



July 2004
The Nebraska Lutheran
REPORTER

Information of interest for Lutherans in the Nebraska District of
The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
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FROM THE PRESIDENT . . . "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1) Fourteen Nebraskans have sacrificed their lives in the war in Iraq. Tornadoes have left families homeless and businesses in ruins. Year after year without rain has turned pastures into deserts and cropland into parched earth. Floods have washed away cherished belongings. These are not only headlines from the recent news. They are statements of reality for many in Nebraska.

Martin Luther talked of using God's 46th Psalm to pray his way through troubles. And what a Word of God Psalm 46 is! God calls to us to rely upon His strength when the world around us is collapsing. "Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea." (Psalm 46:2) Our Lord proclaims that right in the midst of troubles that would engulf us flows a river that makes glad the city of God. The river that flows into our lives is the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ from the horror of an executioner's cross. Jesus has paid for our sin with His life which flows forgiveness, bringing peace and strength. This strength from the Lord enables us to face the troubles of this earthly life with confidence that God is our refuge. This same forgiveness-generated strength also inspires us to be compassionate and caring for those who are beset with troubles. We thank God for the strength His commitment to forgive us brings through Jesus.

We thank God for those who have been moved by Christ's compassion to care for those grieving the war dead, those who offer their hands to pick up the pieces of shattered homes and businesses, and those who pitch in to help one another in dried out or flooded areas. In midst of the various earthly trials we face, our Lord calls to us from Psalm 46 saying, "The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress." (Psalm 46:11). . . . President Russ Sommerfeld

STAFF CHANGES . . . The District welcomes Don Weber to the District Staff as Executive for Education and Youth. Mr. Weber will begin his ministry among the schools, educators and DCEs of the Nebraska District on July 1. Dr. Neil Sandfort, who officially retired at the end of 2003, will be leaving his interim position at the District Office June 30 to begin his retirement full time. Co-workers and District officials wish Neil and his wife, Muriel, God's richest blessings as they move into new ministry opportunities.

LOOKING FOR UNL STUDENTS . . . The University Lutheran Chapel in Lincoln is looking for the names and contact information of LCMS students attending UNL, especially freshmen. Please log on to www.lutheranchapel.org and click on "Student Registration." They would like to use this information to personally invite new students to the Chapel.

DELEGATE CHANGES . . . Pastor Richard Kelm from Faith, Hebron, will represent the Deshler Circuit and Boyd Stuhr from Zion, Hampton, will represent the York Circuit as their voting delegates to the Synodical Convention. Both Concordia President Orville Walz and President-elect Rev. Brian Friedrich will attend the Convention to represent Concordia University, Seward, with President Walz leading a convention devotional.

NEW CIRCUIT COUNSELOR . . . Rev. Luke Biggs of Messiah, Lincoln, has been appointed counselor of the Lincoln Circuit and will serve the remainder of the current term, which ends at the convention in June 2006. He fills a vacancy created by Rev. Mark Rosenau of Calvary, Lincoln, who accepted a call out of the District.

BOARD SUMMARY . . . The Nebraska District Board of Directors took the following action at its meeting Friday, June 4:

- * Reviewed, modified and approved as modified the board-designated assets, investments and endowments of the District that support various ministries around the District and undergird Synod support.
- * Discussed the vision, mission, goals and values of the Nebraska District and how these lead the ministry of the District.
- * Initiated a review of all the policies and procedures made by the District Board of Directors in the past 33 years.
- * Approved the Constitution and Bylaws of St. Paul, Arlington.
- * Approved the nomination of Virginia Von Seggern to the Board of Directors of Lutheran Ministry Foundation.
- * Accepted approval of loans made by the LCEF Nebraska Program Committee.
- * Approved the amended and restated Bylaws of Lutheran Ministry Foundation.
- * Agreed to allow a member of the District Office staff to take written minutes of its meetings, with minutes then reviewed, edited and/or corrected by the District Secretary.

CALLED TO GLORY . . . Rev. Roland Hopmann, pastor emeritus, departed this life on Tuesday, May 18. In retirement, Pastor Hopmann served as visitation pastor and assistant to the pastor at Calvary, Lincoln. Letters of condolence may be written to Mrs. Carol Wagner, 25997 340th Ave. SW, Fisher, MN 56723 . . . **Rev. Bernard Geerdes** departed this life on Dec. 15, 2003, at St. Louis, Mo., at the age of 81. He graduated from the St. Louis seminary in 1947 and his ministry included parishes at Scottsbluff, Morrill and Leigh in Nebraska as well as serving as president of the Nebraska District Walther League.

COMING EVENTS

LCMS Synodical Convention, St. Louis, Mo.July 10-15
National Youth Gathering, Orlando, Fla.July 24-28
Teachers' Retreat, Concordia University, SewardAug. 3
Prairie Fire Event, Concordia University, Seward.....Aug. 14
Orphan Grain Train Convention, Lutheran High Northeast, NorfolkSept. 10-11
Circuit Counselors' Conference, St. Benedict Center, SchuylerSept. 13-14
Educational Seminar for Pastors, Zion, AinsworthSept. 19-21
LWML South Convention, Adams County Fairgrounds, HastingsSept. 24-25
New Workers' Orientation, Concordia University, SewardSept. 27-28
Treasurers' Workshop, Family Life Center, Immanuel, ColumbusOct. 9
Church Musicians' Workshop and Hymn Sing, Zion, ImperialOct. 9-10
All Professional Churchworkers' Conference, King of Kings, OmahaOct. 18-20
National Lutherans For Life Convention, Cincinnati, OhioNov. 12-14

ANNIVERSARIES

St. John, Columbus, 125th, July 11, with former pastor Rev. Thomas Wink as guest preacher at a 10:00 a.m. worship service.

Good Shepherd, Fremont, 50th, July 17-18, with a 10:00 a.m. service, noon celebration meal, and special worship service at 2:00 p.m. with Dr. Dale A. Meyer preaching, as well as other activities. Contact the church office at 1-402-721-8412 or goodshep@tvsonline.net for more information.

St. Paul, Kenesaw, 100th, July 25, with guest speakers Dr. Dale A. Meyer and Rev. John Diener and a noon meal. Call 1-402-752-3240 to register for the meal.

Zion, Tobias, 125th, Aug. 1, with special worship services and celebration meal.

Good Shepherd, Gretna, 25th, September 19, all are invited to join them for an open house and guest speaker, Rev. Wes "Bo" Baumeister, at the 10:30 a.m. service, followed by a luncheon at 12:30. Contact the church office at 1-402-332-3345 for more information.

Immanuel, Lincoln, 95th, October 17, former vicar Rev. Randy McHone will preach at the 8:00 and 10:45 a.m. services. A potluck dinner will follow the second service.

Zion, Grant, 80th, October 31, with District President Russ Sommerfeld preaching at the 10:00 a.m. mission service and the 2:00 p.m. Reformation service, with a noon meal served between services.

IGNITING HEARTS TO MAKE GOD KNOWN ACROSS NEBRASKA . . . The Nebraska District Prairie Fire Event, at Concordia University on Saturday, Aug. 14, offers the opportunity for brothers and sisters in Christ across the Nebraska District to spend a day being encouraged and uplifted through the Word of God and by building relationships with others in ministry across the District. Then, like a fire sweeping across the prairie, we pray those in attendance will return to their congregations and communities ignited for ministry and mission. Registration materials and session information have been sent to every church office and congregational chairman. Full event information and online registration is available at the District website, www.ndlcms.org.

NEW LOOK FOR DISTRICT WEBSITE . . . The Nebraska District website has a new look! Visit www.ndlcms.org to see the new design. Regular features such as the calendar of events, District publications, conference information, District ministries information, and church and school contact information remain present, but with a new look. If you can't find what you're looking for, try the new search feature. Bookmark this information-filled site as a useful ministry resource.

ON FLOOR COMMITTEES . . . Nebraskans assigned to floor committees for the Synodical Convention in July in St. Louis include: Rev. Russell Sommerfeld, Seward, Missions Committee; Rev. Dr. Mark Hannemann, Lincoln, Theology and Church Relations Committee; Dr. Orville Walz, Seward, Higher Education Committee; Joyce Gierke, Omaha, Human Care Committee; Rev. Bill Moorhead, Omaha, Structure, Planning and Administration Committee; Glenn Van Velson, North Platte, Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution Committee; Rev. David Block, Omaha, Nominations Committee.

Call Information

ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. Carlton Hein (StL'93), St. John, Tecumseh, to Mount Olive, Loveland, Colo.

Rev. Bryan Hopfensperger (StL'00), St. John, Culbertson, to St. John, Washburn and Trinity, LaRose, Ill.

Rev. William Wachholz (St'72), Concordia University, Seward, to teacher/principal, St. Paul, Truman, Minn.

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Carlton Hein (StL'93), St. John, Tecumseh, to St. Peter, North Plato, Ill.

Rev. Karl Koeppen (StL'96), St. Paul, Kankakee, Ill., to Peace, Waverly.

Rev. Phillip Vance (FtW'93), senior, Trinity, Fremont, to senior, St. Mark, Hollywood, Fla.

ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

Rev. Thomas Finch (FtW'04) as pastor, Christ, Nebraska City and St. Paul, Weeping Water, June 13 (ordination also).

Rev. J. Robert Paulson (StL'86) as assistant pastor, St. Paul, Utica, June 6.

STATUS CHANGE

Rev. Art Brinkmeyer (StLCy'78), senior, Emmanuel, York, to emeritus status effective June 30.

Rev. Philip Heuser (StL'98), St. Peter, Orchard, to candidate status effective May 31.

Rev. Gerald Roggow (StLCy'92), St. John, Ord, to emeritus status effective May 23.

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

John Christman (S'99), teacher, Lutheran High Northeast, Norfolk, to teacher, Lutheran High, Little Rock, Ark.

Dr. Jane Fryar (S'72), candidate, Missouri District to associate professor, Concordia University, Seward.

Judy Wachholz (RF'69), teacher, St John, Seward, to teacher, St Paul, Truman, Minn.

CALLS DECLINED

Peter Olson (RF'97), teacher, Lutheran High School, Sheboygan, Wis., to Concordia High School, Omaha (WOLSA).

Bob Saeger (S'73), principal, Immanuel, Polk, to principal, Concordia, Frohna, Mo.

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Jennifer Magnus-Duitsman (S'99), teacher, Lincoln Lutheran Jr/Sr High School, Lincoln, requesting peaceful release.

Rhonda McClellan (S'95), DCE, Christ, Lincoln, to candidate.

Ronald Richter (S'64), Concordia University, to emeritus, Northwest District.

Heather Spooler (S'02), teacher, St Paul's, Leavenworth, Kan., to candidate status, Nebraska District.

Holly Strudhoff (S'88), teacher, Trinity, Fremont, requesting peaceful release.

PLACEMENTS

Jacqueline Maier (S'04), DCE, Immanuel, Tilden.

Andrew Rohwer (S'04), DCE, Trinity, Lincoln.

Michelle Bornhop (S'04), DCE, Christ, O'Neill.

Matthew Buns (S'04), teacher, WOLSA, Omaha.

Rebecca Gudmundson (M'04), teacher, WOLSA, Omaha.

See next page . . .

LCEF

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Lutheran Church Extension Fund

Paul Pettit, Nebraska District LCEF Vice President
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