



May 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 . . . "Joy in the Lord!" In these Easter days of resurrection joy, I am thanking the Risen Jesus for the joy He is placing into the hearts and lives of my Nebraska District LCMS brothers and sisters in Christ. I have been humbled and awed by the "joy in the Lord" I have witnessed among God's people in Nebraska. As your Nebraska District staff and I have visited the 22 circuits of the District, we have returned from each visit praising God. The Ascension of our Lord will be observed on May 20. Luke 24:52-53 reports the Spirit-moved response of Jesus' disciples to His resurrection and ascension in these words, "They worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually in the temple, praising God."

Those verses of Holy Scripture speak of what my co-workers and I witnessed the Lord doing in Nebraska congregations, schools, ministries and missions. We have heard elderly Christians talk of their joy in praying with friends in the hospital and telling a nursing home resident of Jesus' love. We have encountered parents who are creative in setting aside family time for the Lord's Word and prayer. Christians in the midst of great challenges in their lives have described the joy the Lord has given them as Christ shined in them. We hear people in little congregations excited about the preparations they are making for summer Vacation Bible School to reach out to their community. Questions are being asked and prayers said to learn how to reach out with Christ to new people from far-away lands who are moving into Nebraska towns and neighborhoods. Still, the most inspiring news has been to hear Nebraska LCMS Christians say, "Jesus died for me. Jesus rose for me. My sins are forgiven. I have eternal life." . . . President Russ Sommerfeld

BOARD SUMMARY . . . The Board of Directors, at its meeting March 27, took the following actions:

- Issued a call to Mr. Donald Weber, principal at Christ Lutheran School, Norfolk, to serve as Assistant to the President for Education and Youth Ministry.
- Granted a peaceful release to Rev. Tom Mroch from his position of Assistant to the President for Congregational Mission Development and Church Worker Care.
- Encouraged Synodical President Kieschnick and the CTCR to establish as soon as possible altar and pulpit fellowship with the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church, and encourage the congregations of the Nebraska District to support the SELC in their prayers and through LCMS World Relief and Orphan Grain Train.
- Accepted the recommendation to adjust the base compensation for the 2005 Compensation and Benefits Guidelines.
- Received a report on the input from Circuit Visits in order to better resource District congregations, schools, ministries and missions.
- Issued the following statement:
The Nebraska District-LCMS Board of Directors, which includes District President Russ Sommerfeld, regrets the public attention brought to Mr. Stuart Tietz and the sainted Dr. Robert Preus during the December 2003 and January 2004 pre-call process for the

Assistant to the President for Education and Youth Ministry, and commends Mr. Stuart Tietz for his continued service to the Lord and His church.

YOU ARE INVITED . . . to gather with hundreds of other District members committed to mission and ministry in their congregations and communities at the Prairie Fire Event on Saturday, Aug. 14, at Concordia, Seward. Prairie Fire will offer a time to come together to share resources and ideas, and to support and encourage God's people in the mission and ministry in which God has called them. The day will include encouragement and resources from Rev. Robert Roegner, Executive Director of LCMS World Missions, as well as over 40 break-out sessions led by church workers and lay leaders of the District on a wide variety of topics. More information and registration forms will be mailed to church offices in early June. Watch the District website, MDULwww.ndlcms.org, for more information.

CALLED TO GLORY . . . Mrs. Florence (Krumland) Kohtz, widow of Rev. Albert Kohtz, departed this life on March 15. During his ministry, Pastor Kohtz served the following congregations in Nebraska: St. Paul, Central City; Immanuel, Eagle; St. John, Culbertson; Immanuel, Daykin; and Christ and Immanuel, St. Paul and Loup City. Letters of condolence may be sent to Virginia Kohtz, 1151 Fairlane, Seward, NE 68434.

DEACON COMMISSIONED IN PREPARATION FOR BECOMING A PASTOR . . . Bill Mattfeld of Schuyler was commissioned as a Licensed Deacon at Trinity and Immanuel Lutheran Churches of Schuyler on March 14. His ministry work will be supervised by Pastor Terry Timm as Mr. Mattfeld enters the DELTO (Distance Education Leading to Ordination) program of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. DELTO is the LCMS response to extraordinary mission needs of the church and provides a contextual education leading to ordination for men who provide ministry service to congregations who need such service and help to prepare the men for ordained ministry. Mr. Mattfeld will become a DELTO Vicar at Trinity and Immanuel on his journey to ordination in those congregations.

VOTING DELEGATES TO THE SYNODICAL CONVENTION . . . The following have been named as voting delegates to the Synodical Convention in July from the various circuits of the Nebraska District:

AINSWORTH: **Rev. Allen Bergstrazer**, Chambers; **Harold Foote**, Butte.
BEATRICE: **Rev. Doug Irmer**, Beatrice; **Leonard Burger**, Beatrice.
COLUMBUS: **Rev. John Nelson**, Columbus; **Victor Olson**, Columbus.
DESHLER: **Rev. John Cotton**, Davenport; **Fred Schmidt**, Hebron.
FALLS CITY: **Rev. Bob Schermbeck**, Elk Creek; **Art White**, Auburn.
FREMONT: **Rev. Rick Kanoy**, Arlington; **Merlin Metschke**, Snyder.
GRAND ISLAND: **Rev. Mark Middendorf**, Scotia; **Norman Quandt**, Loup City.
HASTINGS: **Rev. Ron Kuehner**, Red Cloud; **Burnell Kottwitz**, Blue Hill.
HOLDREGE: **Rev. Carl Lilienkamp**, Arapahoe; **Darrel Maaske**, Holdrege.
KEARNEY: **Rev. Steve Schlund**, Ravenna; **Paul Wice**, Kearney.
LINCOLN: **Rev. Mark Hannemann**, Lincoln; **Brent Stehlik**, Lincoln.
McCOOK: **Rev. Keith Wellman**, Wauneta; **Nik Sandman**, Wauneta.
NORFOLK: **Rev. Richard Snow**, Battle Creek; **John Fehrs**, Norfolk.
OMAHA NORTH: **Rev. Bill Moorhead**, Omaha; **Joyce Gierke**, Omaha.

OMAHA SOUTH: **Rev. Philip Houser**, Papillion; **Ken Benck**, Plattsmouth.
 OMAHA WEST: **Rev. Gary Werling**, Gretna; **Richard Faulkner**, Omaha.
 PLAINVIEW: **Rev. Jerome Leckband**, Foster; **Kevin Fry**, Clearwater.
 SEWARD: **Rev. Mark Cutler**, Seward; **Jim Everts**, Goehner.
 WAYNE: **Rev. Terry Kenitz**, Ponca; **Delwyn Daberkow**, Laurel.
 WEST POINT: **Rev. Jeff Warner**, Bancroft; **Jerry Clark**, Bancroft.
 WESTERN SANDHILLS: **Rev. Fredrick Simon**, North Platte; **Glenn Van Velson**, North Platte.
 YORK: **Rev. Kurt Letcher**, Polk; **Stan Morner**, Waco.

Non-voting delegates include:

District BOD Representative: **Ron Rathe**, Tecumseh.
 Official Synodical District Staff Representative: **Rev. Richard Boring**, Seward.
 Concordia University President: Not yet determined.
 Concordia Faculty Representative: **Dr. Jenny Mueller-Roebke**, Seward.
 Concordia Board of Regents: **Dr. Vance Hinrichs**, Seward.
 Nebraska District President: **Rev. Russell Sommerfeld**, Seward.
 Advisory Ordained Minister Delegate: **Rev. Theophil (Ted) Janzow**, Walton.
 Commissioned Minister Delegates: **Richard Beversdorf**, York; **Clee Wolske** and **Monique Wolske**, Madison.

ANNIVERSARIES

Calvary, Lincoln, 75th, May 22-23, with an open house on May 22, and a 9:30 a.m. service on May 23 with Gary Thies speaking, followed by Thies and Sharon Owens speaking at a 12:30 p.m. luncheon.
Trinity, Jansen, 75th, June 6, with services at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. with guest preacher, Rev. Russ Sommerfeld, Nebraska District President.
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 MDULgoodshep@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, special worship services and celebration meal.
Good Shepherd, Gretna, 25th, Sept. 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.

COMING EVENTS

Ministry Network Retreat, The Leadership Center, Aurora.....May 10-11
Synodical Convention Delegate Caucus, Concordia University, SewardJune 5
Revitalization Leadership Training EventJune 12
LFS Partners in Caring Church Worker Day, North Platte.....June 14
LWML North Convention, New World Inn, Columbus.....June 18-19
Grace Place Retreat, Aspen, Colo.June 21-26

Church Secretaries' Workshop , Concordia University, Seward.....	June 29
LCMS Synodical Convention , St. Louis, Mo.	July 10-15
Teachers' Retreat , Concordia University, Seward	Aug. 3
Prairie Fire Event , Concordia University, Seward.....	Aug. 14
Circuit Counselors' Conference , St. Benedict Center, Schuyler	Sept. 13-14
LWML South Convention , Fairgrounds, Hastings	Sept. 24-25
New Workers' Orientation , Concordia University, Seward	Sept. 27-28
All Professional Churchworkers' Conference , King of Kings, Omaha	Oct. 18-20
National Lutherans For Life Convention , Cincinnati, Ohio	Nov. 12-14

CALL INFORMATION

ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. Claude Houge (StL'96), missionary, Board for Mission Services, to Leadership Training Facilitator, Kenya, Board for Mission Services.

Rev. Robert Paulson (StL'86), Hope, Aurora, Colo., to assistant, St. Paul, Utica.

Rev. Mark Rosenau (StL'97), Calvary, Lincoln, to Good Shepherd, Owatonna, Minn.

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Luke Biggs (StL'84), senior, Messiah, Lincoln, to senior, St. Mark, Hollywood, Fla.

Rev. Brad Beckmann (StL'92), senior, Grace, Arlington, Texas, to senior, Our Savior, Norfolk.

Rev. Duane Duley (FtW'80), Zion, Rapid City, S.D., to senior, Grace, Wayne.

Rev. David Ersland (StLCqy'95), Bethlehem, Greenleaf, Kan., to Zion, Pawnee City.

Rev. Eugene Gierke (Spr'71), candidate, to Executive Assistant to the President, Minnesota South District LCMS.

Rev. Mike Neidow (StL'84), associate, Messiah, Lincoln, to senior, St. John and St. Paul, Aberdeen, S.D.

STATUS CHANGE

Rev. James Hoke (FtW'80), missionary, Board for Mission Services, to candidate status effective 9-1-2003.

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Hans Eickmeier (S'99), teacher, Trinity, Grand Island, to teacher, Christ, Little Rock, Ark.

Craig Ernstmeyer (S'96), teacher, Lincoln Lutheran High School, to principal, Saxony High School, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

JoAn Walling (S'69), principal, Our Redeemer, Staplehurst, to principal, Zion, Prairie City, Mo.

CALLS DECLINED

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

Lyle Ziems (S'89), teacher, Lincoln Lutheran High School, to Concordia High School, Omaha.

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Julie Bushre (S'00), candidate, Missouri, to candidate, Nebraska.

Kathleen Ohlman (S'85), teacher, Lincoln Lutheran to non-candidate status.

PLACEMENTS

Robin Olivier (SP'04), kindergarten teacher, Abundant Life, Wider Omaha Lutheran School Association.

The Nebraska District invites you to attend the

PRAIRIE FIRE EVENT

Saturday, August 14, at Concordia, Seward

This exciting event will join hundreds of lay leaders and church workers in an opportunity to choose from over 40 break-out sessions filled with ideas and resources to support and encourage ministry in their congregations and communities.

A Sampling of Session Titles Includes:

The Overload Syndrome – Learning to Live Within Your Limits

The New Hymnal: Contents and Implications for Congregations

Make Sure to Bring a Friend: Youth Ministry for Youth with Varying Spiritual Maturity

Open Doors and Open Hearts – Being a Welcoming Church

Harvest Time in the Cornfields of Nebraska – Rural Evangelism Through Children's Ministry

Linking Ministries to Communities



Rev. Robert Roegner, Executive Director of LCMS World Missions, will be the featured speaker at the event, as well as leading sessions throughout the day. Rev. Roegner has served the Lord in Liberia, West Africa, as well as providing leadership for various mission organizations throughout his ministry.