



Nebraska Lutheran Reporter



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

PO Box 407, 152 South Columbia, Seward NE 68434

Phone: 1-888-643-2961 • Fax 1-402-643-2990 • Website: www.ndlcms.org

April 2009

NEBRASKA DISTRICT DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATORS . . .

Arlan and Dawn Schellhorn of Seward, Nebraska, have been appointed as the LCMS World Relief and Human Care disaster response coordinators for the Nebraska District. They are responsible for guiding the congregational disaster response efforts of LCMS World Relief and Human Care when disasters occur in Nebraska.

For more information on disaster response or to find contact information for the Schellhorns, visit the LCMS website at <http://www.lcms.org/ca/worldrelief/dnews/> or call the District Office at 888-643-2961.

MISSION TRIP SCHOLARSHIPS . . .

The Nebraska District offers mission trip scholarships to pastors, professional church workers, and lay people of the District. Applicants must meet certain criteria, such as completing a scholarship application, demonstrating personal financial commitment to the trip, and verifying their mission trip through LCMS World Mission. Applications and full guidelines are available by visiting the District website at www.ndlcms.org/ministries/missiondev/trip.html or by calling Connie Borchers at the District Office, 888-643-2961.



CALLED TO GLORY . . .

Dorothy Hannemann, widow of the late Reverend Norman A. Hannemann, Norfolk, Nebraska, departed this life on Thursday, February 19. Mrs. Hannemann was active in the congregations her husband served in Iowa, Wyoming, and Nebraska, including congregations at Newcastle, Ponca, York, and Norfolk.



FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Ci Kritho ro jjeɛ! Ce ro jjeɛ e puc! (Nuer)

Yecu ben erot-nei yiic erot jot! (Dinka)

Yesu zingi be kpio! Lengo kuima zinga! (Zande)

Yecu oce ki ilien-Ada oce. (Acholi)

Al-Masih-Qam! Hakkan Qam! (Arabic)

When the sun rises over the East African nation of Sudan on April 12, "He is risen! He is risen indeed!" will be heard in the languages above, as well as 129 other living languages in the country. And the risen Jesus will receive the praise and glory in each tongue!

Brother and sister Lutheran Christians in Sudan are blessed with enduring trust in the resurrected Jesus. The risen Jesus has led them through strife and war, hunger and want, trial and tribulation. Our fellow Sudanese Christians emerge victorious with the risen Jesus, as do we — not only on Easter, but each new day.

The Nebraska District – LCMS continues to collaborate with LCMS World Mission and its various partners, including Orphan Grain Train, Lutheran Heritage Foundation, LCMS World Relief and Human Care, Lutherans in Medical Missions, and others to find great joy in the risen Jesus with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan. Even though the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan continues to mourn the December 31, 2008, death of its first bishop, Rev. Andrew Mbugo Elisa, there will be great joy on Easter to know that Bishop Andrew is with the risen Jesus.

Our brother and sister Sudanese Lutherans in the Nebraska District are filled with the hope and strength of the risen Jesus as they proclaim Him in Omaha, Lincoln, and Grand Island, while encouraging and supporting fellow Christians in the Upper Nile region of Sudan.

Please continue to pray for the Orphan Grain Train containers of Christian education materials, medical supplies, farming equipment, construction tools, generators, and a water purification system to make their way to the Upper Nile city of Malakal. Orphan Grain Train, LCMS World Relief and Human Care, and the Minnesota South and Nebraska Districts have joined forces for this important delivery that could change many lives. Pray for the team from Minnesota and Nebraska that will go to Sudan to help assemble the equipment that was shipped and then transform the containers into a worship site, medical clinic, and guest house. Pray that the risen Jesus is the focus of all that is done!

For Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Rev. Russ Sommerfeld



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.

WE BELIEVE . . . High school youth and adult sponsors will have the chance to confess their belief in Jesus Christ as their Savior at the 2010 LCMS National Youth Gathering planned for July 17-21, 2010, in New Orleans, La. Participants will gather under the theme, *We Believe*, based on John 20:31, to proclaim, celebrate, and witness their salvation through Him, rejoice in the fellowship of their church, and be affirmed and nurtured in their lives as God's people through Word and Sacrament. Interested youth and leaders can find more information at the new Gathering website, www.lcmsgathering.com. In addition to this website, a group called "The 2010 National LCMS Youth Gathering" has been formed on Facebook. More information will be added to both in the months ahead.



MEN'S NETWORK . . . The Christian Church today is under fire from all sides: spiritually, culturally, politically, socially, and morally. To thrive, the church needs the spiritual muscle and perspective men can uniquely provide. **Men's NetWork** from Lutheran Hour Ministries provides resources to help men claim their leadership roles in their home, their church and community, and most importantly, as the spiritual leader of their household. Men and men's group leaders can find out more about **Men's NetWork** at www.lhmmen.com.



STAFF CHANGE . . . **Carrie Parr**, who served the District as administrative assistant for Lutheran Church Extension Fund and the Treasurer's Office, has left her position for new employment opportunities. May the Lord bless her in her new endeavors.

LFS LOOKING FOR LIVING ORPHANS AND/OR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES . . .

Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska will sponsor a prayer service at the Orphan Cemetery in Fremont on June 16, and contact with living orphans and/or their adoptive families is being sought. Orphans or their families can contact LFS President & CEO Ruth Henrichs or vice president of development Ruth Hultgren Henneman at 124 South 24th Street, Suite 230, Omaha, NE 68102, or 402-342-7038. LFS began from two orphanages in Fremont and Omaha in 1882.

Full of Grace — Seasoned with Salt
Nebraska District Convention—June 4-6, 2009

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Col. 4:5-6

The Nebraska District will meet in convention June 4-6, 2009, on the campus of Concordia University, Nebraska in Seward, under the theme, **Full of Grace -- Seasoned with Salt**.

Congregations of the District have been contacted and encouraged to select voting delegates to represent them at the Convention. Congregations that have not returned the **Voting Delegate Information Form** to the District Office should do so immediately.

Delegates will receive registration materials and the *Convention Workbook* in two separate mailings in April. This year's workbook will be provided as a CD to all delegates. Guest registration forms will be sent to each church office and available on the District website, www.ndlcms.org, in late April.

All church workers and lay members of the Nebraska District are invited to attend the Convention to learn more about the Nebraska District, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and mission opportunities God has placed before each of us today.

Some of the highlights of the upcoming Convention include:

- An uplifting and inspirational opening worship service with Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick, president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as the special guest preacher.
- President Kieschnick will represent the Synod at Convention and engage in a "Question and Answer" time.
- Essayist Rev. Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus III, president of Concordia University Irvine in California, will speak to the Convention on how conversations of grace salted with sound doctrine can be part of mission outreach in this post-modern era.
- Significant time during the Convention will be set aside to consider possible changes for Synod's structure and governance.
- Friday evening's dinner will be a mission festival featuring the ministries of the Nebraska District.
- A special ingathering of Bibles and Catechisms for Nebraska District mission starts will take place during the Convention, in addition to a thank offering gathering at the opening worship service.



News items and ministry stories for the Reporter are always welcome. The deadline for submission for the May 2009 Reporter is Wednesday, April 1. Please submit items to Reporter@ndlcms.org or PO Box 407, Seward, NE 68434.

COMING EVENTS

School Administrators' Conference , Leadership Center, Aurora	April 23-24
Junior High Retreat , Camp Comeca, Cozad	April 24-25
Nebraska District LCMS Convention , Concordia University, Seward	June 4-6
New Worker Orientation , Concordia University, Seward	September 7-8
Circuit Counselors' Conference , St. Benedict Center, Schuyler	October 5-6
Junior High Retreat , Camp Luther, Schuyler	October 16-17
Teachers' Conference , Christ, Norfolk	October 22-23
Pastors' Conference , (TBA)	October 26-27

ANNIVERSARIES

- St. Peter, Orchard**, 100th, May 3. Rev. Kelly Mitteis, son of the congregation, will be the guest preacher at the 9:30 a.m. service, followed by a catered noon meal and a 2:30 p.m. program with guest speaker Rev. Lynn Riege, son of the congregation.
- Bethany, Omaha**, 70th, June 7, 14, 21, and 28. Special guest preachers during the June worship services include: Rev. Kenneth Holdorf on June 7, Rev. Martin Greunke on June 14, Rev. Wallace Vinovskis on June 21, and Rev. J. Brad Urbach on June 28.
- St. John, Hooper**, 140th, June 14. Rev. Jeff Ernstmeyer will be the guest preacher at the 10:00 a.m. worship service.
- Zion St. John, Wisner**, 40th, June 14. Rev. James Wright, former pastor, will be the guest speaker at the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Noon meal and afternoon program to follow.
- St. John School, Seward**, 125th, July 5. Dr. David Peter will be the guest preacher at the 9:00 a.m. worship service in the Concordia University Arena. Alumni activities are planned throughout the weekend.
- Zion, Scotia**, 125th, August 9, 2009.
- St. Peter, Scribner**, 125th, September 6. Rev. Warren Woerth, son of the congregation, will speak at the 10:00 a.m. worship, followed by dinner and an afternoon program.
- St. Peter, Gresham**, 100th, September 13. Rev. Timothy Jenks, former pastor, will be the guest preacher at the 10:30 a.m. service, followed by a catered noon meal and a 2:30 p.m. service with Rev. Timothy Prince, former pastor, as the guest preacher.
- St. John (Ash Creek), McCook**, 125th, September 20. President Russ Sommerfeld preaching.

CALLS IN THE DISTRICT

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Kristin Bergt (S'02), candidate, Iowa District West, to non-candidate, Nebraska District.

Heidi Brink (IV'92), candidate to non-candidate.

Robin Kolumban (POR'92), candidate to teacher, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Preschool, Omaha.

Dallas Koffarnus (SP'73), non-candidate to emeritus.

Media Library

Contact Carol Oetting at 888-643-2961 or carolo@ndlcms.org to request becoming custodian of one or more of these titles.

The Dating Game

The Day the Senior Class Got Married

Deaconess: Privileged to Serve

Dead Serious

Dear Children: A Story of Post-Abortion Healing

Destructive David

Devil Worship: Rise of Satanism

ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. John Nelson (StL'92), Christ, Columbus, to senior pastor, Mount Olive, Norfolk.

Rev. Robert Swearer (StL'83), senior pastor, Holy Savior, Lincoln, to Good Shepherd, Vancouver, Wash.

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Tim Heupel (FtW'78), associate pastor, Beautiful Savior, LaVista, to First, Burbank, Calif.

Rev. Michael Klatt (StL'82), senior pastor, Peace, Columbus, to senior pastor, Trinity, Grand Island.

Rev. Duncan McLellan (StL'05), associate pastor, Faith, Lincoln, to First, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Rev. Peter Mueller (StLCQ'97), St. John, Ellisville, Mo., to associate pastor, King of Kings, Omaha

Rev. Robert Wiest (StL'04), Our Redeemer, Staplehurst, to St. Paul, Marshfield, Mo.

ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

Rev. Keith Christiansen (FtW'83), candidate, as part-time administrative pastor, Our Savior, Norfolk, February 22.

THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

Just two days short of a year after its first Fellowship/Bible Study, **1C, a Mission Church of the LCMS** in Columbus became an official congregation of the Nebraska District and joined the LCMS on January 11, 2009.

The journey of this church plant from its beginning until now is a story of God's grace and the desire of people in our communities to be connected to something important in their lives.

Peace Lutheran Church in Columbus felt the Spirit moving them to explore the mission opportunities in their community of Columbus.

Jerry Steger, a member of Peace and a graduate of the Lay Leadership Program of the Nebraska District, was commissioned as a church planter on January 28, 2007. Jerry has the God-given gift of an evangelist and a passion to start new churches that connect the disconnected and unchurched into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. God used Jerry in the Columbus community to gather a launch team and lead them every Wednesday night for nine months in singing, Bible study, prayer, and planning for the new plant.

1C held its first public Fellowship/Bible Study on January 13, 2008, and continued each week for the remainder of the year. Average weekly attendance for Fellowship is now 155,

up considerably from the 44 adults and 29 children that were part of the original launch team.

God has provided for the financial needs of this mission start, and it was launched debt free in 2008, continuing to support itself through offerings and God-pleasing stewardship practices of members and the congregation as a whole. The congregations of the Nebraska District helped support this new church plant by providing for resources and consultation through the District Office.

Now, **1C, a Mission Church of the LCMS**, is a congregation of the LCMS, and is beginning the process of applying for a vicar that would lead to having a pastor to serve the congregation and reach out into the Columbus community with the saving message of Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God for 1C joining the other 244 congregations of the District as a place where those of the community can find comfort in the precious Word of God and join in fellowship with blessed children of God.

For more information on 1C, contact Jerry Steger at jsteger@frontiernet.net or 402-564-8103, or visit the 1C mission church website at www.1cwhatever.com.



Commissioning of Jerry Steger



Becoming an LCMS Congregation

IS IT TOO LATE?

NO! It's never too late to tell people about Jesus, and that's what *Ablaze!* and *Fan into Flame* are all about. Your personal or congregational involvement in *Fan into Flame* provides resources to support projects that share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

If you are a member, leader, or pastor of a Nebraska congregation, and you would like to be involved in *Fan into Flame*, but haven't begun your appeal yet, there's still time. Below are some easy steps you can prayerfully follow to begin the implementation of *Fan into Flame* in your congregation.

- Step 1:** Present *Fan into Flame* to your congregation's leadership.
- Step 2:** Educate members about *Ablaze!* and *Fan Into Flame*.
- Step 3:** Determine and approve a goal for your congregation in dollars to be raised.
- Step 4:** Fax a copy of the completed pledge agreement to the Nebraska District Office.
- Step 5:** Choose an appeal plan that will work best for your congregation to reach or exceed your goal and decide when you will conduct your appeal.

Contact your Circuit Coordinator or the District Office for assistance – there are many resource materials and tools to help you conduct your appeal. We can even schedule a visit to your congregation. Visit the District website at www.ndlcms.org for more information on the steps listed above and for resources to assist congregations in planning their participation.

Remember, *Fan into Flame* gifts are above and beyond normal giving to Synod, District, and World Mission. We are starting new outreach ministries by God's grace, and you and your congregation are invited to be a part of this exciting mission effort.



Campaign Update

Commitments as of March 5, 2009, from individuals and congregations in Nebraska for *Fan into Flame* are \$3,189,422 as a result of 1,036 gifts.

National gifts and commitments to date total \$45.3 million.