and enables us to do.

To help equip people to reach out to inactive members of their churches, Peace Lutheran Church in Wall Lake and partnered with Iowa District West is sponsoring an **Engaging the Wandering Workshop**. Participants will see how much Jesus loves those who have wandered from the flock and will learn caring ways to gently restore them to the Body of Christ.

This workshop is suitable for Boards of Elders, Evangelism/Mission, Education, Youth, Fellowship and other groups. Learn practical ways to engage inactive members that they might return to the worshipping community.

Date: Sunday, March 19

Time: 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. with dinner served (registration begins at 1 p.m.). A bonus session will take place from 6:30-7:30 p.m. for those wishing to stay.

Location: Wall Lake Community Building, 209 W. 2nd Street, Wall Lake, IA 51466

Presenter: Rev. Todd Kollbaum, Director of the LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission, will give a practical presentation about reaching out to inactive members.

Cost: **\$10 per congregation – Send as many members as possible!** *A freewill offering will be received to defray dinner expenses with proceeds going to support “The Gate” District missionary partner.*

Registration: Please register by Wednesday, March 15. Call 712-664-2961 or email peacecar@netins.net with name of congregation and number of participants.

Presented in cooperation with:

**LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission
Office of National Mission
and
Iowa District West, LCMS**





2017 National Essay Contest

For students in Grades 6 through 12

(Any Lutheran student or student in a Lutheran school)

Sponsored by the Council of Federation Presidents, Lutherans For Life

Contest Guidelines:

1. Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the 2017 Conference theme: **Hope For Life** and 1 Peter 3:15 *"in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"*
2. Examples of topics the essay could deal with are: abortion, the handicapped, infanticide, cloning, stem cell research, physician assisted-suicide or euthanasia.
3. Essays should include student's name, grade (identify school or church) and email address. All entries submitted by a teacher or pastor, should include their name and email address. This information should be submitted on the rubric page used in grading the essay.
4. All sources for references, statistics and quotes should be incorporated within the essay and then included in a bibliography at the end.

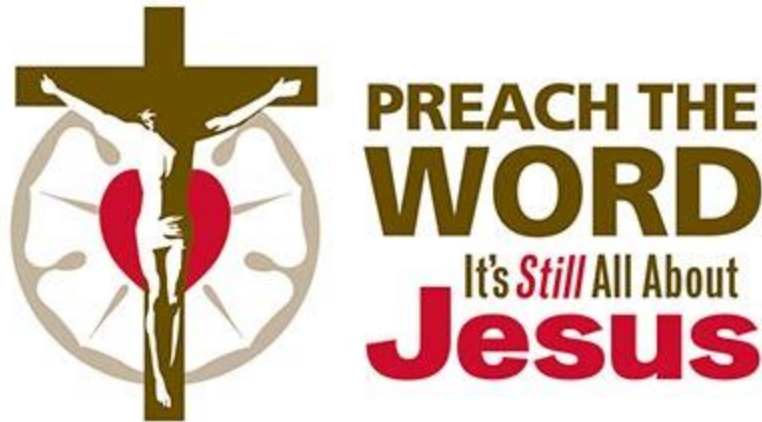
Grades 6 - 8 should submit essays up to 400 words

Grades 9 - 12 should submit essays up to 750 words

5. Entries first should be submitted digitally using Microsoft Word to the State LFL Federation by March 15, 2017. Send State entries to: Kie Maas at faithluth@aol.com
6. Lutherans For Life of Iowa (Iowa Federation) will award a \$100 prize to one winner in each age category. The winners' essays will be forwarded to the National Contest.
7. Winning state entries (one from Grades 6-8 and one from Grades 9-12) from each State Federation should be submitted digitally by May 1, 2017 to: essay@lutheransforlife.org
8. Grand Prize for national winning entry at each level: \$250 plus free conference registration to the 2017 Regional Conference of their choice and 1 hotel night at a conference hotel.
9. All entries become the property of Lutherans For Life.
10. For questions or resources on the sanctity of life, see: lutheransforlife.org

MEMORANDUM

The Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Symposium on Preaching



DATE: February 17, 2017 (9am-2:30pm)

PLACE: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fort Dodge, Iowa

TO: Preachers of Iowa District West and LCMS

FROM: Rev. Dr. Steve Turner, President Iowa District West

Dear Brothers in Christ,

The 2017 Kapfer Symposium on Preaching for pastors and vicars is scheduled for Friday, February 17 from 9am-2:30pm (8:30-9am fellowship, coffee, etc.) at St. Paul Lutheran Church (400 South 13th St., Fort Dodge). We are very excited about this year's Symposium. The Rev. Dr. David Schmitt will introduce *Preach The Word* (PTW), a synodical effort to foster excellence in preaching. I invite you to take a look at President Harrison's introduction to PTW at <https://youtu.be/HpFWZEIxs8>.

Dr. Schmitt is the Gregg H. Benidt Memorial Professor of Homiletics and Literature. A Concordia Seminary, St. Louis faculty member since 1995, he is professor of practical theology. He is also chairman of the homiletics instructors group. His interests and areas of expertise include preaching, the intersections of faith and culture, particularly literary culture, spiritual autobiography and the devotional life.

The entire cost of the symposium (including registration and lunch) will be underwritten by the Richard G. Kapfer Memorial Fund and a grant from American Church Group/Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company. If your plan includes arriving Thursday evening, the district has a corporate rate with:

Sleep Inn & Suites – 110 Leah Lane (down the road from the district office)

515-302-8508 website: <https://www.choicehotels.com/iowa/fort-dodge/sleep-inn-hotels/ia217?source=gyxt>

Iowa District West rate: \$79 (plus tax) for a queen room \$89 (plus tax) for a king room

Another hotel option:

AmericInn – 100 West Kenyon Rd (down the road from the district office)

515-576-2100 website:

http://www.americinn.com/hotels/ia/fortdodge?utm_source=google&utm_medium=local_listing&utm_campaign=google_local_page&chebs=ai_gl

Rate: \$98.91 (plus tax) for a double queen room

To register please contact my assistant, Jill Davis (jill.davis@idwlcms.org or 515.576.7666) no later than Monday, February 13. I am looking forward to seeing you at this continuing education event.

Always in Grace,
Pres. Steve Turner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve D. Turner'.