



/ MARCH 2023

DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH WISCONSIN



**Rev. Dr.
Dwayne Lueck**
North Wisconsin
District President

On Jan. 16 it was my turn to lead staff devotions. I learned that in 2004 the third Monday of January became known as Blue Monday, and is supposedly the saddest day of the year. These findings were based on poor weather, the post-Christmas lull, stretched finances and unattainable New Year's resolutions. I also learned that the scientific and academic community reject that it is the saddest day.

During the winter months we also hear about people suffering from SAD (seasonal affective disorder), which is most common in winter. It affects 1 to 10% of people. As Craig Jackson, a professor at Birmingham City University in England, stated: "Put simply, SAD is a form of depression ... can be caused or exacerbated by a lack of natural daylight as well as social reasons such as reduced activity and leisure time due to shorter and colder days" (livescience.com/what-is-blue-monday).

So what is a person to do when depressed? Some suggestions I found include taking a hike, thinking positive thoughts, talking to friends, and even crying and screaming. Most would agree those with severe depression should seek professional help.

In taking a look at my Bible, my suggestion to the staff was

that we read Psalm 121. Martin Luther wrote the following about this psalm:

The 121st Psalm is a psalm of comfort in which the psalmist comforts us by his example, so that we may remain strong in faith and wait for God's help and protection. (*Reading the Psalms with Luther*, CPH, p.302)

Psalm 121 begins with:

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. **PS. 121:1-2**

Psalm 121 is from the section of the Psalms (120-134) that worshipers sang on their journey to Jerusalem. It is a confession of trust in the Lord; a song of comfort to those people back in Bible times and fitting for us on our life's journey as well. These words of Psalm 121 are good for us whether it is a Blue Monday or dealing with SAD.

The psalmist suggests that our Lord is not asleep and He is caring. God is not asleep at the wheel while we are struggling. For us as believers we know that we can turn to our Lord for help when we are down. He hears us when we pray to Him. He hears all of our prayers.

The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore. (**121:7-8**)

Here we have the words that give us assurance that God promises He will watch over us and be with us all of our life — "forevermore." These are the

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Q&A

WITH JEN LARSEN

Our district early childhood directors are outstanding leaders with significant responsibility. Sometimes their contribution to the ministry of the church is overlooked.

Jen Larsen is the director of Faith Christian Preschool, Green Bay, where she also teaches. She has a bachelor's degree in Organizational/Corporate Communication and is the mother of two young children. Her leadership experiences have given her keen insight to the needs of early childhood leaders in our North Wisconsin District.



Some churches see early childhood, including 3K-4K, as daycare only. How would you respond to that?

Unfortunately, this is a much larger misconception that is viewed by much of society.

First, one must understand that there are so many different “types” of early childhood centers. Just within our district there are full-day preschool programs, half-day preschool programs, half-day preschool programs with daycare, daycares, standalone preschools, and preschools in partnership with larger schools.

Each program has their own specific needs and may vary by location, year,

or the philosophy of the program. But among all these differences, there is a common theme. All programs operate to not just provide care in a Christian environment, but to do it in a way that is developmentally appropriate and best suits their families’ needs.

Many preschool programs, including ours, operate with similar expectations of a K-8 school versus a daycare. Whether it is a preschool or daycare, most maintain a play-based philosophy and the fact should not be negated that there is much planning and intentionality that goes into a quality hands-on program.

What are the everyday challenges you face as an early childhood leader?

As a standalone preschool, we do see many of the same challenges that daycares or full-day programs face, such as staffing, enrollment, or parent education. However, our biggest hurdle to overcome is creating an understanding that we operate as a half-day school, but oftentimes with less support than a K-8 school.

Although a preschool program may be a shorter day, and have smaller class sizes, lower tuition rates and play-based learning, it does not mean that quality should be sacrificed. Fewer hours of class time does not mean different standards have to be met. It does, however, mean that intentionality, organization, time management and thinking outside of the box must be present at all times.

How could the church better embrace their early childhood leaders?

The first step is having a better understanding of how your program operates. What does the program’s day look like? Do they have additional events that they may need support for? What kind of relationships can be formed between the church and the preschool?

At our location, we are blessed to have strong relationships within one of our association churches, Faith Lutheran Church. Our pastor (Rev. Joshua Error), vicar (Jordan DeBoer) or DCE (Alex Wright) leads Bible time for each class once per week, the youth groups help with set-up for extracurricular events, the music director (Paul Heiser) assists with program music, the custodian (Diane Rowe) ensures daily cleanliness of our classroom, and the office staff (Angela Stiles and Angie Smet) support with administrative tasks.

Since we are a smaller teaching staff, the quality program that exists would not be what it is without these amazing people!

Jen Larsen is pictured helping children work on their alphabet skills.



LWML

Fitting the pieces TOGETHER



On a recent visit, our son asked me, “Mom, why do you keep a jigsaw puzzle piece in your wallet?” Now after reading that, I suppose you are wondering why I keep a puzzle piece in my wallet!

During our garage sale last fall, I became bored between customers and started working on a 300-piece puzzle that was in the sale. A lovely young lady looked over all of the items we had on display and asked if she could buy the puzzle that I was working on. I must have made it look pretty good!

She asked if all the pieces were there and I said they most certainly were. After she drove away, I found a piece to that puzzle lying on the garage floor. Too late to chase her down! I was feeling awkward that it looked as if I had misled her. So I keep the puzzle piece in my wallet as a reminder that although I may have good intentions, I am not perfect. Perfection only comes through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thinking about jigsaw puzzles, all the different pieces connected reveal a picture. This is much the same as LWML projects, servant events, in-gatherings, mite collections, rallies, retreats and conventions. The North Wisconsin District LWML, along with the South Wisconsin and Northern Illinois districts, are working together to host the LWML 40th Biennial Convention.

It will be great to see how all the pieces fall together to help make this convention a mountaintop experience for those who attend. Come “Celebrate the Lord of the Nations” June 22-25 in Milwaukee!



Joan Berquist
LWML District
President

Wellness Corner

Equipped for equipping

“God does not call the equipped. God equips the ones He calls.” (Rick Yancy)

God is in the equipping business. There is kingdom work to be done, for which God calls men and women into service. It is a partnership between God and the called.



Rev. Dan Kohn
District Counselor

We can list an array of people in the Bible whom God called: Noah, Moses, David, Isaiah, Peter and Paul. Those called were pre-ordained for kingdom work, as was the prophet Jeremiah:

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” (1:5)

God the Father creates ... God the Son redeems ... and God the Spirit equips. One way the equipping takes place is through spiritual gifts given by the Spirit. The apostle Paul gives this overview of these gifts:

Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 COR. 12:4-7

Here we will focus on the gift of pastor (also referred to as “shepherd”). We find the reference in Ephesians 4. This is a chapter that says much about ministry in the church. Verses 11-13 offers this summary:



And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

It is that first application that is the focus here — “to equip the saints for the work of ministry.” The church is a “body of believers” who share a common mission. Here the pastor has a vital role. He is equipped by the Holy Spirit for the work of equipping others for shared ministry. The kingdom work is shared.

These verses provide clarity regarding the pastoral ministry. They provide an outline that can help prevent the overload that pastors frequently face.

Thank you, Pastor Kohn!

Let me take this opportunity to say thank you to Pastor Kohn for the articles he has shared with all of us that brought home God’s Word and gave us insight for our lives.

He has decided to step down from authoring future articles. We give thanks to him and ask God to continue to bless and be with him.

Rev. Dr. Dwayne Lueck
President, North Wisconsin District

DISTRICT NEWS

St. John welcomes Pastor Lorfeld

Rev. Matthew Lorfeld was installed as pastor of St. John, Kellner, on Jan. 8. A 2009 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Pastor Lorfeld had served congregations in Minnesota before moving to Wisconsin. He and his wife, Heidi, are the parents of four children.

Clergy attending the service are, from left (front row) Preston Paul, Dr. Dwayne Lueck, Matthew Lorfeld, John Schmidt, Timothy Sallach; (back row) Corey Shaffer, David Ficken, Bruce Hoffmann, Tim Ritter, Joshua Baumann and Matthew Christians.



A 'LABOR OF LOVE'

Did you know that \$30,000 was granted to 14 district professional church workers to help reduce their educational debt? That is just this year! Thirty-nine gifts totaling over \$80,000 have been given over the previous three years!

The average educational debt of an applicant is over \$40,000. Delegates to the North Wisconsin District Convention last June voted to create the Labor of Love



campaign to be able to meet this need well into the future. We celebrate their wisdom to care for our church workers.

Watch for more information about the million-dollar Labor of Love campaign later this summer.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

words of hope that we cling to as believers. These are words that we hold onto when life gets us down.

Write down Psalm 121 in the front of your Bible. Make a copy of it and put it on your mirror. Read it. Believe it. Put your trust in the Lord. "My help comes from the Lord."

CHURCH WORK STUDENTS: Apply for financial aid

This annual grant to college students pursuing professional church work is making a difference. The purpose of the student aid fund is to make it possible for young men and women — lacking in financial resources but who have the desire and ability for church work — to train for full-time service.

District financial support is available to all college and seminary students who are attending an LCMS university or seminary preparing to become pastor, teacher,



deaconess, parish worker, DCE, music director or other full-time vocation.

A new application must be filed each year. Students simply need to contact the school's financial aid office to

get the district financial aid application and return it to their school before May 15.

The form and other information can also be found at nwdlcms.org. Go to the "Financial" tab and select "NWD Resources" from the drop-down menu. From there, scroll down to "Financial Aid."

Share your news with us!

Please send submissions to Karol Selle at selleks@gmail.com. You may also mail your submissions to Karol at 3177 State Hwy. 66; Rosholt, WI 54473.

Please ensure photos sent electronically are high resolution.