



DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH WISCONSIN



THANK YOU, PASTOR!

“Feeling appreciated is one of the most important needs that people have. When you share with someone your appreciation and gratitude, they will not forget you. Appreciation will return to you many times.” (Steve Brunkhorst)

Remember when someone appreciated you? Remember that “thank you” note or text you received that you did not expect?

I bring up appreciation because the second Sunday in October (Oct. 11) is Clergy Appreciation Day, and all of October is celebrated as Clergy Appreciation Month. The apostle Paul urged his fellow believers to do this years ago:

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.
1 Tim. 5:17

Saying “thank you” to our pastors can go a long way in encouraging them in their role as your pastor, your shepherd.

COVID has really made a mess of things. All kinds of changes

have occurred at home, work and in your congregation. Churches were supposed to follow COVID guidelines. People were told to stay home. So pastors were faced with the challenge of how to hold worship using technology, and later how to offer communion safely. At the end of May 2020, when in-person worship returned in Wisconsin, pastors heard from some of their congregants that they did not want to wear a mask — and from others who said that everyone should wear one. Needless to say, our pastors, teachers and directors of Christian education became worn down. Some of our workers suffered from anxiety and depression while still doing their ministry this past year.

In 2017, the LCMS conducted a worker wellness survey of pastors and teachers. Of those workers responding to the survey, you already noticed some despair:

- ▶ 24% have been told by a professional that they suffer from anxiety or depression
- ▶ 40% question whether their work has any real impact.
- ▶ 57% of pastors feel fulfilled, but yet discouraged, stressed and fatigued.

Feeling stressed out occurred to the prophet Elijah. He had a mountain-top experience with a victory over the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, and then Queen Jezebel entered the story. She wanted him dead in 24 hours. So Elijah took off, eventually sitting under a broom tree and asking God to take his life. He was filled with despair and fatigue. God heard his prayer and sent an angel with cake and water. God heard his prayer and encouraged him.

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Rev. Dr. Dwayne Lueck
North Wisconsin District President

Congrats, pastors!

Rev. Ian Thormodson was ordained at Peace, Eau Claire, on July 10. Pastor Ian, who graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in May, is serving his first call at Redeemer, Richmond, Va., as associate pastor. From left, Revs. Scott Schmieding, Scott Johnson, William Plautz, Mark Schultz, Ian Thormodson, Tim Stein, Bill Pieper, David Forke, Wes Gehrke and Dr. Dwayne Lueck.



Rev. Corey Shaffer was installed as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Port Edwards, on June 27. He is serving his first call following graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in May. From left, Revs. Dr. Timothy Wenger, Andrew Weden, Joshua Bauman, Steve Hulke, Dr. Timothy Roser, Corey Shaffer, David Kettner, Kevin Ader, Bruce Hoffmann and John Schmidt.

Church work students blessed with grants

The 2021 awards to church-work students were blessed with more funds because of robust endowment earnings. With only 25 students applying for the grants, more money was available for the applicants. Our seminarians received more than \$8,000 for the school year and undergrad students received between \$4,000-\$6,000. Thank you to all who contributed to the endowments. Contact Bill Jordan at bill@nwdlcms.org to help strengthen these endowments.

LWML

In HIS hand

The first Sunday in October is traditionally set aside for the observation of LWML Sunday, but it may be celebrated at any time. This year the theme is “Our Hearts in HIS Hand,” authored by Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer. It is based on Peter’s first letter to persecuted Christians in Asia Minor and in 4:8, Peter tells them: “Above all, keep loving one another earnestly.”

The heart of the LWML is its members and we are the heart of LWML



Becky Haltaufderheid
LWML District President

because we are HIS! We are Held by His word, Inspired to share His Gospel and Surrounded by His grace. Our hearts have been made holy by God. We are fully dedicated to serving Him by serving His church at home and abroad. Our hearts for Christ are in His service, wherever and whenever He has need of us.

Dr. Meyer is former president and professor of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He retired in 2020 after serving for 15 years as president. He may be best known as speaker of “The Lutheran Hour” radio program. He has authored many books and has been speaking and preaching for over 40 years.

He served his vicarage at Calvary, Lincoln Park, Mich., where my grandparents attended. I remember them speaking about Dr. Meyer as he served at their congregation. They shared with me that they invited him to their home for meals and he was loved by many.

The “Our Hearts in HIS Hand” service,



banner design and bulletin information can be downloaded for free at lwml.org/lwml-sunday. If you have not already celebrated LWML Sunday, I encourage you to use the information Dr. Meyer has provided for the service.

Have you looked at the new information for “I am the Heart of LWML” (lwml.org/heart-of-lwml)? This campaign’s vision is to promote a strong LWML identity among LCMS women. You are the heart of LWML and Christ lives in your heart. As you engage in mission education, mission inspiration, mission service and mission support, others can see that Christ lives in your heart and your heart is in His hand! So as you celebrate LWML Sunday, I pray others will see the heart of LWML through you. What a great theme for LWML Sunday!

May you be blessed as you continue to serve the Lord with gladness!

Wellness Corner

Finding the sufficient ‘who’

His credentials were impeccable. God viewed Job as “blameless and upright” (Job 1:1a). God also richly blessed this righteous man (2-3).

Then Satan entered the story, all was lost and the words of Job were fulfilled: “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away” (21b). All Job had left was his empty life and grieving wife. The follow-up verse defines the bulk of the rest of the story: “In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong” (22). Job wrestled with God. He sought answers from God. He also debated with his presumed friends, who had a deep misunderstanding of the cause of his losses.

Interwoven in Job’s monologue with God were questions of “why?” Why have I been chosen for such affliction? Why has God allowed for such great loss? Why is God not responding to my pleas for answers? Why do I have this added burden of friends who are so critical and misguided?

God’s response was delayed for reasons not shared. When God spoke, He did so



Rev. Dan Kohn
District Counselor

“out of the whirlwind” (38:1). His first word was significant: “Who...?” (2a). The identity being referenced was first Job. But the greater focus was on the “Who” of God, the Sovereign Creator. It was God’s design that there would be sufficiency in the “Who” of Himself. The “why” questions did not need to be addressed as long as “Who” was adequate.

This story brings to mind another

righteous man of God. His name was Saul (Paul), whose life was defined by suffering (Acts 9:16).

Paul also pleaded with God regarding a “thorn ... in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7). God’s response also focused on His sufficiency: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (9a). Like Job, Paul accepted God’s sufficiency. Life challenges were not allowed to be distractions.

Even in the midst of suffering and searching, God is at work. His divine plans are being worked out with a focus on endurance, character and Spirit-centered hope (Rom. 5:3-5). Maturity in faith is also a desired outcome.

God is fully aware of what we face each day. He would remind us that regardless of our circumstances, He is present and sufficient. We do well to reflect on Christ’s invitation when we are burdened: “Come ... and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). Christ is our sufficiency, as Paul also knew (Phil. 4:13).

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Conference attendees are ‘Restored’

Eighty-five early-childhood teachers and directors gathered for the district triennial Early Childhood Conference held Aug. 24 at Trinity, Wausau. Jennie Williamson provided two presentations, sharing her music and a message of restoration through the love, forgiveness and spiritual healing only Jesus can give. Sarah Jones, director at Mount Olive, Weston, and Dian Schlichtmann, director at St. Paul, Stevens Point, provided breakout sessions on sharing Jesus with students and families. District President Rev. Dr. Dwayne Lueck gave the opening devotion.



Pictured are, from left, Sarah Jones, Jennie Williamson and Dian Schlichtmann.

Mission Grants available

All North Wisconsin District congregations and schools are eligible to apply for 2022 Mission Grants. The purpose of the grant is to encourage and support local outreach and evangelism to make known the Gospel to those who are not Christian or church members.

The grant process is competitive, meaning applications will be evaluated according to their outreach/evangelism potential. Grant requests must be received by Nov. 24 and recipients will be announced by Jan. 1. Grants must be used by Dec. 31, 2022.

Find the application and guidelines by clicking the “Financial” link at nwdlcms.org.

District hits the links



The annual district golf outing was held July 19 at Pine Valley Golf Course in Marathon. District friends celebrated being together again on a beautiful day, playing golf and enjoying a meal prepared by district LCEF Vice-President Bill Jordan.

MESSAGE

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I believe that your pastor made the decision to go into ministry to be able to serve God’s people. He is called to build them up as children of God, as well as build up the church in Christ. He certainly is human — sinful — and does not please everyone all of the time. However, he also took a vow at his ordination to be faithful — to his Lord, God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

The following verse is one I share at pre-call meetings on pastoral ministry:

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

1 Cor. 4:1-2

The second page of the call document your pastor received from your congregation is the “Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation,” which has obligations for the pastor. The page then states what you as members of your congregation obligate to do for your pastor:

As the baptized people of God we partner with you to accomplish His mission to the world, and we hereby obligate ourselves:

- To receive you as a servant of Jesus Christ, to give you the honor and love and obedience that the Word prescribes, to aid you by word and deed, and to support you with our diligent, faithful assistance and prayers;
- To make faithful and regular use of the means of grace; and
- To work with you to equip God’s people to glorify Him and extend His kingdom by living out our baptism.

So how can you show appreciation to your pastor? There are all kinds of ways. The easiest one is really simple — pray for him and his family. Write him a note thanking him for something he did for you, whether preaching or teaching God’s Word, or when he stopped and chatted with you at the grocery store.

There is one more way I know that would really make October great and that he would appreciate — attend worship with your family. I know he would love a full church when it is time for God’s people to come together.

On the way out just shake his hand or give him a fist bump and tell him, “Thank you pastor!”