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DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH WISCONSIN

Set your GPS



Many changes are taking place. One of them is the department store — they are disappearing. Amazon has changed the landscape. Technology is changing things as well. The smartphone has eliminated the need for the Garmin (GPS), video cameras, pocket planners, calculators, flashlights, newspapers, magazines, etc., because you have all of that in one device.

Jesus had his own GPS. Luke wrote in his book:

“When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.” **Luke 9:51**



Rev. Dwayne Lueck
North Wisconsin
District President

I have always loved that comment by Luke. He “set his face” — he set his GPS — to go to Jerusalem. When I put into my phone where I want to go, it will eventually give me directions with alternate routes. Then after I pick one, I hit “GO” and I follow that route. Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem and He went.

In this verse from Luke 9, Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem with His disciples at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. But later on in Luke, we see that Jesus is going up to Jerusalem for a different purpose:

“And taking the twelve, he said to them, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and

shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.’ But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.” **18:31-34**

Jesus was determined to complete His mission — He set His face toward Jerusalem.

This is what Lent is all about. It is about remembering that our Lord knew for what purpose He was sent and that He stayed focused on what He had to do — fulfill the words of the prophets and then suffer and die. He knew what was ahead. He knew what He was going to go through. When He set out to Jerusalem for that last trip, it was for more than visiting friends and relatives or taking in all that the big city of Jerusalem had to offer, with all its shops and goods. He went to Jerusalem to save you and me from our sins and it would be painful — suffering hell for our sins. You could say it was a hell of a journey!

From a human standpoint, how many would go on that journey knowing what was to happen. Or why would someone do that? Well, we are not talking about you, me and our humanness. We are talking about our Lord, who out of His love for you and me was willing to go through it.

Lent is a time for prayer and looking at our sins. We repent of our sins and look to the promise of God’s mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ. During Lent we think especially of what Jesus did to

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LCEF helps Sturgeon Bay outreach

There's a small church in Door County that received a big grant from the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) Kaleidoscope Fund last fall. Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, with a membership of 150, has been serving Thursday dinners for more than four years. Recently, the numbers have jumped up from 45 to 50 guests to nearly 80, with word getting out that the food and dining experience are fantastic. For a free-will offering, Chef Michael Bein and his team of volunteers have provided spaghetti and meatballs, French toast and sausage, stuffed pork-loin and veggies and a truly diverse and completely dignified meal. Welcome are the hungry. Welcome are the lonely. Welcome are the families struggling to balance life.

A bulletin announcement reflecting on the first eight weeks of the community dinner season stated:

"Community Dinner Report: Oct. 19 through Nov. 16, 458 people have attended dinners with a running total of 713 since Sept 21. Chef Bein and a team of 24 volunteers and five youth volunteers have prepared and served meals, and a rotating additional 12 volunteers prepare desserts. To God be the Glory!"

The Rev. James Gomez, pastor of Prince



of Peace, raves about the volunteerism in his congregation. "We have a tremendous number of volunteers, with a few from outside the church, participating in the production each week," he said. "The precious commodity of time is given, but the dollars are still important."

That's where LCEF steps in, with the Kaleidoscope grant playing a major role in allowing the Sturgeon Bay mission to continue. A new oven, electrical work, tables and chairs are needed with the numerical growth.

Gomez says, "This grant is super-exciting for our congregation, but also for our district, because it's an example of what can happen and what is available when you look around. There are givers and there are doers in the Kingdom of God. The trick seems to be finding a good match and having them work together. We don't have to accomplish everything on our own. That's not the way God works anyway."

The Kaleidoscope Fund has its focus on "Reflecting His Love through Missions, Education and Worker Wellness," and is available to all LCMS entities, including congregations, schools, child care centers and districts.

Grants are back

Looking for some extra financial resources for a meaningful outreach event at your church? North Wisconsin District Mission Mini Grants are back for the third year, providing \$200 to \$1,500 to support your witness and mercy outreach.

Program details and an application can be found on the homepage of the District Resources website at nwdlcms.org. Contact DJ Schult with questions at dj@nwdlcms.org.

Bible Bowl 2018

Have you signed up for the seventh annual to 12th grade Bible Bowl? The event is planned for April 7 at Rib Mountain Lutheran Church, Wausau.



Event information, competition rules and team registration can be found at nwdlcms.org/youth-ministry.html.

Get ready for convention

The triennial convention of the North Wisconsin District will be held June 3-4 at the Central Wisconsin Convention & Expo Center in Rothschild under the theme "In Your Light, We See Light." Ongoing updates are posted at nwdlcms.org/nwd-convention.html.

MESSAGE

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save all people.

My hope and prayer is that you set your GPS to your church and go to the mid-week Lenten services, and that you set your GPS to go to your church to take in Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and by all means the celebration of Easter. During Lent, maybe we talk about what we are going to do to remember our Lord and what He did for us through His suffering death and hell for us. Rather than giving something up for Lent, what can we do? It may take discipline, just as it takes discipline to keep

those New Year resolutions.

As a child I would ask, "Do we have to go to all those services ... even twice on Easter morning?" My mother told me of course and I am glad she did. It was an expectation that we attend worship — all of them during Lent and Holy Week. I remember hearing about the symbols of Lent: the rooster, the whip, the crown, etc., during those mid-week services led by Pastor Lemke. I remember it was always the biggest turnout for the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday.

Mom set our GPS and it was off and up the hill to St. Peter's to hear and

remember what our Lord did for us. It happened just as we confess: "Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord ... suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead."

Jesus set His face, His GPS, and went to Jerusalem and completed His mission to save us. Set your GPS to attend your church (bring your family) and all the services, and with a thankful heart hear again what Jesus accomplished for you and go! You will *really* appreciate how His story comes out in the end ... for you. You win! Amen.



Team members from left, Anna Ryan, Kaylie Cartwright, Mattea Schlender, Natalie Madson, Greta Wollmer, Bailey Hardel, Branden Pierce, Colin Welch, Sierra Mathieu, Melissa Wood, Mitchell Beilke, and Myles Erb

Double the blessings in Beaumont

By Bailey Hardel

Peace Campus Center participant and UWSP student

In January, 12 students, along with the Rev. Andy Weden, pastor, Peace Lutheran Campus Center, Stevens Point, traveled to St. John Lutheran Church, Beaumont, Texas, for a 10-day mission trip. The purpose of the trip was to help those affected by Hurricane Harvey. As we left the Minneapolis airport, we had a feeling that we would be a blessing to those we met in Texas; however, we didn't realize that there would be "double the blessings" in Beaumont.

We worked on six different homes and each needed slightly different work, including hanging drywall, mudding and taping drywall, and hanging insulation. While the physical labor we provided was important to the homeowners, I believe we also provided much more. To many homeowners, our assistance was a sign of hope when they believed there was no hope left after the devastation of losing the use of their homes. While we worked and learned

from each other, we were not only being a blessing to one another, but also to those who needed our help in order that their homes, destroyed by a flood, could become livable again.

Our mission consisted of a lot of working. The group knew that would be the case beforehand because as a mission trip, we were in Texas with a purpose, which was to serve others and show them the love of Jesus in all that we did. However, the trip also allowed us the opportunity to get know each other better. While we all attend

the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and worship at Peace Lutheran Campus Center, we didn't know each other very well. After working together and learning more about one another, we all became very close friends.

Throughout the trip we met residents of Beaumont and the surrounding areas who all had stories to share of how the flood had affected them. Each of the volunteers, who provided us with delicious meals and accommodations

at St. John Lutheran Church,

Beaumont, were always willing to share stories with us about the flood.

They told us that we were making an impact in their lives as well as others' lives by giving them hope for their future.

Everyone whom we met was grateful for the work we were accomplishing

in a short amount of time and wanted us to know that we were a blessing in their lives as well as their communities. But in the end, we too were blessed. We were blessed by the hospitality that was shown us. We were blessed by the friendships formed. We were blessed by the hands and feet of Christ, sharing His love and hope to those in need. Our week in Beaumont really had "double the blessings."



The counseling CONNECTION

The shepherd's Shepherd

We know it well. But another re-telling, with a new twist, could be beneficial for we who are called shepherds. May Psalm 23 speak to you.

"The LORD is [the shepherd's] Shepherd; I shall not want." (v. 1)

The "caring one" needs the "Caring One." It's built into the calling. The Christian who comforts and directs needs One who offers the same in times of personal need.

"He makes me lie down in green



Rev. Dan Kohn
District Counselor

pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul."
(v. 2-3a)

For those feeling the pressure, for those who are losing focus, for those who are spiritually dry, the Shepherd invites, encourages, joins with, restores. Come and find rest in your deepest being!

"He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake." (v. 3b)

The very essence of what the Shepherd desires to find in us is where He leads. We are the blessed recipient, He the all-knowing, all-loving Guide. He even has a plan to address our straying back into His arms of joy.

"Even though I walk through the

valley ... I will fear no evil, for you are with me." (v. 4)

In the "valleys" of disappointment, discouragement and despair — sometimes to the point of feeling spiritually dead — the Shepherd is ever-present with loving support. Even when there is a need for correction, or redirection, His rod and staff serve as tools of hope. There is a way up a new mountain with Him.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever." (v. 6)

Every day has a "God filling." And earth is just prep time for what lies beyond when we will have face-to-face communion with God and His eternal love ... forever. The shepherd's Shepherd awaits you.

You may contact me at 715-610-2400 or revkohn@gmail.com.

Living abundantly, through gratefulness

Join the fun at the 2018 North Wisconsin District LWML Young Women's and Young at Heart Retreat! We're meeting at Camp Luther in Three Lakes on Saturday, April 7. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the retreat hours is from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Mary Harrington
LWML District President

Do you have lots going on in your life? Are you in need of a recharge? Enjoy a day of Christian fellowship and fun and take advantage of the opportunity to re-energize with friends — old and new.

Our speaker will be Linda Rinne, who has served in missions at home and abroad with her husband, Rex, a retired LCMS pastor. Linda and Rex served in

the Czech Republic, providing pastoral care to missionaries throughout Europe. She has many interesting anecdotes to share and is an inspiration to many. Perhaps she'll talk about her "God Appointments." Invite a friend — all ladies are welcome.

Again this year, there is opportunity to spend Friday night at Camp Luther. Just mark that on your registration form. The form and more information are found in the winter issue of *Mission Tidings*, which can be found at nwdlwml.org (the link is near the top of the page).

At our February Board meeting, board members voted to pay the remaining half of \$12,500 for financial assistance to those from the North Wisconsin District who are studying to become professional church workers. May God

guide and bless those who are studying to become pastors, deaconesses, teachers, directors of Christian education and other church vocations.

Plan to join the women of our district as we celebrate our 75th anniversary at convention this summer. We're meeting at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Stevens Point June 24-26.

Information can be found in *Mission Tidings* or at nwdlwml.org.

Be a Blessing!



Send news to:

Karol Selle (715-677-4877)

► selleks@gmail.com or

► 3177 State Hwy. 66
Rosholt, WI 54473-9529