

# District Resources

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

## the Happenings



### The President's Message – March 2019



#### In This Issue:

- The President's Message
- Across My Desk: DJ Schult
- News and Events
- Counselor Corner
- Rural & Small Town Mission
- CPS News
- NWD Financial Box Score

#### DENNY RETIRED! THANK YOU!

Retire! Monday, February 25<sup>th</sup> marked the first day of the last week of work (after 26½ years of service) for Dennis Johnson here at the North Wisconsin District.

It was my turn to lead the weekly staff devotions and I had heard that the word **retire** is not in the Bible. So I did a word search and found out that some versions do have retire – Numbers 8:25 (NIV) "but at the age of fifty, they (Levites) must retire from their regular service and work no longer." God's Word translation says – "they must retire from active service." I also looked for retire in THE MESSAGE (merely contemporary English) and sure enough it was in Numbers 8:25 and also the story of the rich fool in Luke 12. "Self, you've done well! You've got it made and can now **retire**." Many of us know what happened in the next verse – "God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you'" (ESV). I shared that with Dennis and told him it wasn't too late to reconsider retirement.

Dennis did not change his mind. As of March 1, Dennis is retired and at home with Kris. When I texted him and asked, "How is retirement?" He replied: "Coffee and devo time with Kris." A great way to start retirement; having devotions at home with his wife.

On Wednesday night we celebrated his retirement with family, friends, and co-workers past and present. We had a great time celebrating and laughing. We roasted him, sang a bunch of songs, and thanked him for a job well done.

Dennis started working for the District in September 1992 as Vice President of Lutheran Church Extension Fund helping congregations with their loans and encouraging people to invest in LCEF. He also served as business manager and over the years took on helping congregations with stewardship. Because of his construction background, Dennis also became the District handyman overseeing maintenance for the building and grounds. All of this he did with a smile and quick wit.

As DJ Schult put it. "I appreciated his love for people demonstrated by his kindness and servant heart. I will NOT miss his constant whistling, NOT miss his corny jokes. I WILL miss his smiling face and passion for ministry."

What did Paul Dean appreciate? "His ability to adapt to different situations and offering a helping hand when needed."

Lori Kavajecz shared, "He would always drop what he was doing no matter what, to lend an ear. I will NOT miss his strong coffee, but WILL miss his loud whistling (especially Christmas songs in July) and his amazing snowball throwing skills."

I, Dwayne, had the privilege of working with him all 26 years. We were both from the class of '71. As I told him, "26 is the number of miles in a marathon. It did not seem like a marathon... 26+ years. How quickly time flies when you are having a great time with a great fellow servant and friend."

As stated on FACEBOOK with a picture of Dennis and his family – "After 26+ years serving LCEF and the NWD, Dennis Johnson has worked his last day and is off to retirement. Thanks to family and friends who celebrated his milestone. God bless your transition!" On behalf of the North Wisconsin District - Thank you Dennis! God go with you!



Rev. Dwayne M. Lueck, District President

### EDUCATOR AWARDS!

#### **Brian Betts Named 2019 LEA Distinguished Lutheran Elementary Administrator**

Brian Betts was selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2019 Distinguished Lutheran Elementary Administrator Award. Mr. Betts is administrator at Immanuel Lutheran School in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. He was selected by LEA's Leadership Network leadership team.

Brian earned a B.S. in Elementary Education from Concordia College [now University], St. Paul, Minn. His Masters in Educational Administration is from Concordia University Wisconsin.

Among Brian's joys in ministry, he said, "... is the opportunity to see God's hand in all that is part of ministry. The ministry at Immanuel makes such an impact to the families we serve. I love building those relationships with God's hand guiding as we go. My goal is that people see Christ through me."

In support of Brian's nomination, his pastor wrote, "Brian sets the bar high for our teachers, encourages and challenges his coworkers, and is always willing to jump in and help out. He never asks others to do something he isn't willing to do himself. Brian seems always to be with people, talking with students, greeting parents, and working on projects. For Brian, ministry is not a nine-to-five, clock-in-clock-out endeavor, but a vocation and a way of life. He does not limit his responsibilities only to what a 'traditional' principal or administrator would do, but rather identifies whatever needs or opportunities may arise and strives to meet them."

One parent commented, "The dedication he has to our ministry is above and beyond. The 25+ years I have watched Mr. B make huge strides in progressing our school. Over the last 25+ years that I have been able to watch Mr. B go from a brand new teacher with visions of science experiments to a great leader as the principal of Immanuel Lutheran School. His passion for ministry and those he serves is evident in the choices he makes for the greater good of the school and actions he makes EVERY day."

One colleague said, "Mr. Betts is an overcomer and a problem-solver as well. The parents of our school recognize that he is an approachable leader and most feel comfortable raising their concerns to him when necessary. When challenges arise he tackles them swiftly and with great concern. He investigates before judging, makes decisions with a level head, and protects the privacy of others when possible."



#### **Erin Mehlberg Awarded Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Award**

The **Herb Kohl Educational Foundation** has announced Erin Mehlberg from Saint Paul Lutheran School in Stevens Point as one of the **Teacher Fellowship award winners**. These winners were selected from a competitive field of applicants from across the state and represent the best and brightest in K-12 schools. Teacher Fellowship award recipients each receive \$6,000 and \$6,000 for each of their schools. They will be recognized at regional receptions in April. Herb Kohl will attend each ceremony to present the awards. Well done Erin!



# District Resources

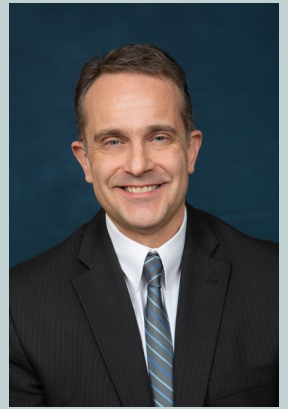
NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

## **News and Events**

### **Welcome Bill Jordan!**

Bill Jordan has been hired to fill the role of Lutheran Church Extension Fund Vice President and NWD Business Manager, replacing recently retired Dennis Johnson.

Bill grew up in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, confirmed at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Sheboygan, WI under his father, Rev. H. Wm. Jordan. After graduating from Sheboygan Area Lutheran High School, he attended the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire for his undergraduate degree and the University of Notre Dame for his master's degree in administration. Since 1992, Bill has held various roles in higher education marketing, recruitment and admissions, having most recently served as Director of Recruitment & Admissions at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.



Bill has been married to his wife, Gina, for 23 years and has three teenage sons – Samuel, Owen and Asher. He loves being a husband and father who commits time to his family, which during this season of life involves numerous sports and performing arts events, college visits and frozen pizzas. He is also an active musician, performing across central and northern Wisconsin with various jazz and R & B groups.

"For a while now, I've been searching for a position in which I can play a more direct role in supporting the Church. I'm so grateful that the Lord has seen fit to give me this opportunity," says Bill. "I look forward to joining the District Resources staff later this month. To God be the glory!"

Bill begins his new role on Monday, March 25. Welcome Bill!

### **Professional Church Worker Student Grants - Deadline May 15**

District financial support is available to all college and seminary students who are attending a synodically operated school to prepare for full-time service in the church as a pastor, teacher, deaconess, parish worker, DCE, lay assistant or other full-time ministry position. Aid is granted for one school year at a time; half for the fall semester, half for the spring. The student must carry a credit load that is considered full-time. A new application must be filed each year. Contact your school's financial aid office to get the District Financial Aid Application and return it to your school before May 15. The form and requirements of the grant program can be found on the [NWDLCMS.ORG](http://NWDLCMS.ORG) website under [Financial Resources/Financial Aid](#).

### **Hearts for Jesus—Camp Luther**

Thanks to all who are supporting the great work of Camp through your HFJ offerings. Please submit your checks to the NWD, made out to North WI District-LCMS, and put HFJ Camp Luther on the memo line.



# *District Resources*

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



## **News and Events**

### **Commissioned Worker Openings**

Have you seen the multiple openings for commissioned minister vacancies in the NWD? Do you know of an outstanding church worker who wants to serve in the NWD? Quality Christian educators to fill our openings are becoming harder and harder to find. Check out the list of openings on the School Resources page at <http://www.nwdlcms.org/school-resources.html>.

### **Organist Supply List**

A Substitute Organist List is now available on the same tab as the Supply/Vacancy Pastor List. Find it on our [Supply/Vacancy tab](#) under Congregations or use the link on our [homepage](#). To be added to the list please send an email to Sandie at [officeadmin@nwdlcms.org](mailto:officeadmin@nwdlcms.org) with the following information... first and last name, contact information (email address, phone #), travel area willing to serve, piano or organ or both, comfortable with LSB divine services - yes or no.

### **Youth Bible Bowl 2019**

The annual Wisconsin State Wide Bible Bowl for 7-12th grade youth will be held Saturday, April 6, 2019 at Rib Mountain Lutheran, Wausau. Details for Bible Bowl 2019 are complete and posted to the NWD website under the tabs [Missions/Youth Ministry](#). You will see links to videos of last year's event, plus detailed links to registration, information and more. Please contact Pastor Palmer, listed on the page, with any questions. The link for the information is <http://www.nwdlcms.org/youth-ministry.html>.

### **Bow the Knee**

This dramatic Easter musical will be presented at:

- ⇒ St. Mary's Catholic Church, Tomahawk - April 6th @ 7pm & April 7th @ 2:30pm
  - ⇒ Trinity Lutheran Church, Stewart Ave, Wausau - April 13 @ 7pm & April 14 @ 2:30 pm
- Free admission and all are welcome as we focus on the Lenten season.

### **Pastors' Wives Retreat**

April 25-27, 2019 - AmericInn, Merrill

A link to all the details is available on our [homepage](#) or [directly here](#).

### **NWD Spring Pastors' Conference**

The Spring Pastors' Conference will held May 13-14 at Camp Luther. Agenda, details and paper registration forms are again hosted on the St. John Pulaski website...

<http://www.stjohnpulaskiwi.org/nwd>. Please contact Pr. Ryan Fehrman with any questions at [revzion1896@gmail.com](mailto:revzion1896@gmail.com).

### **Noah's Ark Youth and Family Day**

The South Wisconsin District would like to invite the NWD schools and congregations to join them for Youth and Family Day at Noah's Ark, Friday, June 14. Here's the link to their website... <https://swd.lcms.org/june-14-noahs-ark-youth-and-family-day/>

\$16 per person, includes all day unlimited admission and a free lunch. Order passes by June 3. Questions? Contact Robin in the SWD @ 414-464-8100, ext. 741.



## **News and Events**

**Camp Luther** ~ *Building Up All People in Christ for Service and Witness in the World.* ~

Check out everything Camp Luther has to offer @ [campluther.com](http://campluther.com)!

### **Church Interpreter Training Institute**

The CITI program will take place from June 13-16, 2019 on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. For more information or to register for this summer's program go to [lutheranfriendsofthedeaf.org/citi](http://lutheranfriendsofthedeaf.org/citi).

### **2019 National Youth Gathering**

US Bank Stadium, Minneapolis, MN,  
July 11-15, 2019!



The NYG is almost here! Critical updates continue to be posted on the NWD Facebook page. Questions? Contact District Coordinators Samantha Tracy [samanthakaytracy@gmail.com](mailto:samanthakaytracy@gmail.com) or Tara Barret [tbarrett@immanuelrapids.com](mailto:tbarrett@immanuelrapids.com) for answers.

Check out important updates on the [NWD website under the tab Missions/Youth Ministry](http://www.nwdlcms.org/youth-ministry.html) or directly at <http://www.nwdlcms.org/youth-ministry.html>.

### **RSTM 2019 Conference**

The LCMS 2019 National Rural & Small Town Mission Conference will be held Nov. 14-16 in Minneapolis, Minn., at the Doubletree by Hilton Bloomington-Minneapolis South.

**The blessings and challenges** facing rural and small-town congregations today will be addressed. Congregations will be encouraged to cultivate ways to become healthy churches, eager to bear witness for Christ, able to show mercy to those in need in communities and develop a robust life together with fellow members. We hope you'll join us by registering now and reserving your spot!

#### Speakers and Session Topics

Keynote speakers will include Rev. Todd Kollbaum, director, LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission and Dr. Harold L. Senkbeil, Executive Director for Spiritual Care, DOXOLOGY. Rev. Robert Zagore, executive director, LCMS Office of National Mission, will lead the theme Bible study of the conference based on Hebrews 12:1b-2a.

Breakout topics include dealing with addictions, mental health, young adults in ministry, bivocational pastors, stewardship, community engagement, partnering with LERT, online education and many other topics affecting our rural and small-town congregations. There is something planned for everyone... from layperson to pastor, student to teacher!

We encourage you to bring your whole family to spend a few days together!

#### Registration

Adult registration for the conference is \$225/person and includes all plenary and breakout sessions, materials, Thursday dinner, Friday lunch and dinner and more. See our full registration form for discounted rates for youth, students, families, couples, meals only and groups. Contact our office with questions.

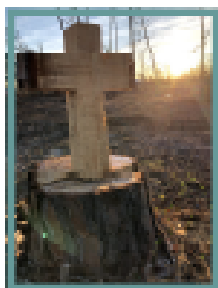
More information and online registration can be found at [lcms.org/rstm/conference](http://lcms.org/rstm/conference).



# Panama City Mission Trip 2019

Peace Lutheran Campus Center • Stevens Point, Wisconsin

## From Sawyers to Servants



Hurricane season comes and goes each year and for most of us (who don't live near the coast) the closest we get to the devastation is what we see on the national evening news. However, even then, we only get a mere glimpse of the damage and the lives that have been affected. Not being satisfied with remaining at a distance, 10 students from Peace Lutheran Campus gave up 8 days of their semester break and departed in early January for the disaster zone of Panama City and Mexico Beach, Florida. These cities were ruined by the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest Hurricane (Michael) to hit the United States back on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

While helping the residents of the Panhandle of Florida, the students of Peace worked closely with the members of Trinity Lutheran Church and staff of Shepherd's Heart Ministries, which specializes in tree removal and clean up through their chainsaw ministry. After receiving disaster response training, a certified chainsaw safety class and field exercises, the students soon became sawyers in their own right and used their newly learned skills in service to others.

Once the work week began and the students were able to survey the extent of the damage, the reality was hard to take in. The tree damage was so widespread that estimates for the cleanup will be years and it will be decades before mature trees once again fill the horizon. This, however, did not deter these novice sawyers from cleaning up one tree at a time. The days were long and tiring but the impact that these students had ironically wasn't with their chainsaws but rather with their hearts as they showed the people of Florida the grace and mercy of Jesus. In turn the residents, many of whom had been long overwhelmed with the struggles of the disaster including, cleanup, dealing with insurance companies, and simply trying to get back to a sense of normalcy were filled with hope once again.

Although the sound of chainsaws, skid-steers, and logging trucks filled the worksites each day, it was as if they were all muted as the homeowners paused to simply say, "thank you" and storm stories were shared. Those two simple words made these college students, turned lumberjacks, realize just how important and how easy it is to show the love of Christ to those in great need and by the end of the week these sawyers indeed became servants of our Servant, Jesus.



From left to right  
Back Row: Bailey Hardel, Greta Wolmer, Mitch Belike,  
Sierra Mathieu, Anna Ryan, Matteo Schlender, Natalie  
Madson, Colin Welch  
Front Row: Matt Stalert, Myles Erb

# District Resources

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

## **Counselor Corner**

### **CONFLICT IN THE RANKS**

It could not have come at a more inopportune time. In the midst of the pre-Passion, emotional drama, we find Jesus disciples at their worst.

Jesus has just disclosed that one of the disciples would soon betray Him (Luke 22:21-22). If this dark mark were not enough we find this scene next in this Gospel—

“A dispute also arose among them [the disciples], as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.” (vs.24).

One can only begin to imagine what new emotions this mini-drama would have generated. As if Jesus didn't have enough on his plate already He now needed to deal with His disciple's arrogant self-centeredness.

Jesus was quick to address this pride agenda. In contrast to Gentile rulers this was His expectation for His followers—

““Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ...I am among you as one who serves.”” (vss.26b &27b)

In Christ's kingdom, humility is a high quality. Jesus is the ultimate Model of humble greatness, as Paul would later emphasize (Philippians 2:5-11).

Christ's directive is timeless with application to today's pastors and other church leaders. There is also relevance in this regard—the Lord had conflict in the ranks as well, as is all-too-frequent in churches today. Some human dynamics do not change.

The apostle James gives clarity to the source of such conflict—

“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?” (4:1)

Pastors and other church leaders need to pay heed to Christ's Model and message. The “greatest” is always Christ. In His church there is ample room for second place. What a difference it would make if all leaders lived by the motto—“I am second.”

For support and encouragement give me a call. Also check out the [District Worker Wholeness Page](#) for wisdom on your wellness.

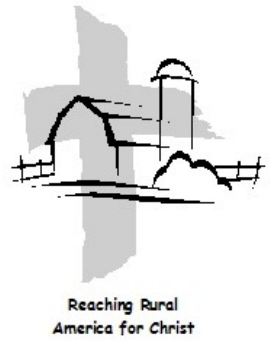
Pastor Dan Kohn  
District Counselor  
[revkohn@gmail.com](mailto:revkohn@gmail.com) / 715-610-2400





## **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...



### **"Raising Young Leaders and the Lutheran Young Adult Corps"**

When I was in sixth grade, the Director of Christian Education at my church asked me to be one of several teen representatives on the Youth Board. It might sound silly to ask an eleven-year-old to sit through the business agenda of monthly meetings, but I took on the responsibility with genuine passion. This one person saw me, challenged me, equipped me and ultimately moved me towards pursuing professional church work. Raising up young leaders can be a powerful thing.

In 2017, LCMS Youth Ministry did a research project on millennial retention in the LCMS. We found that congregations with a decision-making leader under 32 showed several markers of increased LCMS retention from confirmation to young adulthood. It didn't matter how many young adults were in the congregation; the impact was the same. Raising up young leaders helps children and teens stay in the church.

Rural and small-town ministries are uniquely designed to mentor new young leaders. These congregations tend to be close-knit where young people are known deeply. This can give special insight into where a young leader can best use their skills, passions and abilities and prevent ill-fitting or token leadership roles. These congregations can provide a critical safe space for young leaders to try and fail with grace.

Smaller congregations can be more open to empowering young leaders, sometimes out of necessity. When they do, leaders of all ages must work together for the sake of the Gospel. While established leaders have experience, knowledge of systems and a critical understanding of history, young leaders bring a fresh perspective and new strategies. Young leaders can learn and grow in new skills while established leaders can be reenergized and help manage change.

One example of raising up young leaders is Lutheran Young Adult Corps. Lutheran Young Adult Corps provides full-time service opportunities for LCMS young adults in urban settings. Participants grow in community and share their faith in Jesus through acts of service for 10 weeks in the summer or 10 months as a gap year. During their service, our 18- to 26-year-old participants serve in roles such as volunteer coordinators, after school tutors, communications and administrative help.

The power of young leaders should not be underestimated. Consistently the young leaders in Lutheran Young Adult Corps prove to be self-motivated, passionate, adventurous, independent, and have a desire to grow in the areas of faith formation, service and community outreach. This is true of the young people in your congregation as well. Engaging young leaders helps ministry, keeps young people connected to the church and provides a chance for all ages to live out their vocation.

*Contributed through the LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission monthly newsletter by Julianna Shults, DCE, Program Manager, Lutheran Young Adult Corps, LCMS Youth Ministry*



# *District Resources*

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD





## **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. Find past webinars in our archive 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 or our office if you are interested in holding an event near you. Look for upcoming announcements about the 2019 National 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).*



## **CONCORDIA PLAN SERVICES**

- ⇒ Check out the [CPS website](#) for a wealth of information or head right to the '[Blog & News](#)' section for their latest articles!
- ⇒ 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** **February 2019**

February Offering	\$129,494.76
February Budget	\$142,687.50
Year-to-date total offerings	\$146,884.11
Year-to-date budget	\$168,937.50

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

3103 Seymour Lane  
Wausau, WI 54401

715-845-8241 | [www.nwdlcms.org](http://www.nwdlcms.org) | [www.facebook.com/nwdlcms](https://facebook.com/nwdlcms)



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