



DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH WISCONSIN



Mom's house was the place that pulled our family together. There really is no reason to go back now that Mom is gone.

A REASON FOR HOPE

Now we come to a season called Advent, a time we prepare for the coming of the Savior. During the season of Advent, the world buys presents (starting on Black Friday), attends parties, mails the family Christmas cards, puts up the house and lawn decorations (hoping the lights work), gets the home prepared for the family and more. However, all of that busyness does not bring a loved one back. There is still emptiness.

What is needed is hope.

Advent is when we, as part of the holy Christian church, look forward to the birth of God's Son, repent for our sins and wait eagerly for the triumphant second coming of our Savior.

The kids in our churches rehearse for and ultimately perform a Christmas program. They enjoy their Advent calendars and learn that they open gifts because Jesus was God's gift to them and the world. They hear the words of the angels to the shepherds:

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" — **Luke 2:11**

When I was growing up, the color of Advent was purple, but over the years it has changed to blue — and I like the

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A LAMENT

I recently preached at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Reedsburg, where I grew up. It was sort of a weird feeling. None of my family live there anymore. I would have stayed with my Mom, but she died in 2016, so I stayed at a hotel.

While I was in town, I drove by the house where I lived as a child and noticed that the owners had made a few changes. At worship, I noticed that the majority of people I grew up with had moved away. I learned that my old boss from my summer jobs had recently died. I even walked around town on Saturday night and thought how much has changed since I left in the 70s. It was a weekend of memories.

Christmas is a time to get together with loved ones — a time to celebrate. Christmas can also be difficult as it may be the first Christmas since your mom or dad or other loved one has passed away.

Christmas can be hard. There is the empty place at the table. "Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more" (Jer. 31:15).



Rev. Dwayne Lueck
North Wisconsin District President

LFL essay contest

Lutheran students in grades 6-12 in Wisconsin are invited to enter the Lutherans For Life (LFL) of Wisconsin 2020 Essay Contest.

Contest Guidelines

Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the 2020 LFL Conference theme, "From Invisible to Indispensable..." and Conference Bible verse: "On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable" (1 Cor. 12:22).

- ▶ Not incorporating the conference verse in the essay will disqualify the entry.
- ▶ Examples of essay topics include, but are not limited to: abortion, the

disabled, adoption or foster care, infanticide, cloning, stem cell research, physician assisted suicide or euthanasia.

- ▶ Essays should include student's name, grade (identify school or church) email and home mailing address. All entries submitted by a teacher or pastor should also include their name and email address.
- ▶ Each school or congregation may have their students enter a school-level contest first, but in the end, each school or congregation will submit only one entry for grades 6-8 and one entry for grades 9-12.
- ▶ All sources for references, statistics and quotes should be incorporated within the essay and then included in a bibliography at the end. Grades 6-8 should submit essays up to 400 words. Grades 9-12 up to 750 words.

- ▶ Entries should be submitted digitally using Microsoft Word to *LFLofWIEssay@gmail.com* by April 1.
- ▶ There will be a \$150 prize for each of the two categories. The two winners will advance to the national contest.
- ▶ Grand Prize for the national winning entry at each level: \$250 plus free conference registration to a 2020 Regional Conference and one-night stay at the conference hotel.
- ▶ All entries become the property of Lutherans For Life.

For more information about the essay contest, please call the Wisconsin essay committee at 920-264-8317 or email *LFLofWIEssay@gmail.com*.

For sample essays, visit *lfl-wi.org* and click the essay contest link. For resources on the sanctity of life, visit *lutheransforlife.org*.

MESSAGE

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change. Blue is the color of anticipation and hope. What we need to know is that someday — through faith in that Baby Jesus, who opened the heavenly kingdom through His death and resurrection — we will be reunited with our loved ones and have life everlasting. *That* is the hope that we are reminded of in this season of Advent.

Remember the comforting words of Paul:

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord." — **1 Thess. 4:16-17**

God's Word gives us strength and hope.

May God be with you as you focus on Jesus' coming — now in Word and Sacrament and in His return on Judgment Day.

May God be with you as you go through

the season of Advent, and in preparation to celebrate the birth of our Lord on Christmas Day.

May God be with you as you gather round the Christmas table, with or without an empty chair.

Jesus comes in joy and sorrow, shares

alike our hopes and fear;

Jesus comes, what'er befalls us,
cheers our hearts and dries, our
tears;

Alleluia! Alleluia! Comforts us in
failing years.

(*Lutheran Service Book*, #353 v.4)



The Gift

Gifts! They come from family and friends who have chosen the perfect wrapping paper and gently decorated them with ribbons. We don't know what's inside, but we know they have been selected with thoughts of love for us.



Becky Haltaufderheid
LWML District President

These gifts can be so precious. We protect them and tell others how precious they are.

God gave us the ultimate gift of a Savior. A gift we celebrate year after year:

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" — **Luke 2:11**

There are many people in the world who

don't know about this precious gift. Some are in our own backyards.



The mites offered by the men and women of the North Wisconsin District will be put toward the final mission grants for this biennium. One of these grants is for Professional Church Workers Financial Aid. We have paid half of this grant in this biennium; \$12,500 remains to fully fund this grant.

This grant gives financial assistance to college and seminary students who have been called by God to become a pastor, teacher, DCE or lay minister. As you fill your Mite Box with your offerings, please pray for the students receiving this financial assistance, that God would equip them with all they need to work in His mission field.

The other grant to be funded is for Elliot and Serena Derricks of Lutheran Bible Translators. Elliot and Serena accepted God's call to be missionaries in Cameroon, Africa. They are learning the

Fali language so they can translate the entire Bible into the language of the people. Can you imagine

the faces of the Fali as they receive this most precious gift? Can you imagine them holding that Bible tight, protecting it and sharing God's Word with others? What a precious gift this is!

As you place your quarters, dimes, nickels, pennies or dollars into your Mite Box this month, pray that your gifts would be multiplied as they reach the students in need of financial assistance and the Derricks as they work to complete the Bible translation for the Fali people in Africa.

"The he (Jesus) said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few'" — **Matt. 9:37**

Have a blessed Christmas as you celebrate the birth of our most precious gift, the Christ Child!

Blessed to serve!

The Counseling CONNECTION

A future and a hope

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart." — **Jer. 29:11-13**



Rev. Dan Kohn
District Counselor

What a promise from our God! He has a good plan for our future as we partner with Him toward that favorable destiny.

Jeremiah's (God's) words have broad application. For the sake of this article I would like to focus on God's plan for

church workers. Here too is His plan for "a future and a hope." He wants this to be our prayer content as individuals, as a district and as a Synod.

A strong emphasis is being placed on "ministerial health" for workers in our Synod. There is growing evidence for the decline of such health tied to the stress workers face. Let me reiterate what President Lueck reported in his president's message in the August *Happenings*:

"Church workers are hurting as well. In 2017, LCMS Research conducted a survey of the well-being of church workers and their spouses: 24 percent have been told by a professional that they suffer from anxiety or depression; 33 percent struggle with compulsive behavior; and 26 percent have experienced serious marital

difficulties while in ministry."

We as a Synod are taking action. At the LCMS convention in Tampa in July, Resolution 3-04A was passed with this focus: "To Encourage Training of Pastors, Church Workers and Congregations to Recognize and Provide Pastoral Care for Those Suffering from Clinical Depression, Mental Illnesses, and other Mental Disorders."

The call is for "compassionate care" to church workers. Each district is encouraged to develop resources for this essential cause. The Synod and Concordia Plan Services are also doing their part to meet the growing need. This was the focus at a recent national ministerial care conference in St. Louis.

The North Wisconsin District is doing its part to impart needed resources. Direct counseling care is available; as is assistance to congregations to set up health resources for their church workers. Confidential help is a call away!

For assistance in this effort, feel free to contact me at revkohn@gmail.com or 715-610-2400.

View from a parent

When our daughter, Melissa, was looking at colleges, we were excited to learn about the opportunity for her to attend Peace Lutheran Campus Center while she was at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP). This school offered her a successful program in her field of study, and some wonderful professors who helped her learn along the way. But as parents, we were even more encouraged to know that there she also had a chance to grow in her faith and put that faith into action with other Christian students. After meeting with Pastor Andy Weden and having our questions answered, we were confident that what she would be learning and participating in was all based on God's Word in its truth and purity. God tested; mother approved!

Melissa was quiet and shy when she first started attending, but the encouragement she received at Peace helped her become more outgoing and to step out of her comfort zone. By the end of her four years at UWSP, she was an active part of the leadership team as president, was involved in many activities and Bible studies, and participated in a variety of mission trips throughout the country.

It's a scary thing for a parent when you are sending your child off to college, hoping you taught them enough to navigate this new chapter in their life and not lose the person they have become, especially in today's world. When you hear the statistic that two out of every three students who grew up in the church will fall away from their faith when they go to college, it's unsettling as a parent. We live in a time when expressing your faith is looked at as a weakness. At this age, standing up against your peers who support worldly beliefs can be a real challenge, but



Alan and Laurie Wood with their daughter, Melissa.

Peace Campus helped her learn that she was not alone and that students can lean on each other and God's Word for support.

The time she spent at Peace was as big a part of her college experience as her classes and activities at UWSP. We are very proud of the education she received at both. Her time at UWSP helped her build a career, but her time at Peace helped her build her life upon God.

We are so grateful for Peace Campus, especially Pastor Weden and his family. We can never thank them enough for all the hard work they do to help keep God in the college experience for so many kids who might otherwise fall prey to the world during this formative time in their lives. It is truly appreciated by their parents and we only wish that this opportunity was available on all college campuses.

— Submitted by Laurie Wood, whose daughter, Melissa is a 2018 graduate of UWSP

CAMP LUTHER

Position Opening

Food Service Manager

Camp Luther invites individuals who want to invest themselves in the year-round ministry to serve as Food Service manager. Join us as we usher in a fresh dining experience at camp and move into our new community center and dining hall.

This person will lead kitchen staff to continually innovate meals, creating exciting, healthy dishes to reach and maintain an exemplary standard of food service.

This is a full-time, salaried position. If interested, please submit a resume and cover letter to Blaine Welch, director of Guest Services, at beemer@campluther.com or 1889 Koubenec Rd., Three Lakes, WI 54562.

Camper had wonderful experience

I have been truly blessed to have gotten to come to camp this summer. I had never been in all 17 years of my life and was honestly a bit skeptical of coming.

I came on the "Every Kid to Camp" scholarship, for which my stepmother applied. I am so glad I was able to come and make some new, deep friendships, disconnect from my phone and really spend time not only reconnecting with myself but with God and other fellow Christians. The counselors were totally amazing. The way they treated me and the other campers with such care and respect really reflects Camp Luther's goals of sharing that love and grace of the Lord.

I did spend a large portion of my night crying because I had such a great time this past week and would love to stay or come back next summer. I cannot put into words how this has impacted my life and made me want to continue my growth in Christ and create those deep, meaningful friendships.

From the bottom of my heart, I loved every moment at Keweenaw Base Camp. Thank you so much.

