

# District Resources

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

the Happenings



## The President's Message - July 2019

### CELEBRATE!

**CELEBRATE:** (verb) *acknowledge (a significant or happy day or event) with a social gathering or enjoyable activity.*

Recently in my daily Bible reading I read Ezra 6:16 (ESV): "And the people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, **celebrated** the dedication of this house of God with joy." How did they celebrate? Verse 17 tells us: "For the dedication they offered 100 bulls, 200 sheep, and 400 lambs as sacrifices, and 12 goats as offerings for sin, one for each tribe of Israel."

What a great day to celebrate! King Cyrus of Persia allowed the Israelites to leave their exile in Babylonia and return to Judah to rebuild the temple and take the captured temple treasures with them. They returned to Jerusalem and worked at rebuilding the temple. It took four years and was completed in 520 BC. "They...celebrated...with joy." The dedication certainly was a time to celebrate – the broken temple of God had been rebuilt.

Celebrating is good. We will celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Benjamin Franklin on July 3, 1776 wrote: "The colonies have separated from the tyranny of England, and we can finally stand together as the newly-formed United States of America! On this July 4, 1776, I, Benjamin Franklin, aka Poor Richard, aka Benjo Freezus, set my sights towards the future of our great nation and hope that future generations will remember to celebrate America's independence." Franklin got his wish. We continue to celebrate in 2019.

During the summer, we celebrate in so many different ways. We celebrate family events - reunions, weddings, wedding anniversaries, birthdays, class reunions, etc. This summer our Synod is celebrating 3 events. The LWML just finished celebrating their 38<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention in Mobile, AL with over 3000 coming together. Over 25,000 youth will be in Minneapolis in July. During the five days of the Gathering, youth will spend time together in God's word, worship, service, and fellowship with others. Under the theme "JOY:FULLY LUTHERAN – Rejoice. Pray. Give Thanks.", our Synod will gather in convention in Tampa for the 67<sup>th</sup> Convention. There certainly is a time for business and worship but also a wonderful time for many to reconnect and celebrate with old friends and classmates.

The Lord's Supper is a celebration of Christian fellowship. As it states in the Formula of Concord: "After the Last Supper, as he was about to begin his bitter passion and death for our sin, in this sad, last hour of his life, this truthful and almighty Lord, our Creator and Redeemer Jesus Christ, selected his words with great deliberation and care in ordaining and instituting this most venerable sacrament, which was to be observed with great reverence and obedience until the end of the world and which was to be an abiding memorial of his bitter passion and death and of all his blessings, a seal of the new covenant, a comfort for all sorrowing hearts, and a true bond and union of Christians with Christ their head and with one another (FC SO VII, 44)." This celebration takes place in many churches every Sunday.

There are church celebrations as well. St John's, Edgar is celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Seven congregations are celebrating the installation of new pastors that just graduated from the seminary. Two new pastors are being installed – pulpits are being filled. St. Paul, Pine River (Merrill) just threw a party for their neighborhood – "Party on P"!

Celebrating and getting together is not only good for families but also for the church. I believe it is good for congregations to plan for some type of celebration, to bring the congregation and neighborhood together. Find a reason to celebrate – mission festival; anniversary of your pastor, teacher or DCE; church anniversary; dedication of something; VBS or whatever your creative mind can imagine. It takes some planning and work but the celebration for the congregation is worth it. Celebrate!

**"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps 118.24 ESV).** We are God's baptized people. We are sinful people who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ on Calvary and through faith in Him we will be saved. We have reason... so plan your celebrations & **CELEBRATE!**

Rev. Dr. Dwayne M. Lueck, District President



### In This Issue:

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- Across My Desk: DJ Schult
- News and Events
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- NWD Financial Box Score

### **Synod Convention Prayer**

*Congregations: Consider using these words in the Prayer of the Church on or before July 14, as you pray together for the Synod convention (July 20–25). Reproduction for parish use is permitted. <https://blogs.lcms.org/2019/a-prayer-for-the-church/>*

O Christ, when You ascended into heaven, You sent Your disciples into the world to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them and teaching them to observe everything You commanded. Bless our church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as it holds its 2019 convention.

O Lord, You brought great joy to the wise men when they saw the star that led them to You. Give all members of our Synod great joy in following You, that in every situation they are ready to hear Your Word, give thanks for all Your benefits and trust in Your promises.

Ruler of All, Your Word brought the universe into existence and is able to turn rebellious sinners into thankful servants. With Your Word govern and sustain every congregation, educational institution, service organization and church worker in our Synod. Guide them in their tasks of sharing the Good News of Your victory over sin, death and the devil. Help everyone who labors in Your Kingdom to be Your faithful servant.

Lamb of God, You are the Alpha and Omega and Head of Your Church. Guide those who plan the convention's worship, business and communications, that everything done or said there would serve Your purpose of bringing salvation to every nation and people. Direct the work of floor committees as they review proposals and draft motions, that all who are involved may hear clearly, discuss calmly and prepare wise recommendations. Give all delegates, especially those who will cast votes, diligence in studying the issues at stake, wisdom in discerning Your will and charity in dealing with others, that every decision they make will honor and serve You. Send the Holy Spirit on all who are elected to positions of authority, that they will be enabled to serve with a pure heart, to seek Your guidance in all matters and to carry out their duties faithfully and well. Watch over all who travel to the convention that they may arrive safely; protect them from every harm as they labor together and as they return home.

Shepherd of the Church, You supply us with everything we need and are always with us. Continue to nourish and strengthen us with Your Word and Sacraments, and fill our hearts with gladness, so that by our labors under Your guidance, many more may be brought into Your flock.

O Jesus, we ask all this in Your name, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.



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## Ministry Corner

### National Youth Gathering

It has been a year of planning for many of churches attending the triennial NYG, this July 11-15 in Minneapolis. Held every 3 years since 1980, the LCMS Youth Gathering (Gathering) provides thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to learn more about Jesus Christ, the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity. During the five days of the Gathering, youth spend time together in God's word, worship, service and fellowship with others from across the synod. The NWD is holding a district celebration at the event, the Lumberjack Show, with food, friends and fun, Minnesota lumberjack style, with log rolling, axe throwing, crosscut sawing, and a cookout. Pray for the youth attending, the adult leaders guiding them, and the presenters and musicians leading the learning and fun. Learn more about the event at their FAQ page found here <https://www.lcmsgathering.com/faq/>. Special thanks to our outstanding district coordinators who have organized our church groups and kept the communication flowing: Tara Barrett-Immanuel WI Rapids and Samantha Tracy-St. Paul Stevens Point.



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## Managing God's Money

### **Your Past can Become a Part of Your Church's Future**

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Matthew 6:21

Have you thought of including your church in your will? Those of us, both young and old, who find ourselves considering end-of-life arrangements ought to prayerfully consider this. We have the opportunity to make a lasting gift to God with all or some of the earthly wealth He gave us. Such gifts (bequests or trusts, for example) can generously provide for the ministry and mission efforts of your home church long into its future.

Setting these up is not as difficult as one may think; nor is gifting such as this reserved for the "super rich" – far from it! Even a modest amount can make a huge difference in the life and financial health of a church. We have people contracted through our North Wisconsin District office who are happy to help address your specific questions and concerns about including your church in your will.

Just call or email me should you wish to find out more.

God's blessings to you -

Bill Jordan

LCEF Vice-President & NWD Business Manager

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# District Resources

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



## News and Events

### **Synod Convention**

The 67<sup>th</sup> triennial convention of the LCMS is being held in Tampa this July 20-25, 2019. Think of it as a really big voters meeting. Officers are elected, big issues are debated, ministry gets celebrated, work gets assigned, decisions get made and the Lord is praised. Some people aren't interested, some want to learn more. Just like your local church, someone has to do the work, so special thanks to those from our own NWD who are serving the convention. Learn more at this link, including viewing the agenda for each day, called Today's Business and the resolutions presented by the floor committees: LCMS National Convention <https://www.lcms.org/convention/frequently-asked-questions>

### **NWD Church Workers' Annual Golf Outing**

Register now for the NWD Golf Outing on July 29, 2019 at Merrill Golf Club. Church workers and friends of the NWD are encouraged to participate. **Registration for golfers & sponsorships** is available on our website. Thanks to Pastor Lance Hoelscher & Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Weston for once again organizing this event. Join us for this annual event as we celebrate the amazing church workers of our district!

### **Hearts for Jesus**

Special thank you to all those who participated in and supported HFJ 2019, with over \$10,000 donated for new dining tables in the new dining hall at Camp Luther! Requests for HFJ 2020 are open through summer. Application forms can be found on the homepage of the NWD website at [nwdlcms.org](http://nwdlcms.org). Also posted are the ministries and support received through the years. Selection will be made in early fall, with February again as the special HFJ month.

### **Upcoming Events & Save the Dates: -**

- NWD Golf Outing - Monday, July 29, 2019—Merrill Golf Club
- All School Summit - August 15, 2019—St. Paul, Bonduel
- Early Childhood Regional Meetings
  - ⇒ August 8—Christ the King, Ishpeming
  - ⇒ October 3—Trinity, Wausau
  - ⇒ October 17—St. Paul, Fall Creek
  - ⇒ October 24—Pilgrim, Green Bay
- Fall Pastors' Conference - Sept. 23-25, 2019—Holiday Inn, Marquette
- NWD Adult Gathering - October 1, 2019—Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Weston - *Featured Presenter - Former LCMS President, Rev. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick*
- Retirement Workshop - October 18, 2019—NWD Office



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## **News and Events**

### **Congratulations to President Lueck**

President Lueck was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity Degree from Concordia University-WI for his longtime, faithful service to the church. Rev. Dr. Dwayne M. Lueck is a 1973 graduate of Concordia College Milwaukee, earned his BA from Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne and his Master of Divinity from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He has been member of the CU-WI board of regents since 2012 and is serving his third term as District President.

### **Check Your SPAM**

Because of the volume of e-mail sent from District Resources, you may be receiving important emails in your spam folder. Be sure to check your spam folder daily and mark us as a safe sender by following the steps of your email provider.

### **District Accreditation Commission Meets**

The Synod requires its districts to manage the ongoing improvement of its schools through the DAC. This team of NWD principals has the responsibility to review all visiting team reports, review the cumulative annual review of each accredited school, and make recommendations to the National Accreditation Commission on policy and practice of the accreditation process. It is a big job...and they volunteer! A special thank you to the DAC team for their commitment and service to Lutheran schools. Team members include Kathy Yahr-Trinity Merrill; Dean Frick-Trinity Athens; Jim Wegner-St. Paul Stevens Point.

### **Serve in Peru?**

The NWD has been part of an important mission in Peru for the past few years, with President Lueck serving on their leadership team called a foro. Working in partnership with the Office of International Mission, ministry in Peru has been making an important difference. This ministry in Peru is again ready to accept service teams into special programs for the 2020 school year. See the information and contacts at this link if your ministry or circuit is considering serving in Peru and let us know when you are going! - <https://mailchi.mp/46487ce3e46f/save-the-dates-2019-drlm-foros-1891161?e=031aaa394b>

### **All School Summit in August**

Last winter the NWD principals agreed to hold another back to school summit for all our schools, wanting their teachers to have the chance to learn and grow with other teachers from around the NWD. The staff from Grace Lutheran School, Menomonee Falls will lead and guide our NWD schools through the activities and practices that have moved their school from good to great. Grade level groups will collaborate on research-based best practices that meet the needs of all learners. High school staff will be served by leaders from Living Word Lutheran High School in Jackson. Thank you teachers for your commitment to Christian education and thank you principals for your leadership.

### **Passion Play – Oberammergau**

Every ten years the Passion Play is held in this German city, the next in 2020. Pastor Beukema from Rock of Ages in Minocqua is leading a Reformation trip for those interested in attending. Please contact pastor at (715) 614-4123 <mailto:rockofagespastor@gmail.com> for detailed information about this 10 day trip.



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## Counselor Corner

### THE SHIFTING SAND OF ADDICTION

It is the desire of the human heart to have a stable life. We aspire to have a solid foundation for a meaningful life. God desires the same--with love as the most significant element of such a fulfilled life.

Addiction is the antithesis of such a life. As a progressive condition, addiction steals stability, solidarity and meaning. Love is its greatest casualty. Indeed the destruction of love is a key, defining aspect of this progressive, corrupting force—

“When the relationship to the addictive experience brings harm to love relationships repeatedly.”

This brings to mind a paraphrase of Romans 13:10—“In love, no one gets hurt.” Addiction progressively brings harm, especially to close relationships. Comments like the following now apply—

“He use to be a loving husband...he was a great father. Now his absence brings relief.”

The addictive behavior becomes the “god” that is “worshipped.” Life is defined by the sacrifices made to support that which holds no gain. Pain is the replacement.

There is also an eroded relationship with Triune God. His judgment is feared. Like Adam---there is a lot of “hiding” going on (Genesis 3:8b). Addiction has a central, spiritual core.

The ultimate outcome of active addiction is death, in its many forms. There is the “death” of relationships... “death” of self-esteem... “death” of hobbies and interests... “death” of hope. Physical “death” is the final loss for all-too-many addicts.

Yet there is an alternative. The addict’s life can be transformed. Stability, solidarity and meaning can be restored. Love can be regained. God plays a central role.

A pivotal, summary verse is found in Romans 12:2—

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Core elements of this God-guided work are—honesty, humility and hard work. Repentance, confession and absolution is central as God holds #1 status.

For more information check out [“Addiction 101”](#) on the [Worker Wholeness page of the District website](#).

Pastor Dan Kohn

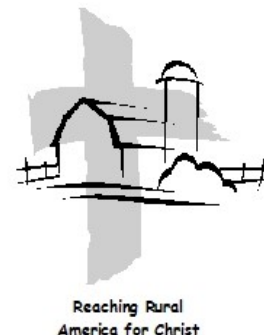
[revkohn@gmail.com](mailto:revkohn@gmail.com) / (715) 610-2400

*Pastor Kohn was a licensed addiction counselor for over 30 years before becoming an LC-MS pastor. He is now a contracted counselor for church workers in the North Wisconsin District.*



## Rural & Small Town Mission

To check out the latest 'Reaching Rural America for Christ' Newsletter [click here](#). This month's edition includes the following article entitled...



### **"Active Stewardship in the Rural Parish"**

Where I serve, people are conservative. I don't mean that they watch Fox News and listen to Rush Limbaugh (although plenty of them do). I'm talking about the deep-down conservatism that always asks the question, "Pastor, if we've been doing it this way for so many years, why would you ask us to change? Is the risk of messing up what's been working just fine really worth whatever little marginal gain you think your new way of doing things will give us?"

That question may not always be put into so many words, but after 13 years in rural ministry I've learned that that's what people are thinking pretty much any time I make a suggestion for doing something new or different in our church. And I've come to appreciate the question. People are most conservative about the things they know best — and for good reason. Human life is short, and we humans are slow learners. The traditions we've been given by previous generations represent the distilled wisdom of the ages. So it's a good question.

But wisdom, alas, is not the only thing handed down by our fathers, nor is it the only thing we are preparing to hand down to our children. If we're not careful, we can also pass on our bad ideas, our laziness and our mistakes.

So, to turn to the topic at hand, how are things in your congregation financially? How's the stewardship of the people? Do you find yourself running short in the summer months? Do you run bulletin announcements asking people to dig a little deeper and put a little more in the plate to catch up to the budget in October, November and December? Do you worry about closing the school, cutting a staff position, getting the roof fixed, or even being able to afford your own pastor?

I get around the Synod a lot, and I can tell you that I've rarely found a rural parish that doesn't struggle with things like that. Indeed, that's how I got into stewardship ministry in the first place: I had to face those challenges in the parishes I still serve.

So if what we're doing is not working out, maybe it is time to learn and change. Maybe there are deeper, even more conservative traditions to follow when it comes to our stewardship: instructions from God's Word on how to be active, faithful, generous, Gospel-centered stewards of God's good and gracious gifts.

I hope you can join me for a webinar on this topic in July. I'll talk about what really works for stewardship in the rural parish (or any parish, really): putting the Word of God first, finding stewardship's place in the Christian life and the theological task of the Lutheran pastor, and teaching generosity and the support of the Lord's work in a faithful, authentic, natural way.

*Contributed through the LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission monthly newsletter by Rev. Heath Curtis, Coordinator of LCMS Stewardship.*



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## **Rural & Small Town Mission - Upcoming Events**

Don't forget that Rural & Small Town Mission provides free monthly webinars on topics important to congregations in town and country settings. Up next is **"Active Stewardship in the Rural Parish"** on July 25, followed by **"The No-Casserole Illness and How the Church Can Respond"** on August 22. Find past webinars in our archives and watch for information on all our upcoming events!



Register for one of our Engaging Your Community (EYC) or Engaging the Wandering (ETW) events at [lcms.org/rstm](http://lcms.org/rstm). These partner events offer practical resources and communication skills for reaching out to our wandering members and our communities with Christ's love. Online registration is available for both types of events. Contact your district office or ours if you are interested in holding an event near you.

Register now for the 2019 National Rural & Small Town Mission Conference, *Running With Endurance: Eyes Fixed On Jesus*, Nov. 14-16 in Minneapolis at [lcms.org/rstm/conference](http://lcms.org/rstm/conference).

To see our calendar, visit [lcms.org/rstm](http://lcms.org/rstm). Contact our office at 888-463-5127 or [rstm@lcms.org](mailto:rstm@lcms.org).

LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission supports and encourages rural and small-town congregations in engaging their communities and growing together in Christ through Word and Sacrament. Learn more about RSTM at [lcms.org/rstm](http://lcms.org/rstm) or by calling 888-463-5127. "Like" us on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/lcmsrstm](https://facebook.com/lcmsrstm).



- Check out the [CPS website](#) for a wealth of information or head right to the ['Blog & News'](#) section for the latest info!

- Visit the NWD website for a CPS corner listing the main contacts for churches using CPS, as well as links to the most important news and answers found on the CPS website. Bookmark it so you have it! <http://www.nwdlcms.org/concordia-plan-services.html>

### **NWD Financial Box Score** **June 2019**

**June financials were not yet available at time of print.**

## **North Wisconsin District Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**

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The logo features the words "District Resources" in a large, blue, cursive script font. On either side of the text is a stylized illustration of two doves, one above the other, in shades of blue and white. Below the main text, the words "NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD" are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

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