



# Nebraska Lutheran Reporter



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

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March 2009

**LLL CONVENTION.** . . The Nebraska District LLL convention is March 27-29 in Sidney. As part of the convention, western Nebraska is hosting a Lutheran Hour Rally with Rev. Ken Klaus, Speaker of The Lutheran Hour, on Saturday, March 28, at Sidney High School. A children's choir, men's choir, and the Zion, Imperial, handbell choir are adding to the service, along with organist Dr. J. Gordon Christensen. Immediately following the Rally, a brat feed to support Orphan Grain Train will be held at the school.

**BIBLE INTERPRETATION COURSE IN OMAHA.** . . "Interpreting the Bible," a course sponsored by the Lay Leadership Program of the Nebraska District, will be led by Prof. Terry Groth of Concordia University on April 4 & 18 and May 2 & 16. Classes will meet at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 7706 S. 96<sup>th</sup> St., LaVista. For more information, please contact Marvin Bergman at [marv.bergman@cune.edu](mailto:marv.bergman@cune.edu) or (402)643-3724.

**STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: STEWARDSHIP OF THE GOSPEL!** . . . Empowered by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, Peter and the other disciples practiced good stewardship of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by boldly proclaiming that all who call upon the name of the Lord [Jesus] will be saved. Our stewardship is not just about time, talent, and treasure, but also about our testimony. May the Holy Spirit help us always to be good stewards of the Gospel, first by believing it and then by sharing it with others. A Christian stewardship survey will be gathered at the June 4-6, 2009 District Convention.

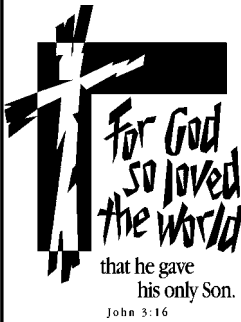


## FROM THE PRESIDENT . . . "Securing Each Child's Future -- For Eternity!"

John 3:16 is perhaps the most quoted and referenced Bible verse in America. It can be seen plastered on sign boards held by Christian spectators at NASCAR tracks, or as NFL football teams take the field. Floats in parades carry John 3:16, and T-shirts announce its message. John 3:16 has even become graffiti on train cars, to be read as they zoom by a railway crossing.

During March 2009, Lutheran schools throughout The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod will elevate the message of John 3:16 to announce their mission of "Securing Each Child's Future--For Eternity!"

LCMS Lutheran schools as well as LCMS congregational education efforts are all about what Jesus said in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Martin Luther said that these words of Jesus flow like milk and honey to make the sad happy and the dead alive.



As familiar as these words from Jesus are, we dare not miss their impact. They are words that can only come from God. How God could ever love this troubled world of people that are so filled with evil and wickedness is truly divine! And God's amazing love is for all people! We just can't comprehend the depth of this love! It is a love that sacrifices! God gives His best! Yes, His one and only Son is given unto death. And it is reliance -- indeed, full dependence -- on this Son Jesus that guarantees never being separated from God even into eternity!

There is no one more important for every man, woman and child than Jesus. The United States Department of Education has declared "no child left behind!" Lutheran schools, Sunday schools, Confirmation classes and youth ministries declare: "Securing Each Child's Future--For Eternity!" Only Jesus could do this!

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.

**LCMS SERVANT EVENTS OFFERED.** . . Over 100 servant events are planned for 2009. All kinds of events are available, from construction, human care and outreach events to crisis, multicultural and environmental events. There are also events especially for families, and for the first time in 2009, there will be an event just for young adults. LCMS servant events give young people across the country the experience of learning that serving others can make a difference because of Jesus Christ. Camp Luther in Schuyler will host "His Kids Camps A, B, and C" throughout the summer. Visit LCMS Servant Events online at [www.lcms.org/youth](http://www.lcms.org/youth) for a complete listing of events and to search by type, date and region of the country. For a free DVD about LCMS servant events, contact the LCMS Youth Ministry Office at [youth.ministry@lcms.org](mailto:youth.ministry@lcms.org) or 1-800-248-1930 ext. 1155.



## CONGREGATION STATISTICAL REPORTS . . .

Congregation statistical reports have been mailed out and were due by February 28. Please make two copies of the completed form, mail the original to St. Louis, and mail a copy to the District Office. If you have not already done so, please complete and submit this report immediately to keep District and Synod records up to date. Contact Kim at the District Office at [kimh@ndlcms.org](mailto:kimh@ndlcms.org) or 1-888-643-2961 with any questions.



## NEBRASKA DISTRICT CONVENTION . . . "Full of Grace—Seasoned with Salt"



Convention to be held June 4-6 on the campus of Concordia University. Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick, President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will be the synodical representative. Rev. Dr. Jacob A.O. Preus, President of Concordia University Irvine in California, will be the Convention essayist.

A special Convention Thankoffering will be gathered to support efforts to place Bibles and catechisms in mission fields of Nebraska and around the world in various languages, including Nuer, Spanish, Japanese and Chinese. These gifts of love will be taken to the District Convention by delegates and presented for the Lord's work during the opening worship service, and will be used throughout the next triennium to purchase Bibles and catechisms.

Delegates to Convention will also have the opportunity to participate in a special ingathering by bringing with them a new Bible in the English Standard Version (ESV) and a new Luther's Small Catechism. These books will be collected at convention and distributed to new mission congregations and ministry starts in the Nebraska District, with the prayer that they will be used to "season" conversations about Jesus Christ and His free gift of salvation for all people. More information about these opportunities is on the District website at [www.ndlcms.org](http://www.ndlcms.org).

**CALLED TO GLORY** . . . Karis Pingel, daughter of Rev. Aaron and Kara Pingel of Christ, Falls City, was called to her eternal rest on January 18.



## Media Library

The following video titles from the Nebraska District Office's Media Library are available to congregations and RSOs of the Nebraska District – LCMS. If your congregation or RSO would like to serve as the permanent custodian of one or more of these titles, please contact Carol Oetting at the District Office [carolo@ndlcms.org](mailto:carolo@ndlcms.org) or 888-643-2961. Additional titles will be published in upcoming issues of the Reporter.



*Climb a Tall Mountain*  
*Come Meet My Jesus*  
*Committed to Kids*  
*Committing Our Way: Alive in Christ--Alive to Witness*  
*Concordia Historical Institute*  
*Concordia Historical Institute: Preserving Your History*  
*Concordia Online Teacher Colloquy Program*  
*Concordia, Seward, Recruitment*  
*Concordia University*  
*Concordia University System*  
*Conflicts, Conflicts*  
*Contemporary, Traditional or Blended Worship*  
*Convention Video Report: The LCMS 61<sup>st</sup> Regular Conv.*  
*The Cost of Freedom*  
*Creating Healthy Communities for Kids: Start Over, Start Now*  
*Creative Youth Programming*  
*The Crown Prince*

News items and ministry stories for the Reporter are always welcome. The deadline for submission for the April 2009 Reporter is Monday, March 2. Please submit items to [Reporter@ndlcms.org](mailto:Reporter@ndlcms.org) or PO Box 407, Seward, NE 68434.

## COMING EVENTS

<b>Junior High Retreat</b> , Camp Luther, Schuyler.....	March 13-14
<b>Nebraska District LLL Convention</b> , Holiday Inn Convention Center, Sidney .....	March 27-29
<b>Principals' Conference</b> , Leadership Center, Aurora .....	April 23-24
<b>Junior High Retreat</b> , Camp Comeca, Cozad .....	April 24-25
<b>Nebraska District LCMS Convention</b> , Concordia University, Seward.....	June 4-6
<b>Junior High Retreat</b> , Camp Luther, Schuyler.....	October 16-17
<b>Teachers' Conference</b> , Christ, Norfolk .....	October 22-23
<b>Pastors' Conference</b> , (TBA).....	October 26-27

## ANNIVERSARIES

- St. Peter, Orchard**, 100<sup>th</sup>, 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**, 70<sup>th</sup>, 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**, 140<sup>th</sup>, June 14. Rev. Jeff Ernstmeyer will be the guest preacher at the 10:00 a.m. worship service.
- Zion St. John, Wisner**, 40<sup>th</sup>, 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**, 125<sup>th</sup>, 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**, 125<sup>th</sup>, August 9, 2009.
- St. Peter, Scribner**, 125<sup>th</sup>, September 6. Rev. Warren Woerth, son of the congregation, will speak at the 10:00 a.m. worship and dinner, followed by an afternoon program.
- St. Peter, Gresham**, 100<sup>th</sup>, 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**, 125<sup>th</sup>, September 20. President Russ Sommerfeld preaching.

## CALLS IN THE DISTRICT

### COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

#### CALLS DECLINED

- Andrew Gavrun IV** (AA03), teacher, Immanuel, Waterloo, Iowa, to principal/teacher, Christ, Juniata.
- Jessica Gavrun** (AA03), teacher, Immanuel, Waterloo, Iowa, to teacher, Christ, Juniata.

#### OTHER TRANSACTIONS

- Wendy Borcharding** (RF'93), candidate, to teacher, Messiah, Lincoln.
- Jeana Buhman** (S'89), candidate, to non-candidate status.
- Denise Grein** (S'77), candidate, to non-candidate status.
- Darin Jalas** (S'96), candidate, to resigned from roster.
- Wendy McCarty** (S'77), candidate, to non-candidate status.
- Karen Prelerson** (S'87), non-candidate, Pacific Southwest District, to non-candidate, Nebraska District.
- Robin Schermbeck** (S'91), candidate, to non-candidate status.

### ORDAINED MINISTERS

#### CALLS DECLINED

- Rev. Paul Krueger** (FtW'87), Our Savior, Minot, N.D., to senior, Holy Cross, Kearney.
- Rev. Matthew Berndt** (StL'01), St. John, Burwell, and Peace, Sargent, to St. John, Sherwood, Ohio.
- Rev. Greg Stuckwisch** (StL'01), Redeemer, Wauneta, and Trinity, Palisade, to Zion, Hastings.
- Rev. Robert Kuefner** (StL'95), associate, Holy Cross, Kearney, to senior, Immanuel, Columbus.
- Rev. Brad Birtell** (StL'92), St. John, Columbus, to First, Bozeman, Mont.
- Rev. Lonnie Jacobsen** (StL'00), Christ, Arlington, Tenn., to senior, Our Redeemer, North Platte.



# LUTHERAN SCHOOLS SHARE GOD'S LOVE



Mr. Don Weber,  
Executive Assistant  
for Education and  
Youth

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod schools of the Nebraska District, join all schools in the Synod in celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week March 1-7, 2009.

More than 80 schools are located in all parts of the District from Beatrice to Winnebago, and from Ogallala to Omaha.

Great things occur in these schools everyday, as you will note from the information below. The greatest of them all is the fact that each day, students hear the Good News of Jesus and what that means to the world.



**Please join me in thanking God for the work of our dedicated servants who serve in our schools, and the dedicated families who support their ministry.**

## Here are a few of our Lutheran School's Joys and Successes in the Past Year...



- Heartland Lutheran High School, Grand Island Sets Guinness World Record — World's Longest Basketball Game



From left to right: Don Weber, John Davis, Principal Steven Stortz, Rev. Chip Winter, Rev. Leon Rosenthal

- Christ Lutheran, Norfolk Burns Mortgage Five Years Later to the Date

- Zion, Pierce Integrates New Technology Center
- Three Students and a Mom are Baptized in One Month at St. Paul's in Ogallala
- Immanuel, Columbus Welcomes Peace Lutheran Church as a Partner in School Ministry
- Faith, Lincoln Celebrates 25 Years of Lutheran Elementary School Ministry 1983-2008
- Keeping Jesus First for Over 125 Years at Trinity, Lincoln as We Continue to Shine! in 2009
- Lincoln Lutheran -- Largest Enrollment Ever
- Cassandra McMahan Named Teacher-of-the-Year at Faith, Lincoln

## ABLAZE! MOVEMENT SUPPORTED BY FAN INTO FLAME CAMPAIGN

The churches, schools, missions, and agencies of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are engaged in a mission outreach movement called *ABLAZE!* to use opportunities provided by God to speak of Jesus and the salvation He gives to unreached and uncommitted people.

The Fan into Flame Synod-wide campaign is gathering pledges and cash gifts in a special offering to fund this movement to start 5,000 new churches, 2,000 of them in the United States, revitalize 2,000 churches in the United States, send out 58 new international missionaries, and build up Lutheran schools and seminaries all over the world.



The *ABLAZE!* movement and Fan into Flame campaign are impacting the Nebraska District. To date, \$43 million has been given to Fan into Flame, nationally. Nebraska District gifts and pledges total \$3,108,230, of which congregations contributed \$1,073,230, and individuals, \$2,035,000. Gifts returning to the Nebraska District thus far as part of the Fan into Flame campaign are \$83,512.18.

These gifts will be used to help revitalize congregations, plant new churches, provide Lutheran education scholarships, and assist the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan. All praise to God!