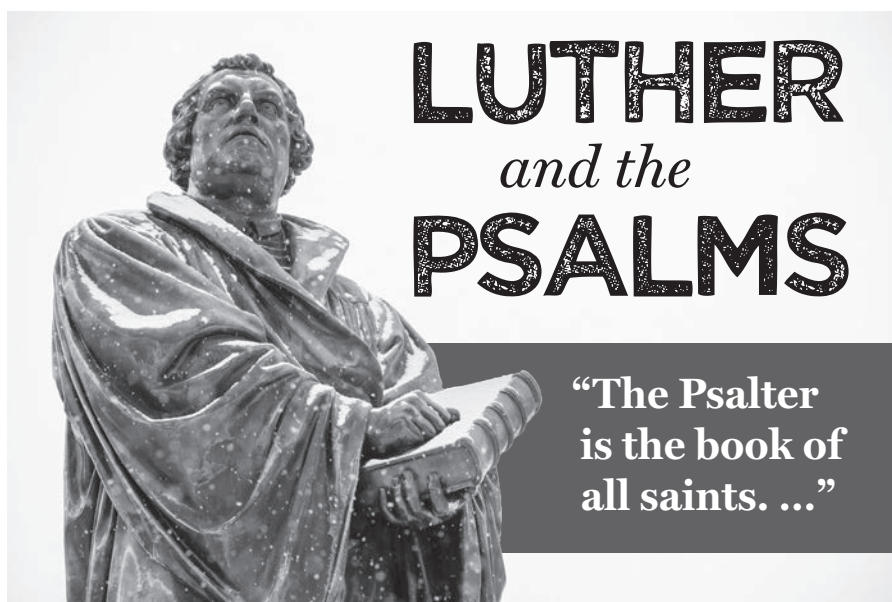




# DISTRICT NEWS

## NORTH WISCONSIN



**REFORMATION DAY** — Oct. 31 — is a big day for Lutherans. That is when Martin Luther posted the 95 theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Germany, back in 1517. Luther wrote those theses, but he also wrote *a lot* more.

Luther loved the Psalms. His initial lectures as a professor were on the Psalms, as was the first book he wrote for publication. Much of what Luther wrote was about the Psalms. Five of the volumes in the American edition of *Luther's Works* are on the Psalms.

Recently, I preached at a 150th church anniversary service on Psalm 116. In preparing for the sermon, I looked on my shelf and saw this book — *Reading the Psalms with Luther*. It has all 150 Psalms, and a brief Luther commentary on each psalm. That led me to ask: What was Luther's favorite psalm? I learned it was Psalm 118.

Luther wrote:

This is my own beloved Psalm. Although the entire Psalter and all of Holy Scripture are dear to me as my only comfort and source of life, I fell in love with this psalm especially. Therefore, I call it my own. When emperors and kings, the

wise and the learned, and even the saints could not aid me, this psalm proved a friend and helped me out of many great troubles. As a result, it is dearer to me than all the wealth, honor, and power of the pope, the Turk, and the emperor. I would be most unwilling to trade this psalm for all of it.

So what did Luther write specifically about Psalm 118? I am going to directly quote Luther from *Reading the Psalms with Luther* (published by Concordia Publishing House). My suggestion for you is to get your Bible and read Psalm 118.

Luther wrote:

The 118th Psalm is a psalm of thanks and my dearest, most beloved *Confitemini* [the Latin title of the psalm]. It gives thanks and also prophecies of the Christian and of Christ, the rejected cornerstone. This psalm is a general statement of thanksgiving for all the kindnesses of God daily and unceasingly showers on all men, both good and evil. ... This psalm praises God especially for the greatest benefit He bestowed on the world, namely, for Christ and His kingdom of grace — first promised and now revealed."

What did he write about Psalm 46 (the basis of Luther's hymn *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*)? Read Psalm 46. Quoting Luther:

The 46th psalm is a psalm of thanks, sung by the people of Israel because of the mighty deeds of God. He had protected and saved the city



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

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# Welcome new workers!

Our district's new church workers (except teachers) gathered at Camp Luther in Three Lakes in September for a day of encouraging, networking and equipping. They met the staff, discussed the district's culture, reviewed ministries and enjoyed the Camp Luther. New district teachers met in October.



# Congrats!

## *Principals win School Shepherd Award*

**Rev. Scott Gustafson** and **Rev. Steve Hulke** were awarded the 2021 district School Shepherd Award, which honors a faithful pastor who has provided outstanding encouragement, support and service to the congregation's school.

Pastor Gustafson has served at Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Merrill, for 11 years and has been in the pastoral ministry for 25 years. He also serves as a chaplain in the U.S. Army. Kathy Yahr, Trinity principal, described Gustafson's leadership in the recommendation letter: "Pastor Gustafson exemplifies leadership, humility and service to others. He is actively involved in the lives of our staff, students and all parishioners. Whether leading preschool chapel or counseling a troubled middle school



**Gustafson**

student, he offers solid biblical truth and human compassion, all accompanied by an unexpected and delightful sense of humor."

When not serving the church and school, he is busy with his family, his dog and cheering on the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Pastor Gustafson is married to Georgia and they have five children who attend the school.

Pastor Hulke has served 34 years in the pastoral ministry, the last five at St. Paul, Stevens Point. According to St. Paul staff, he knows each student by name and welcomes them to school each day. He has a very visible presence within the school, attends PTL events,



**Hulke**

athletic contests and conducts chapel at the school and the local Lutheran high school on a regular basis. The faculty and staff greatly appreciate his guidance and support in their vocation. In his free time, pastor enjoys cross-country skiing, golf, tennis and fishing. He is a proud Green Bay Packers and Wisconsin Badgers fan. Pastor Hulke is married to Olivia and they have three adult children and two grandchildren.

# Thank you!

The district received the following from Abigail, a sophomore at Concordia University Wisconsin who is majoring in early childhood education. She received a grant from the North Wisconsin District, which awards them to those studying to be full-time church workers.

"I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to you for making the district grant possible. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honor ... and it will allow me to concentrate more of my time on my studies."



LWML

## Thankful

Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples! Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works! Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice! Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually! **1 Chron. 16:8-11**



**Becky Haltaufderheid**  
LWML District President

This month we are preparing for Thanksgiving. We do some “thankful thinking” at this time. Most often the first thing that comes to mind is we are thankful for family, a home, food in our cupboard and our jobs.

I am thankful for each and every one of

you. I am thankful for the many prayers uttered from you asking God to bring about a cure for my cancer. As of this writing, chemo is no longer working and my cancer has spread. I have been referred to hospice care.

As I think about Thanksgiving, I am thankful for:

- ▶ Being called His child through Holy Baptism,
- ▶ My Christian parents who helped me grow in my faith,
- ▶ A loving and supportive husband, family and friends,
- ▶ God’s many blessings, providing for my every need in this life,
- ▶ Calling me to lead this district through the COVID pandemic,
- ▶ Allowing me to witness to others throughout my cancer journey,
- ▶ Each of your mite offerings so others may be blessed through you,
- ▶ For those called and serving on the district board.

My list could go on.

At the Fall Retreat, I turned over

district president duties over to Joan Berquist, who was serving as first vice-president. She will lead our district well and will fulfill my term through the district convention in 2022. God has blessed this district many times over the years with many wonderful leaders. I am thankful He gave me the opportunity to be one of them.

This will be my last message to you. I am not sure where I am as you read this. I may still be here on earth walking alongside my wonderful husband, or he may have already dropped me off at the door to heaven. I look forward to seeing you one day as you are called home by our loving Father. Until then, continue to support the LWML with your mite offerings so others may know the love of our Father and enjoy their eternal home with us.

God bless your Thanksgiving Day! Thank you for trusting me to serve as your district president these last three years. I am honored and blessed to have served the Lord with gladness.

With Joy in Jesus!

## Wellness Corner

## Our brother’s keeper

It was Cain who raised the question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen. 4:9b) From God’s perspective, the answer was “Yes.”

Here we look at this question and answer from a broader vantage point. In this context, “brother” is a fellow church worker or member. Now, again we raise the question: “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Asked differently: “Do I, as a fellow believer, have a responsibility for the welfare of a brother (sister)?” We presume that it is God who is inquiring. What are His expectations when it comes to a fellow believer in His kingdom?

We are called to love. In love we have a position to guide and correct. We also have a responsibility to address any sin we are aware of in a fellow believer. We share “truth in love” (Eph. 4:15a). We can call this “care-frontation.”

Paul also shares these instructions in his letter to the Galatians:



**Rev. Dan Kohn**  
District Counselor

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. ... Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. **Gal. 6:1-2**

We make available a “space of grace” to address the sin. The goal is a restored relationship with God for the offender. We are called to love as Christ loved (John 13:34-35).

We also consider the words of Christ from Matthew 18. A strategy is laid out by the Lord to deal with a brother who sins against us. This can also be applied when a sin is uncovered. It begins with a one-to-one “care-frontation.”

If that proves ineffective, then one or two witnesses are brought to address the sin. If no repentance is gained, it is brought to the church for action. If the offender’s heart is still unchanged, he or she is to be treated as a “Gentile and tax collector” (removed from fellowship).

We need to keep in mind that God never gives up on His chosen. He leaves room for redemption and restoration when true repentance is gained. King David and Peter are biblical examples. A period of oversight can be valuable in such situations to ensure on-going integrity.

A part of our calling is to be our brother’s keeper. The welfare of fellow believers, and, by extension, those whom they influence, are a priority before God, whom we all serve.

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# Daycare center reopens in Barron



From left, Amanda Ritchie and Jenn Kazekevicz serve on the staff of Salem Lutheran Childcare and Preschool. Amanda serves as infant room director, and Jenn is director.

The members of Salem Lutheran Church, Barron, dedicated their remodeled childcare space to the glory of God during a special worship service on Aug. 22. A celebration meal followed the service.

The congregation welcomed Rev. Dr. Dwayne Lueck, North Wisconsin District president as the guest preacher. During the service, there was also a blessing for the staff: Jenn Kazekevicz, director, and Amanda Ritchie, infant room director. The dedication and celebration followed a process of several years of planning and prayer.

Salem Lutheran Childcare and Preschool came about from a long history of early childhood education with a successful preschool for over 35 years. The preschool was suspended and the congregation began discussions on how to bring children back into the building.

The congregation approved the formation of a Feasibility Committee, which through prayer and guidance discovered that a full-time childcare center was a community need. The childcare center also gives the congregation opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those families without a church home.

The Feasibility Committee used Salem's mission statement as a guiding principle throughout the process: "Salem Lutheran Church is to be what God called us to be through faith in Jesus Christ, a body of believers engaged in building the Kingdom by discipling the Barron area with His Word and Sacrament ministry."

Once the childcare center was approved and the building nearly complete, the staff was formed. The childcare center's philosophy states: "The Childcare and Preschool is committed to a philosophy of providing a warm, loving Christian environment that will allow children to develop a positive self-concept. They will realize their uniqueness as God has created them and will develop their spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and intellectual skills."

By providing a vital community resource, the Salem congregation has a unique way to bring Jesus to lives of little children and their families. Salem Lutheran Childcare and Preschool will provide a Christian environment for children that will include reading Bible stories, singing Christian songs and celebrating Christian holidays and significant Lutheran milestones.



Applications for **Labor of Love grants** are now being accepted. The grants, funded through ongoing donations to the Worker Debt Relief Fund, are available for rostered church workers to help them pay off significant educational debt.

The application window will close on Friday, Dec. 3. Application details, policies and procedures are available at [nwdlcms.org](http://nwdlcms.org). Go to the "Financial" tab and select "NWD Resources" from the drop-down menu.

## MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

of Jerusalem, in which was His dwelling, against all the rage and the fury of all the kinds and the nations and preserved their peace against all warfare and weapons. And, in the manner of the Scriptures, the psalm calls the character of the city a little stream that shall not run dry, as opposed to the great rivers, seas, and oceans of the heathen — their great kingdoms principalities, and domains — that shall dry up and disappear.

We, on the other hand, sing this psalm to praise God for being with us. He miraculously preserves His Word and Christendom against the gates of hell, against the rage of the devil, the rebellious spirits, the world, the flesh, sin, death. Our little spring of water is also a living foundation, while their puddles, pools, and ponds become foul, malodorous, and dry.

Thank you, Dr. Luther, for your insight into God's Word!