



Nebraska Lutheran Reporter



Information of Interest for Lutherans in the Nebraska District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
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January 2006

DISTRICT CONVENTION NEWS

NOMINATIONS DEADLINE . . .

Congregations are reminded that nominations for various Nebraska District officers must be returned to the Secretary of the District, Rev. Roland Jank, Jr., 7301 N 28th Ave., Omaha, NE, 68112, by **FEBRUARY 1** to be valid. For more information contact your pastor or congregational chairman.

DEADLINE FOR OVERTURES TO CONVENTION . . .

Congregations, circuits, church worker conferences, committees, and boards of the Nebraska District may submit overtures to be considered by the District Convention. These calls for action must be in the District Office no later than **JANUARY 23**. Contact Kim Hofer at the District Office, 888-643-2961 or kimh@ndlcms.org, with questions.

PHOTOGRAPHER NEEDED! . . .

Do you love taking pictures? Is photography one of your talents or hobbies? The Nebraska District is looking for someone to serve as photographer at the 2006 District Convention June 1-3 in Seward. If God has given you a gift or interest in photography, please prayerfully consider serving Him in this way. For more information contact Nichole Hetz at the District Office, 888-643-2961 or nicholeh@ndlcms.org.



FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

Epiphany Light! From January 6 to February 26, the Epiphany light continues to grow brighter as the Word of the Lord is preached and taught in our churches. With each week of the Epiphany season, the Word shines bright rays on the identity of the Christ Child, whose birth we celebrated at Christmas; for He is none other than God and man in the same Person, the most



unique being known to humanity, come to live perfect and die for the imperfect. Jesus is the Light of World and He comes into lives to shine forgiveness, salvation, transformation and eternal life.



This season of light, called Epiphany, is both a time for the identity of Christ our Savior to become brighter in our lives in the church, and a time

for us to shine Christ into the lives of those around us. Epiphany has long been known as mission season -- and indeed it is! What a great time to begin talking with someone about attending Lenten services with you to hear the glorious news of Jesus' suffering and death for all of humanity. May Christ, the Epiphany Light, shine on you and through you!

. . . President Russ Sommerfeld



LUTHERAN HOUR ANNIVERSARY RALLY . . . Zone 1 of the Nebraska District LLL is hosting a 75th Anniversary Lutheran Hour Rally at St. Paul's, Ogallala, on Sunday, March 26, at 2:30 p.m. Mountain Time. Rev. Ken Klaus, Lutheran Hour speaker, will be the guest preacher. Visitors from Nebraska congregations and LLL groups are invited to join the celebration.

BIBLE INTERPRETATION COURSE IN NORFOLK . . . "Interpreting the Bible," a study of Reformation principles of interpretation and in-depth Bible study, is the seventh course being offered by the Lay Leadership Program of the Nebraska District in Norfolk. The course will be taught by Pastor Michael Awe of Immanuel, Tilden. Classes will meet on January 14 and 28, and February 18 and 25 at Lutheran High Northeast, Norfolk, from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Tuition is \$200. For more information, contact Arlen Ahlers at adahlers@ptcnet.net or 402-329-6574.



The mission of the Nebraska District is to resource congregations, leaders, and related organizations in their mission of discipling the saved and proclaiming Christ to a lost and changing world.

DISTRICT YOUTH NEWS

YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING RETREATS . . . Through a grant provided by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Camp Luther is hosting two Youth Leadership Training Retreats January 27-29 and March 3-5. These events are designed to gather three to five high school and college-age youth from a congregation, along with an adult sponsor, to learn how to lead events in their local congregation's youth group program. Each retreat includes four meals, snacks, and professional leaders. Those attending will go back to their home areas with the skills to lead and encourage youth ministry. Designing a community service project will also be part of the weekend. Cost for the weekend is covered by the grant except for a registration fee of \$10 per person. To register go to www.campluther.org or call Camp Luther at 402-352-5655.



YOUTH LAY LEADER WORKSHOP . . . Adult lay youth leaders are invited to attend one of two Youth Leadership Workshops at Camp Luther, Schuyler. Registration for the January 28 or March 4 workshop is \$20 and includes sessions on peer ministry and current youth issues, as well as lunch and resources. Contact Camp Luther at www.campluther.org or 402-352-5655 with questions or to register.

DISTRICT YOUTH "TRANSFORMED" . . . Over 850 youth from across the Nebraska District gathered in Omaha on November 18-20 to celebrate how they have been "transformed" through the blood of Jesus Christ and their connection with Him through the waters of their baptism. The weekend of events was based on Romans 12:1-2 and offered those who attended a chance for fellowship and worship with other youth from around the District. Brad Alles spoke to the Gathering about what it means to live a life transformed through the blood of Christ, and the youth joined in praising God with Gathering band Echelon.

FRIENDSHIP – GOD'S EXTRAVAGANT GIFT . . . St. John, Seward, is hosting the 16th annual Women's Retreat to be held Saturday, Feb. 4, at Concordia University. Keynote speaker Dr. Jean Garton from Benton, Arkansas, will provide an address, workshop and closing message incorporating the theme, "Friendship – God's Extravagant Gift."



*Women's
Retreat*

Dr. Garton is founder of Lutherans for Life and served as its national president for 17 years. The retreat also includes workshops, a luncheon, a Christian book fair, and praise and singing opportunities. The cost is \$25 per person (\$10 for high school or college students). Women of all ages and all denominations are encouraged to attend. For registration or information, contact Lisa Krings at St. John at 402-643-2983.

"OPERATION HURRICANE RELIEF" NEWSLETTER . . . Members of the Nebraska District who are interested in receiving current newsletters on the Nebraska District's relief efforts for the hurricane-ravaged South can now receive periodic newsletters by email. Those subscribed to the District *Email Update* will automatically receive these newsletters. Those who wish to subscribe can do so by visiting the District website at www.ndlcms.org or emailing their subscription request to nicholeh@ndlcms.org. Past "Operation Hurricane Relief" newsletters are also available on the District website.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY CHOIR TOUR COMING TO NEBRASKA . . . The Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Chorus will visit Lutheran churches in Nebraska on its 2006 Spring Tour. The following Nebraska congregations will host the chorus:
Saturday, February 25, 5:30 p.m.— Christ, Norfolk (605 South 5th Street)
Sunday, February 26, 10:00 a.m.— Zion, Plainview (102 North Sixth)
Sunday, February 26, 4:30 p.m.— Pacific Hills, Omaha (1110 South 90th Street)
This service is also the hymn festival at Pacific Hills.

CALLED TO GLORY . . . **Rev. James Hahn**, Bellingham, Washington, was called to his eternal rest on October 21. Pastor Hahn served at Good Shepherd, Fremont, during his ministry. . . . **Rev. Roland Going**, Grand Island, departed this life on October 29. During his ministry he served congregations in Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Michigan, as well as congregations in Cairo, Grand Island, and Hastings, Nebraska. . . . **Rev. Vern Albrecht**, Omaha, was called to the Lord's side on November 4. He served the Lord through ministry opportunities in Ohio, as well as at Doniphan and Omaha, Nebraska. Much of Rev. Albrecht's ministry was spent as a chaplain.



With Deepest Sympathy

CONVENTION DELEGATE INFORMATION FORMS . . . for voting delegates are due to the District Office from congregations by January 31.

News items and ministry stories for the Reporter are always welcome. The deadline for submission for the February 2006 Reporter is **Monday, January 2**. Please submit items to Reporter@ndlcms.org or PO Box 407, Seward, NE 68434.

COMING EVENTS

Visiting Theologian Weekend , Pacific Hills, Omaha	February 24-26
Nebraska District LLL Convention , Holiday Inn, Beatrice.....	March 10-12
Junior High Retreat , Camp Comeca, Cozad	March 10-11
Junior High Retreat , Camp Luther, Schuyler	March 17-18
Pastors' Conference , Holiday Inn, York	March 20-21
Principals' Conference , Leadership Center, Aurora	April 20-21
Nebraska District Convention , Concordia University, Seward.....	June 1-3
Nebraska District LWML North Convention , Midland College, Fremont.....	June 23-24

ANNIVERSARIES

Grace, Grand Island, 50th, January 8, with guest preacher Rev. Randall Golter, president of the Rocky Mountain District.
St. Paul, Doniphan, 90th, January 15, with President Russ Sommerfeld preaching at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. services.

DID YOU KNOW . . . that God honors corporate stewardship just as He honors individual stewardship? When we as individuals become members of a faith family, it is expected that God will be free to use our time, abilities and material possessions for the building of His Kingdom in the life of that congregation. That's also why when congregations join the Synod and District they are to model good stewardship principles for their members by setting aside a first, generous percentage of income for the worldwide Mission of the Church. So you see, whether it's individual or corporate stewardship, the question is not, "Can we afford it?" Isn't it really a matter of "Can we afford not to give as the Lord has given to us—fully and freely of the very best?" Jesus, God's best who gave His best that we might have the best—full and free forgiveness and a partnership in the Gospel with Him, said, "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:38)



CALLS IN THE DISTRICT

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED:

Mark Anschutz (S'77), Kansas District to resident artist for Center for Liturgical Arts, Concordia University, Seward.
Steven Armbrust (S'81), DCE, St. Mark, Omaha, to adult and children's ministry director, Christ the Shepherd, Alpharetta, Ga.

CALLS DECLINED:

Rebecca Brockman (I'86), DCE, Divine Shepherd, Omaha, to DCE, Holy Cross, Highlands Ranch, Colo.

OTHER TRANSACTIONS:

John Garske (S'72), reinstated to the roster as candidate, Nebraska District.
Kristi Hayek (S'02), candidate, Indiana District, to candidate, Nebraska District.
Rhonda McClellan (S'95), DCE, Christ, Lincoln, to non-candidate, effective October 2005.

ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED:

Rev. Mark Hannemann (StL'84), senior, Faith, Lincoln, to executive director of Windgate Christian Counseling, St. John, St. Louis, Mo.
Rev. Don McKillop (FtW'82), Our Savior, Odell, to Christ, Winner; Zion, Hamill; and Redeemer, Clearfield, S.D.
Rev. K. Lee Weander (StL'94), associate, Our Savior, Norfolk, to senior, Our Savior, Norfolk.

CALLS DECLINED:

Rev. John Sproul (StC'88), associate, King of Kings, Omaha, to senior, Immanuel, Crystal Lake, Ill.; and Mountain View, Las Vegas, Nev.

STATUS CHANGE:

Rev. George Damm (StL'85), St. Peter, Hampton, to emeritus, effective Dec. 3, 2005.
Rev. James Jaeger (FtW'01), non-candidate, Nebraska District, to non-candidate, Northern Illinois District, effective Oct. 20, 2005.

ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS:

Rev. David Otten (StL'84) as pastor, Trinity, Arapahoe, November 27.

OPERATION HURRICANE RELIEF UPDATE

~DEMONSTRATING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH GENEROUS GIVING AND RESPONSIVE CARING~

Over Twenty-Five Action Teams Organized in Nebraska

Over twenty-five congregations or organizations from the Nebraska District have made plans to send teams to the hurricane areas during the months of January through April to help with all kinds of tasks. Cleaning, hauling, cutting up and moving trees, and rebuilding are at the top of the list, but there are many other opportunities to serve. Many more teams are needed. If you or a group from your church is interested in volunteering, contact Larry Oetting at the District Office, larryo@ndlcms.org or 888-643-2961.



Relief Workers Needed

Sponsor a Family

Would your congregation be interested in the **Family to Family** program?



Adopt-a-Family

A mom whose family lost their home and all their possessions said that the first normal night they had in their borrowed home was when the kids were fighting over a game of Risk. The game of Risk and a few other things were a gift from someone across the country who was paired with this family to help provide things that were a part of "normal" life before Katrina.

That's the idea behind this program. For more information, contact Larry Oetting.

Update from the Southern District

By Pastor David Lewis, Southern District Disaster Coordinator

All we can say is "Praise God" and thank you for your amazing love and generosity. The outpouring from every corner of the church has been amazing and you need to know it is changing lives and it is appreciated.



We wish things were back to normal, but they aren't. In the hurricane zone people speak of working toward "the new normal." We're trying to help people get back to a "new normal" but it is hard; the destruction doesn't go away and the frustrations are ever present. That is why your compassion, care and concern mean so much to us. Again, on behalf of the people and the congregations of the Southern District, "Thank You! We praise God for you!"

Read the announcement on page two of this issue to see how you can learn more and be kept up-to-date with hurricane relief news by subscribing to the "Operation Hurricane Relief" newsletter.

Dr. Larry Oetting has accepted the part-time position of Nebraska District Hurricane Relief Coordinator and is available to assist you in understanding what you can do to make a difference. Contact Dr. Oetting at the Nebraska District Office at 888-643-2961 or larryo@ndlcms.org with questions.

BOARD SUMMARY

The Nebraska District Board of Directors, at its December 1 meeting, took the following action:

- Appointed the following to serve on the District New Mission Committee: **Rev. Georg Williams** of Ainsworth, **David Mueller** of Omaha, and **Ron Rathe** of Tecumseh for 6-year terms, and **Rev. William Voelker** of Grand Island, **James Haack** of Omaha, and **Lee Vieselmeyer** of Lincoln for 3-year terms. Chris Martin of Omaha is the advisory Board member for a 3-year term.
- Heard a presentation and had discussion on the LCMS "Fan Into Flame" campaign. A motion to participate as a pilot district for the "Fan Into Flame" campaign was tabled.
- Approved a Health Reimbursement Account Plan for the employees of the Nebraska District.
- Approved the 2006 District mission and ministry budget of \$4,862,272 in total expenses and \$4,698,695 in financial support. The projected deficit is to be funded through previously received restricted gifts and undesignated net assets.
- Approved the 2006 District capital budget of \$85,500.
- Allocated some board designated assets for mission and ministry needs.
- Approved the election of **Robert Bloechle** and **Kermit Brashear**, both of Omaha, to the Lutheran Ministry Foundation Board of Directors.



BOARD MEETING