

District Resources

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

the Happenings



The President's Message – March 2017



In This Issue:

- The President's Message
- Across My Desk: DJ Schult
- News and Events
- School Corner
- Counselor Corner
- R&STM Article
- CPS News
- NWD Financial Box Score

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

Paul McCartney of the Beatles wrote the sad ballad: *The Long and Winding Road*. It is a sad ballad about loving someone and knowing that love will not be returned. At the end of the second verse Paul wrote: *Why leave me standing here, Let me know the way.*

Lent is just the beginning of an annual journey. It happens every spring. ("Lent" comes from an old English word, *lencten*, which means spring. In time it was shortened from *lencten* to Lent.) It is a winding road for 40 days that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. It is a road on which we follow our Lord and His journey. His journey to do what He came to do and that was redeem us poor sinners.

There is sort of a rhythm to it. Shrove Tuesday is a day of preparation for Lent when people can confess their sins and be forgiven. "Shrove is an old word for "forgave." But over the years it has become a day for feasting and celebrating. Eat pancakes. There is the wild celebration in New Orleans – Mardi Gras. There are no more Alleluias until Easter.

The next day is Ash Wednesday. The palm leaves from Palm Sunday the year before are burned and the ashes are put on the forehead of worshippers at church and told: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return." It is a day to show sorrow for sin.

Then we gather for mid-week services and are reminded from the passion story of what our Lord went through as we may hear about the crown of thorns, the dice, the rooster, and the whip; we may hear from people who were a part of the passion story and their interaction with Jesus: Peter, Judas, Pilate, Herod. The focus of our mid-week journey still focuses on Jesus and what He did for us.

Palm Sunday or "Hosanna Sunday" as we remember Jesus' ride into Jerusalem. Hosanna means "save now." The people honored Jesus by throwing palm branches along His path. Palm Sunday also ushers in Holy Week.

Now the journey gets more intense during Holy Week which is divided into two sections. The first, Monday to Wednesday, is a time of preparation for the second part of the week. "Spring cleaning" had its beginning during Holy week to prepare for the rest of the week and Easter. The second part of the week is given to prayer and special worship.

Maundy Thursday is often called the "birthday of the chalice." We remember the institution of the Lord's Supper. The word "Maundy" derived from the Latin word "I command." The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated.

On Good Friday our journey ends at the cross where our Lord was crucified and died for the sins of the world. Good Friday comes from "God's Friday," the first English name for this day.

Holy Saturday is the last day of Lent. On this day the early church baptized those who had been taking instructions.

The road of Lent prepares us for the joy of Easter and our Lord's resurrection. It is a reminder of what our Lord went through for us. He did what we could not do – save ourselves. No matter how hard we try we could not and cannot pay for our sins. Jesus did. He went through hell for us. He paid the price.

Why leave me standing here, Let me know the way.

The good news is that our Lord did not leave us standing at the door. Because of His love for us He has given us a road to follow and it is in the footsteps of our Lord. He has shown us the way. As Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Enjoy the winding road of Lent. Jesus will show you the way.

Rev. Dwayne Lueck, District President

5 Transformational Church Health Tips To Fuel Spiritual Growth

The below tips are taken from a blog from the Malphurs Group. The entire article can be found at http://www.malphursgroup.com/5-transformational-church-health-tips-to-fuel-spiritual-growth/?utm_content=bufferd02f3&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

What if your church were to prioritize church health over church growth? Below you will find 5 simple suggestions for how you can return to a focus on church health.

1) Prioritize the Pastor's Daily Walk

Pastors navigate numerous challenges on a daily/weekly basis. They get busy, and they can easily find themselves overly focused on DOING ministry at the expense of BEING a growing disciple. If the pastor isn't growing, it's unlikely the church is doing well growing spiritually. (This is not always true, but frequently is the case.) Ensure that someone in your church regularly [encourages your pastor](#) to keep a steady walk with God.

2) Intentional Discipleship of Church Leaders

Church leaders don't have it all together. We are foolish if we assume they do. There is no such thing as a perfect church leader, who consistently knows exactly what to do. Most of your church leaders are incredibly busy balancing work, family, finances, and their responsibilities within your church. Don't assume that they don't need guidance, encouragement, and direction in their walk with God and ongoing spiritual formation.

3) Churchwide Scripture Study Plan

Make sure every member and attender has access to a clear scripture study plan. The Bible is a huge book with endless text containing life-changing truths. God's Word is powerful and a treasure trove for spiritual growth. As a church leader you know this, but the average person struggles with where to start.

4) Celebrate Rest and Vacation Time

I can't tell you how many times I've heard people criticize a church member, church leader, or pastor for taking a vacation. These statements aren't necessarily evil or malicious. But often people "hear" something very different than what is said. They hear people saying "You shouldn't be taking so much vacation. Christians who get sufficient time to rest tend to lead healthier lives. Encourage this type of behavior — among church staff, as well as the congregation. [Consider integrating rest into your work plan](#)...if you haven't already. You won't regret it.

5) Prioritize Depth Over Breadth

I'm afraid that many churches have a tendency to "over-program" their people to the point of burnout. Can you recognize the signs of burnout? When we emphasize one activity after another, we apply the rat-race treadmill of corporate America to the spiritual life of the church. Not good. Make sure you are [being intentional about avoiding burnout](#) and leaving room to grow.



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.



News and Events



Mission Mini-Grants Now Available

The North WI District is funding outreach grants for the 3rd consecutive year. \$20,000 has again been set aside for local witness and mercy outreach. Granting amounts will range from \$200-\$1500 and must be used by December 31. Churches may only apply for one grant each calendar year and can include one-time events, but resubmission of previously approved plans will not be considered. The application must be made by the Pastor, and combining NWD Mini-Grants with Thrivent/other agencies is encouraged. Grants will be awarded to approved applications until funds are exhausted. Awardees must commit to providing the NWD a brief reflection of the event, with pictures. The application form can be found on the NWD website homepage at NWDLCMS.org.

Synod Statistics Due

Congregational Statistics and Lay Leadership forms were mailed from St. Louis mid-January. The annual statistics form is now due online, and the Lay Leader form is due to St. Louis by snail mail. Please complete as soon as possible.

Leadership Meeting Resources Online

Did you miss the multiple circuit leadership meetings held in January and February? Multiple resources from those events are available on the NWD website homepage at www.nwdlcms.org. Simply view the right side of the homepage and click on the items of interest. Want to learn more about stewardship, board business, conflict or worker health? Contact DJ at District Resources to get connected with the right person.

Call Season

This is the time of year where our schools are busy managing the call process. Retiring teachers and school growth creates staffing needs. The Concordia University system has only 118 new teacher candidates for over 200 requests from schools Synod wide. That means schools will call from the field to fill their staff. When teachers and principals receive a call, it impacts their home, their staff, their school, and their church. It's a big deal. Please encourage all the church workers you know with a kind word and the value they bring to your ministry. Pray also for this season of calling, for workers with a heart for Lutheran education and service.

New Resource for Taxes

It's that time of the year again... taxes. David Mellem, CPA, has created a resource to help church workers with common questions regarding taxation that can make your tax filing more accurate and less stressful. The [resource](#) is located on the Financial Resources page of the NWD website along with a [resource from Synod](#).



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.



News and Events

Future Church Worker Student Grants

The application deadline for NWD Church Worker Student Grants is coming soon! The sole purpose of the student aid fund is to make it possible for young men and women, who lack financial resources and who already have the desire and ability, to train for full-time service in the church. 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 can also be found on the NWDLCMS.ORG website under Financial Resources/Financial Aid. Questions may be directed to chair Andy Heren (715)831-9236 or rcktnut007@aol.com.



Full-time Church Work Scholarships from Church Mutual

CM CARES, the Church Mutual Insurance Company Foundation, is pleased to announce a new Religious Scholars Program to financially support religious students in their pursuit of a career in ministry. The foundation has set aside \$250,000 for 50 scholarships of \$5,000 each in 2017. The new scholarship program is open to full-time students across the country who are enrolled in an advanced degree (post-secondary) religious studies program at an accredited theological seminary, college or university during the 2017-18 academic year. For application details, interested participants should visit www.churchmutual.com/cmcares-scholars.

Youth Bible Bowl 2017

The time is "now" to open Bibles to the book of Matthew and be prepared for youth around the state who will compete in getting the "light" on first and share the answers to questions, or be ready to challenge the answer and "score"! Rib Mountain Lutheran Church, Wausau is graciously hosting this event on **Saturday, April 1, 2017**. Trophies are awarded to the team winners as well as individuals for the written test. Lunch is provided and there is no limit to adults and guests who wish to cheer for their youth! Registration, rules and information are available on the NWD website. Contact Pastor Mark Palmer with any questions... 715-853-5225 or m.palmer@stpaulbonduel.com.

Bow the Knee

This dramatic Easter musical will be presented at:

- Rib Mt. Lutheran, Wausau - April 1 @ 7pm & April 2 @ 2:30pm
- Zion Lutheran, Easton - April 8 @ 7pm & April 9 @ 2:30 pm

All are welcome as we focus on the Lenten season.

Early Childhood Directors Academy

NWD EC Directors are gathering in April for their third annual Academy. Dr. Candyce Seider, retired professor from Concordia University Wisconsin will facilitate the discussion for the day. The agenda was created by the directors attending the previous EC Conference. The day will be collaborative, focused on the *Home-Center Connection*, including the relational connection and the business connection. Click [here](#) to register. The NWD has 42 stand-alone preschools/childcares, 19 elementary schools, and 3 high schools. Please pray for all those who teach and lead in our Lutheran schools.



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.



News and Events

Mission Trip Opportunity

The LCMS is seeking out people who love Jesus and can help teach an English Bible Camp (similar to a VBS) in Poland this summer. There are ten congregations ready to reach out to the children of their neighborhoods with the Gospel. Most of these children do not know the Good News of Jesus, and through these camps, they learn about Jesus and in turn tell their parents. And the local Lutheran congregation can follow up with these families after the camp is done. These camps make a lasting difference in these communities! We are looking for teams of 5 to serve July 18-31 or August 1-14, 2017. Teams can come from one congregation or school, or individuals can apply and be placed on a team. Team members raise support to cover the cost of the trip, which is about \$1100 and includes all costs while in Poland. You can learn more or apply here: <http://servenow.lcms.org/opp/vacation-bible-school-poland/>. Read more about this opportunity from those who have served here: <https://blogs.lcms.org/2017/english-camps-in-poland>. This opportunity is not limited to those who have formal teaching experience, so please invite a friend!



LCMS Worship's Institute on Liturgy, Preaching and Church Music

The triennial event will be held July 25-28, 2017 at Concordia University Chicago and will offer pastors, church musicians, and all who are passionate about the Church's worship an opportunity to be refreshed in Word, song, and prayer together with opportunities to grow in skills that enhance the joy of the people of God in the reception of His gifts. This year's Institute takes its cue from the upcoming Reformation anniversary with the theme: ***The Just Live by Faith—Make This Plain in Sermon, Service, Song.*** In addition to three keynote addresses, we'll have opportunity for daily study of the Word (featuring CUC President Dr. Daniel Gard), daily prayer services, two Divine Services (with new arrangements of Setting Five by Jacob Weber and Jonathan Kohrs with LCMS President Matthew Harrison preaching the opening service and Dr. Gard the final one), a concert by the National Lutheran Choir from Minneapolis, a hymn festival featuring the hymns of Martin Luther, numerous breakout sessions for pastors and church musicians plus many others on general worship topics, and exhibitors with all kinds of wares and services. Registration will open mid-March via the Synod's website. Meanwhile, for more information, contact the LCMS at 888.the.lcms ([843-5267](tel:843-5267)) or infocenter@lcms.org.

State Youth Gathering

The State Youth gathering is an event held every three years, this time planned jointly between leaders from the NWD and SWD. This year's event will be Nov 3-5, 2017 at the Kahlahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells and will feature many of the same faces our youth experienced on stage at the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans! Check the NWD website homepage in April for updates, schedules, pre-event studies, and registration. Start planning now to attend!

NWD Information Booklets Available

Have you seen the new District Resources information booklets? Share them with called and lay leaders in your ministry and interested members. These booklets tell the story of the work we are doing together in the NWD. Learn more about students grants, campus ministry, mission Peru, schools and more! Watch for them at NWD events or on the information tables at your church. Call District Resources at 715-845-8241 for your own copy.



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.





Thanks to teacher Sue Lilienthal for sharing this month's school corner.

School: St. Paul, Stevens Point

Program: TEC21

Question 1: What is TEC21? How are you and other NWD schools involved?

TEC21 Stands for Technology Enriched Classrooms. Our goal is to facilitate technology-enriched classrooms for the 21st century-learner. It is a series of 7 face-to-face workshops with Lutheran school teachers across the United States. There are currently about 17 workshop sites across the US, 2 of them are in the North Wisconsin District. I have been facilitating the workshop location in Wausau for the past two years. We have had a full cohort of 10 teachers from the central Wisconsin area both years! Our first group of teachers loved it so much that they have asked to come back for a "reunion" each month!

Question 2: What makes TEC21 a good fit for NWD schools?

This is a great opportunity for NWD schools since it is very individualized. Plus, our teachers get to encourage and uplift one another in a small group setting. Those teachers who have been trained can then go back to their own school and be a resource to their colleagues. So many times we think we are an island in our NWD classrooms, but getting together at TEC21 helps us share ideas and reach out to one another as resources.

Question 3: What commitment must schools make to be involved?

Schools may send one or two teachers per year. The cost is \$1000/teacher. However, the NWD has been blessed with grant money so that schools only pay half of that cost. The school will also need to cover the cost of a substitute teacher for each of the 7 monthly workshop dates. A willingness to incorporate technology into the curriculum and provide basic technology resources would also be expected. Giving your TEC21 teacher time to share at faculty meetings is a great way to support your teacher as well.

Question 4: As a leader, what do you feel are the most important pieces of advice for a principal wanting to implement TEC21?

TEC21 is an opportunity for professional growth for your teachers. Not only will they discover new, innovative technology tools and resources and how to effectively integrate them into the curriculum, but they will have time to discover, play and process. That is something that our teachers often do not have time for. Too often, we have an in-service and ask the teachers to implement the new idea, but we don't give them time to reflect and play. TEC21 provides that time for our teachers. Ultimately, TEC21 teachers return to your school encouraged and energized, ready to pass that on to their students and colleagues.



**NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD**

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.



Counselor Corner

DEFEATABLE "GIANTS"

It is both a true story, and one that offers a suitable "object lesson" for church workers today. It is a "giant" story with a victorious ending... with God's help.

The story is found in 1 Samuel 17. It is a battle scene between a 9-foot giant named Goliath...and a courageous teenager named David.

In the church context there are often "giants" who appear to dominate. These can be individuals or circumstances that intimidate the work(ers). The story of David and Goliath offers us insights to address these challenges.

When David learned of the "giant" he chose a different response than the others in this story—"Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him" (vs. 32).

David chose to be assertive, rather than evasive. David did not see a "giant." Rather he saw a challenge that needed to be addressed... and he was ready to take on that role.

King Saul only saw the "giant" and tried to dissuade David from such a foolish action (vs. 33). In congregations there will also be detractors who cannot see past the problem. They allow the "giants" to remain in control.

David was not distracted. In his mindset he recalled "battles" in the past (over large predators of the sheep for which he was responsible) (vs. 34-36). Yes, past victories reinforced his confidence in the present—with this realization in his mind and heart—that the Lord was his Deliverer (vs. 37a)!

The church is not a human institution. It is the Lord's and his goal is always victory. He uses human vessels to accomplish his triumphs.

So David prepared for battle. He did not use artificial means (someone else's "armor") (vs. 38-39). David would use the "tools" of his comfort. David took his "staff," his "sling"...and "five smooth stones" (vs. 40).

David was ready to do battle. When he faced the "giant" Goliath, this was his battle cry—"...the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands" (vs. 47b). Yes, our "battles with giants" are also in the Lord's hands!

This was a day of victory (vs. 50). This was the Lord's triumph over the "giant!"

When we, as church workers, consider the "giants" before us, we need to consider the victory that Christ has already planned... and how He will use us to defeat those "giants;" and to Him be the glory!

Do not fight the "giants" alone. Contact me when I can be of help.

Pastor Dan Kohn

District Counselor

715-610-2400 / revkohn@gmail.com



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.



Rural and 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...



Teaching the Faith: Confirmation

Do your students enter your confirmation room with the same look they have entering the dentist's office? Do you ever feel like your lessons are like last week's leftovers... a little stale? Do you ever wonder how much is really sinking into their little heads? If so, I do not have all the answers. However, here are a few which I have found to work. Consider offering confirmation instruction during a week in the summer or as a series of retreats. We have found students are much more engaged in the summer and enjoy getting to see their friends again. We offer our "Basics Camp" on Sunday from 3–5 p.m. and then from Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. This gives us a large chunk of uninterrupted time to teach. As an added bonus, we have found children with attention disorders have an easier time engaging during the daytime hours.

Work to build relationships.

We begin each morning by getting youth moving and interacting through games like "Minute to Win It". We have found this is a fun way to get youth comfortable with one another and fired up for another awesome day. This also seems to help youth focus and engage in the morning lessons.

Try using objects to teach.

Jesus did this throughout His ministry. We use objects for each of the six chief parts. For example, in teaching the need for the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit we give each student an unlit candle and turn off the lights. Sitting in a circle, we discuss why we all need the Holy Spirit because we are all spiritually in the dark. Then we bring in a lit candle along with the Bible and the baptismal bowl filled with water. We talk about how the Holy Spirit brings us the light through the Word and Sacrament to shine in our hearts through faith. After lighting each student's candle, we continue this light/darkness metaphor of the Gospel throughout the lesson. Other ideas include guest speakers, video clips, skits, sign language and small group discussion.

Look at your overall structure.

Our structure includes: First Communion (7th grade), Confession Sunday (8th Grade), Confirmation (10th Grade) and Commissioning Sunday (12th grade). With each of these steps we provide opportunities for youth and parents to learn the basics of the Christian faith.

Make review fun.

This summer we are going to use a fun online learning resource called Kahoot! (getkahoot.com). It is a great tool that we will use to reinforce the basic teachings of the Christian faith.

If you want more information, I invite you to join the free RSTM webinar March 9th at 1 p.m. as I present on teaching the faith to junior high youth. You may also email me at mtcalpastor@gmail.com or give me a call at 308-995-2208. I would love to assist you in any way I can.

Contributed by Kenton J. Birtell, pastor, Mt. Calvary, Holdrege, Neb.

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. If you have a good idea for outreach or a story you'd like to share so that we can share it with others, please email Amy Gerdts at amy.gerdts@lcms.org. Learn more about us at www.lcms.org/rstm, by calling our office at 888-463-5127, by email at rstm@lcms.org or "like" us on our facebook page at www.facebook.com/lcmsrstm.



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.



CPS News

Health Stewardship Reward

Thanks to you and your workers, ***Health Care Done Right*** is working. Healthy behaviors, health management, health stewardship and health coverage are making a difference. **Ministries that were in the Concordia Health Plan in 2016 will receive a Health Stewardship Reward this year.** - [READ MORE](#)

Worker Form 1095-B Mailing

Let your workers in the CHP know that CPS is mailing proof of their 2016 health care coverage - Form 1095-B - by March 2. - [READ MORE](#)

NWD Financial Box Score

December 2016 REVISED

December Offering	\$361,339.88
December Budget	\$370,370.00
Year-to-date total offerings	\$1,865,507.10
Year-to-date budget	\$1,925,000.00

February 2017

February Offering	\$122,239.50
February Budget	\$147,647.50
Year-to-date total offerings	\$151,014.74
Year-to-date budget	\$176,907.50

North Wisconsin District Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

3103 Seymour Lane

Wausau, WI 54401

715-845-8241 | www.nwdlcms.org | www.facebook.com/nwdlcms



NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

Promoting healthy churches, healthy workers, and missions outreach
by encouraging, networking and equipping local leaders.

