



DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH WISCONSIN

One is the **LONELIEST** number

Over the years there have been many songs about being lonely. Three Dog Night recorded “One is the Loneliest Number.”

In “Eleanor Rigby,” The Beatles sing about Father McKenzie writing “a sermon that no one will hear.”

Then they ask, “All the lonely people, Where do they all come from?”

“You’ll Never Walk Alone” is from the musical “Carousel.”

Pastors are sharing with me that there are a lot of lonely people right now. Talk to the people in nursing homes who cannot see their families, the widows and widowers who sit home alone and people who are alone after going through divorce.

It seemed the elderly are the lonely ones. Then the other day I read that Gen Z and Millennials identified as the loneliest generations because of their social-media addiction.

There is another song about loneliness. It is an old American folk hymn by



Rev. Dr. Dwayne Lueck
North Wisconsin District President



George Jones titled “Lonesome Valley.” He sings:

Jesus walked this lonesome valley;
And He had to walk it by Himself.
Nobody else could walk it for Him;
He had to walk, walk it by Himself.

During this season of Lent, let’s stop and think about Jesus. The journey He took to the cross was a lonely one, a walk only He could take. In Gethsemane, He went off to pray by Himself. After Jesus was arrested in the garden, His disciples fled. He did not have an attorney or anyone at His side, at His trial or before Pilate. Then, they took Him to Calvary and crucified Him. The words of the prophet ring true:

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was

despised, and we esteemed him not. — **Is. 53:3**

When Jesus was on the cross, He cried about the feelings of loneliness:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”
— **Matt. 27:46**

The sinless Son of God, who had been from all eternity in an intimate relationship with His Father, was now spiritually separated from Him, alone. “Forsaken, rejected by God: that is the torture of hell. What deep humiliation for the eternal Son of God to enter into the depths of everlasting death and torment!

He remained obedient to God and thus conquered wrath, hell, and damnation for us.” (from Paul Kretzmann Commentary, *New Testament, Vol. 1*)

The Father placed the sins of the world on Jesus so He could suffer what we deserved — hell. What a sacrifice!

This same Jesus, our Messiah who went to such extremes to save us, will not leave us alone. We lean and believe His words, “I will be with you always.”

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. ... Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.
— **Ps. 23:1,4**

For the Lord will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage.
— **Ps. 94:14**

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REFLECTION

Greta Wollmer

How were you involved at Peace over the years?

Throughout my time at Peace, I was a member of the Leadership Team and served as the organization's treasurer and co-president. Through these positions I helped plan events for the Peace community, managed our budget and completed administrative tasks. I also went on three mission trips, to Texas, Florida and Iowa.

Describe your first time at Peace. What do you remember thinking as a new student in a new worshipping community?

I don't truly have any recollection of how or why I first came to a service. I don't even remember what was said to convince me to go on my first mission trip. In all honesty, my first memory of Peace was lying on the ground of an airport gate in Minneapolis waiting for our seven-hour delayed flight to leave for Texas. After the trip, I remember being asked to join an after-worship leadership meeting, and from there I was committed to continue my involvement.

As you reflect back over your years of being involved at Peace, how have you been blessed by this ministry?

This ministry brought me a group of friends who are reliable, trustworthy, and who appreciate me. These people loved me simply because I am their sister in Christ; and because of that, I felt safe being myself within that community.

What is one (or two) of your favorite Peace memories?

I got to know one of my best friends from Peace while washing our hair in the sink of a small church bathroom in Texas. There was only one usable shower and a mile-long line of people waiting to use it, so we opted to rinse out the drywall dust the old-fashioned way. We talked about our lives, our current relationships and how our faith played a part in it all.

In what areas have grown the most while at Peace? How has Peace helped you grow in this area?

I believe that becoming a participant at Peace encouraged me to embrace and



accept more opportunities. The members and the atmosphere made me feel inspired to take on more responsibility and pushed me to become a better leader. I feel stronger in my faith, and stronger in my collaborative skills because I was able to utilize and strengthen both of them together.

What are your greatest words of advice for other students?

Do not be afraid to talk about Jesus. In every aspect of your life, give thanks to the Lord. It can feel unnatural or uncomfortable, especially if you're speaking with individuals outside of the faith, but it's something that God calls us to do daily.

Would you say that Peace has helped you grow in your faith while at UWSP? How so?

A mission of this organization is to spread the love and the message of the Bible to other people on campus. In order to do that, I had to feel inspired to strengthen the faith that I've been given. Every believer has more to learn, and I know that I learned more and more about what it means to be a Christian through my experience at Peace.

What will you miss the most about Peace?

I will miss having a place to go during a stressful week and I will miss the smiling faces that greeted me there. I will miss the people who show God's love to me in everything that they do.

Greta is a recent graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

There was a woman named Helen who told of how, all her life, she had been sheltered and somewhat pampered by her family. She was the youngest of five children. She had never known what it was to be alone. Her family was always together and did things together.

However, Helen found herself at a time when her parents, her brother and three sisters had all been taken from her, the last two dying exactly one month apart. She suddenly found herself in an empty house. She had never had a key, for there was always someone there to let her in. Now there was no one. For a few weeks, a niece stayed with her. However, the time came when the niece had to leave. Helen drove her to the station, drove back home and sat in the driveway for a while dreading to go in.

Finally, she braced herself and for the first time in her life, she walked into the house all alone. As she walked up the steps, she prayed, "O God, help me." The first thing Helen did when she got inside was to turn the radio on so there would be sound in those silent, empty rooms. She walked to the closet to hang her coat up, when over the radio she heard:

No, never alone, No, never alone.
He promised never to leave me,
Never to leave me alone.
No never alone, no never alone.
He promised never to leave me
Never to leave me.

It was the Old Fashion Revival Hour Quartet singing, "I've Seen the Lightning Crash." Helen said, "To me it was the very voice of God in answer to the cry of my heart. I realized as never before that my Lord was there with me, and that I was never alone. All my life I had depended on my family for companionship. From that moment I learned to depend on Him."

During this season of Lent, focus on the journey He took for you and me because of His love and care for us. May that be your assurance that you are not alone, that Jesus is with you!

See you at retreat!

We are closing in on spring, but I want to take you back to Dec. 21, as we were able to see “The Christmas Star.” Were you able to see it? Unfortunately, from my home along Lake Michigan we were not able to see it, but we knew it was there.



Becky Haltaufderheid
LWML District President

What a way to close out a really challenging year, with this beautiful sight so close to Christmas. It was a reminder to me of God's majestic power and control over all creation, meaning He will take care of us as we move into another year. It's kind of like the rainbow He placed in the sky in No-

ah's day, telling His people He is with them and they will be OK.

Another sign is the COVID-19 vaccine that is available right now. We thank God He has provided the scientists with the knowledge and materials to prepare it. Perhaps you have received your vaccine that will protect you from this virus and its lasting effects. Once protected, we may one day be able to get close enough to each other to steal a hug!

Our district LWML Heart to Heart Sisters have planned a Spring Retreat for April 10 at Camp Luther. Are you ready to gather with your LWML sisters? The registration form can be found in the winter edition of the *Mission Tidings*. You will be inspired as you learn about connecting cultures and generations. You will hear from speakers Heather Ruesch, Debby Suchyta, and Rev. Doug Reinders, our senior pastoral counselor.

Come and enjoy a Saturday of learning, fun and fellowship. Hopefully, we can get close enough to get a hug or two! If you're traveling from a long distance

or you wish to join us Friday night for ethnic food tasting, you can arrange to reserve a room in the retreat center. I hope to see you there!

As I close this article, I wish to share with you that I have been going through treatments for pancreatic cancer. I have had chemo and radiation treatments these past seven months. I will now have surgery to remove the tumor. During this time of surgery and recovery, I will be turning the leadership over to Joan Berquist, first vice-president, for a few weeks. She served in the past as Iowa East District president, so our district will be in good hands while I recover.

God has always been in control as we have seen in the last year. He continues to control our lives every day. I am assured of His love for me. He knows what is best for me and I continue to follow Him through this cancer journey. He knows your needs as well and will continue to provide for all you need each and every day. May He bless you! Serving Joyfully!

The Counseling CONNECTION

UNDISTRACTED!

We live in a culture of disturbing distractions. There is increasing shifting sand replacing foundations when it comes to spiritual security. Fear is eroding faith.



Rev. Dan Kohn
District Counselor

What could be applied to our current culture was also lived out by one of God's prophets. Elijah's foundation of faith, present when he challenged the false prophets, eroded all too quickly when powerful Queen Jezebel proved to be the distraction. Elijah ran in fear tied to this singular threat (1Kings 19:2-3).

God intervened on behalf of His

despairing messenger. An angel was sent twice to provide sustenance in the midst of the wilderness Elijah was in as he attempted to run from God and His mission (vs. 4-7).

Then came God's message that redirected this wayward man. It was time to venture to the “mount of God” (v. 8). This was not a time for defeat.

God joined with Elijah on that mountain. Following the prophet's lament (v. 10), God spoke. He had not abandoned His chosen messenger. Indeed, there was a new mission to fulfill (vs. 15-17).

And God reminded His prophet that he would not be alone in the work before him (v. 18). This was a time of renewed focus and faithfulness by Elijah.

Now back to our contemporary culture. We seek lessons from this story to be applied now to assure workers that this

is not a time of defeat. Yes, God's workers face a threat. Despair and distancing oneself from God is one alternative. It can be a time when workers feel very alone ... and a time of lamenting.

God would have each worker consider the inspired words of another chosen worker, who also faced daunting challenges in his mission:

And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. — Gal. 6:9

There is still work to be done for God. As with the ancient prophet, His voice may come in an unexpected “low whisper” (v. 12b). Take heed, God did not bring you to this precious moment to abandon you now. He foreknew that you would have a role to play at such a time as this.

We close with Solomon's wisdom:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. — Prov. 3:5

Contact me at revkohn@gmail.com or 715-610-2400.

Pastor installed in Waupaca

Rev. Brian Roehrborn was installed as pastor of Calvary, Waupaca, on Jan. 17. Rev. Timothy Shoup, senior pastor of St. Paul, Bonduel, and district third-vice president, served as the officiant for the service and Rev. Kevin Ader, pastor of St. John, Wisconsin Rapids, served as preacher. Assisting ministers were from circuits 16 and 18.

Pastor Roehrborn had previously served for 13 years at St. John's, Almond, and for the past year at St. Paul's Wild Rose, which is now a dual parish with Calvary, Waupaca. He had also been serving Calvary as vacancy pastor.

He is married to Heather and they have three daughters Amy (Aaron) Eppinger, Bryony (Tyler) Austin, and Ashley (Devon) Wennedt; and one grandson, Rex, son of Bryony and Tyler.



Pictured are, from left, Revs. Tim Shoup, Brian Roehrborn, Kevin Ader and Jeff Smiles, pastor of St. Luke, Big Falls, and St. Mark, Symco.

CAMP LUTHER

Volunteers of the Year



Bonny and Wally's first involvement as Camp Luther volunteers began when Bonny served as a summer guest medic. When the Pethkes learned of the Community Center project, they offered to help.

As the Community Center project neared groundbreaking, the camp staff still hadn't found a table for the new Dining Hall. That's when Bonny and Wally offered to build exactly what was needed! After much discussion and research, the staff decided on a 10-person table that would best serve summer camp and year-round retreats.

Bonny and Wally visited Honey Rock Camp for measurements and design ideas. Then a prototype table was built and tested with campers last summer. Over the next eight months, Bonny and Wally constructed 26 tables and matching benches with the white pines on their property in Ogdensburg.

Wally and his friend, Gary, also installed the half log wainscoting in the dining hall and the wood ceiling in the main entrance, which was milled from some of the trees that came down onsite prior to construction.



Terry is receiving this award for serving as project manager for the construction of the new Community Center. He oversaw the work of the general contractor, Bayland Building, Inc., from beginning to end. He also monitored project expenses, worked with the Building Oversight Committee to keep costs in line with the project budget, and provided regular updates to the Board of Directors.

Terry's commitment to Camp Luther included traveling weekly to camp throughout the construction, where he lived and worked out of a cottage. A special thank you to Terry's wife, Judy, for the sacrifices she made over these many months so Terry could serve at camp.

Terry and Judy are from Pulaski and have three children and six grandchildren. Terry has served on the Camp Luther Board of Directors the last six years and was also chairman (2016-19).