



Nebraska Lutheran Reporter



Information of Interest for Lutherans in the Nebraska District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
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January 2011

PREPARE/ENRICH WORKSHOP . . .

A Prepare/Enrich training course for pastors will be offered on Saturday, January 15, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at Concordia University, Nebraska – Lincoln Campus (570 Fallbrook Blvd., Suite 203). This workshop is designed to help facilitators learn how to use the Prepare/Enrich program with premarital and married couples, and will be led by Rev. Dr. Kevin Kohnke, director of family life at Concordia University. The deadline for registering is January 9 and the registration fee is \$175. Questions may be directed to Kevin.Kohnke@cune.edu.

SING HIS PRAISE, HIS LOVE DECLARE . . .

In order to continue equipping and resourcing pastors and church musicians on worship-related topics, St. John Lutheran Church, Seward, and Concordia University, Nebraska will be co-hosting a worship

conference July 27-29, 2011.

Sing His Praise, His Love

Declare is a three-day event

that will include sessions for pastors and musicians, both the professional church musicians and those without

extensive training or experience. Find more information and registration materials on the event website at www.seward2011.org.



CALLED TO GLORY . . . Milton Holtzen, teacher emeritus, Deshler, departed this life on September 20. Milton taught at schools in York and Waco, Nebraska, as well as in Missouri, California, and Illinois. . . .

Esther Niedner, widow of Rev. Frederick Niedner, was called to her eternal rest on November 14 in Washington.

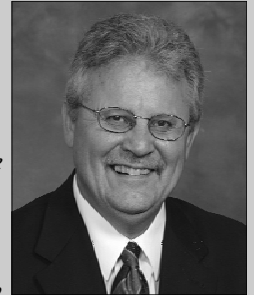
Pastor Niedner served at St. Paul, West Point, from 1950 to 1967, and as president of the Northern Nebraska and Nebraska Districts of the LCMS from 1956 to 1978.



FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

Forgiven to Forgive!

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)



By the Holy Spirit's inspiration, Luke provides a beautiful description of the first Christian congregation. That congregation was devoted to the teachings the apostles had received from Jesus, enjoyed fellowship, celebrated the Lord's Supper in the breaking of the bread, and joined together in prayer and worship. This portrayal of the first Christian congregation goes on to recount awe over the wonders God did through the apostles. The portrait also includes their compassion and care for one another that overflowed into times together at their homes filled with gladness and praise to God. And God blessed them with additions to their number.

This is the picture of the Christian congregation that we pray God will bless every one of His churches to imitate. It is not uncommon for us to think the best church is the one where people adhere to the clear Word of God, enjoy fellowship with each other, regularly receive the Lord's Supper, and joyfully worship God without any disagreements. Truth be known, that which draws us together as the people of God into Christian congregations is our need for forgiveness and the gift of that forgiveness. Every Christian is a sinner who is only made right with God by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus doesn't simply excuse us for our sin. Jesus came among us to give His life for us and take our sin upon Himself to overcome it.

Indeed, Jesus, who gave the apostles His teaching, came to rescue sinners, to have fellowship with sinners, to give His Body and Blood in a unique meal to bring the forgiveness of sins to sinners, and to give sinners the one reason to rejoice with prayer and praise — namely forgiveness! And it is the forgiveness of sins that moves us to compassion and into friendships created by more than similar interests. The forgiven congregation forgives!

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.

FINANCIAL AID FOR NEBRASKA STUDENTS

Nebraska District financial support is available to anyone preparing for full-time service in the church. Applicants must be enrolled at a Concordia University System school or Concordia Seminary at Fort Wayne or St. Louis, demonstrate financial need, and have completed their FAFSA (federal student aid documentation).



The Concordia University System consists of the 10 LCMS-operated universities located in Ann Arbor, Mich.; Austin, Texas; Bronxville, N.Y.; Irvine, Calif.; Mequon, Wis.; Portland, Ore.; River Forest, Ill.; St. Paul, Minn.; Selma, Ala.; and Seward, Neb.

Application forms may be obtained from the District Office, by printing the application form from the District website, www.ndlcms.org/education/education/aid.html, or from the universities and seminaries. The deadline for completing the application process is **May 1** for the first semester and **December 1** for the second semester. **Only one application is needed per academic year. Please complete an application form and send to your university of choice as soon as possible.**

OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS . . . The LWML North provides scholarships for students preparing for careers in full-time church work on the basis of residence in the LWML North region, financial need, and full-time enrollment in the Concordia System. The Nebraska District Student Aid Committee administers these grants. Therefore, the application is the same as the District Aid Application Form which may be obtained from the District Office, online at www.ndlcms.org/education/education/aid.html, or from the financial aid offices of the universities and seminaries, with the May 1, 2011, and December 1, 2011, deadlines. For more information, contact the scholarship chairperson, Joyce Lase, 1963 R Rd, Bancroft, NE 68004, sparkle@gpcom.net, 402-648-7482.

The LWML South offers assistance to students from the LWML South region who are going into full-time church work. Applications may be obtained from the website at www.lwmlsouth.org or from the student's local LWML society. Applications are to be mailed to Elaine Royuk at 334 N 1st St, Seward, NE 68434 postmarked by **June 3, 2011**.

The **Gil and Blondie Vogt Scholarship Fund** is designed to assist Nebraska students preparing for LCMS church vocations at any LCMS university or seminary. Requests for information or applications should be sent to Pat Hofer at hofpat2012@gmail.com or 402-981-4716. The application deadline is **April 15**.

The Nebraska District **Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL)** provides scholarships for students studying for full-time church work. These would include pastor, DCE, DCM, deaconess, liturgical arts, and education. Applications for the 2011-2012 school year are now available. To request an application contact: Dr. Marvin Swan, PO Box 863, Grant, NE 69140, 308-352-6504, or mmswan@gpcom.net. Application deadline is **May 22, 2011**.

Scholarships are available for students who are descendants of alumni of **St. John's College, Winfield, Kan.** Scholarship guidelines and application forms for the 2011-2012 academic year are available on the St. John's College Alumni Association's webpage, www.stjohnsalumni.org. This financial aid is available to all students who are or will be attending one of the colleges, universities, or seminaries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Additionally, the student must be a direct descendant of an alumnus of St. John's College, i.e., their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents must have attended St. John's. Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2011, and students will be notified by May 1, 2011. Students who are currently enrolled in college must re-apply each year.

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED . . . The 249 LCMS congregations of the Nebraska District support the Nebraska District Office in part to provide ministry resources to the congregations as they need them. As the staff and board of directors go into their planning time, it is important for the members and workers of Nebraska District congregations to share their most pressing ministry needs and the resources they are looking for to address these needs. The Nebraska District Office would like to know what areas of your congregation's ministry it can provide support for. A survey has been posted on the Nebraska District website, www.ndlcms.org, and everyone is invited and encouraged to share their thoughts by February 4.



FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY MATERIALS AVAILABLE . . . Friendship Sunday materials written and produced by the Center for U.S. Missions are available to download for free from the **Friendship Ablaze!** website at www.friendshipablaze.com. These materials will encourage and enable congregations to equip their members to reach out with the love of Jesus Christ and embrace their disconnected or unchurched family and friends. Contact the Center at 949-854-8002, ext. 1780 or office@centerforusmissions.org for more information.

News items and ministry stories for the Reporter are always welcome. The deadline for submission for the February 2011 Reporter is **Monday, January 3**. Please submit items to Reporter@ndlcms.org or PO Box 407, Seward, NE 68434.

COMING EVENTS

Pastors' Conference, Younes Conference Centre, Kearney	February 24-26
Theological Conference on Worship, Younes Convention Centre, Kearney	February 25-26
Nebraska District LLL Convention, Divots Convention Center, Norfolk	March 25-26
School Administrators' Conference, The Leadership Center, Aurora	April 14-15
Worship Conference, St. John, Seward	July 27-29
District Youth Gathering, Embassy Suites Convention Center, LaVista	November 18-20

CALLS IN THE DISTRICT

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Crystal Brummels (S'04), candidate status to non-candidate status.

Wanda Dunn (S'08), candidate, Kansas District, to candidate, Nebraska District.

Howard Voelker (S'69), teacher, Christ Lutheran, Juniata, to non-candidate.

Kathryn Wiest (S'78), teacher, Our Redeemer, Staplehurst, to non-candidate.



ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. Andrew Ratcliffe (StL'07), St. Paul, Sac City, Iowa, to associate, St. John, Seward.

Rev. Gerry Weaver (FtW'07), St. Peter, Snyder, and Trinity, Howells, to Zion, Crookston.

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Jonathan Rathjen (StL'95), Trinity, Auburn, to Our Redeemer, Staplehurst.

STATUS CHANGE

Rev. Ralph Guetersloh (StL'67), emeritus, transferred to Missouri District.

Rev. Carl Lehmann (FtW'95), non-candidate, transferred to Montana District.

ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

Rev. Gerry Weaver (FtW'07) as pastor, Zion, Crookston, November 28.

The Nebraska District LCMS is hosting "*What is Lutheran Worship?: A Theological Conference on Worship*" February 24-26. This conference will bring pastors, church musicians, and lay leaders together for meaningful discussions about that which makes worship distinctly Lutheran. Registration materials and more information will be mailed to church offices and will be available on the District website in early January. Visit www.ndlcms.org for up-to-date information.

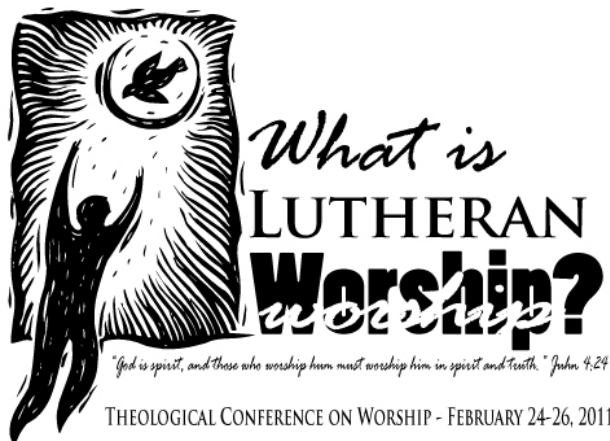
Where: Younes Conference Centre, Kearney

Presenters: Dr. Charles Arand, St. Louis
Dr. Arthur Just, Fort Wayne

Who: All pastors and one additional congregational representative who is passionate about and/or involved in planning worship.

When: Pastors' Conference is February 24-26. Congregational representatives join them for noon lunch on February 25 until noon on February 26.

Registration: Materials will be made available on the District website, www.ndlcms.org, and mailed to each church office. Registration due back February 4.



Contact the District Office at info@ndlcms.org or 888-643-2961 with questions or for more information.

ARE YOU A PAINTER OR A POINTER?

The following article was written by Dr. John D. Eckrich, M.D., Executive Director of Grace Place Lutheran Retreats. While Grace Place Lutheran Retreats focus primarily on the health and wellbeing of church workers, this article points out the importance of congregational members caring for the church workers in their midst, as well as the importance of healthy relationships within the congregation.

“You need at least six hours of socialization per day to bring about social wellbeing!” *

Now there is a health headline that will capture the hearts of many people who love to talk, the so-called “painters” of this world. Rev. Dr. David and Kathy Ludwig, my partners in Grace Place, have developed a personality typography entitled “Painters” or “Pointers.”

Painters think and process out loud. They probably don’t know completely what they are thinking until they have verbally assembled a “word-painting,” usually driving their pointer-partners, generally their spouses, completely nuts. About 75% of painters are women.



Pointers process internally, whirling their Pentiums for sure, but doing it non-verbally. After they have internally processed their thoughts, they may finally verbalize with a short summary word or phrase...yeh, okay, grunt...thus driving their painter-spouses nuts. You guessed it...about 75% of men are pointers.

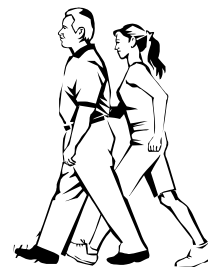
The Ludwigs espouse that *painters* usually marry *pointers*; the difference is what adds energy to a marital relationship. Opposing social styles create a never-ending mystery, driving the relationship forward. But it also drives home the point!!! We need relationship effort, relationship work, frequently throughout the day to be well in our emotions, intellect and human interactions. The Gallup folks, to whom I frequently refer, conclude—thinking in 21st Century modalities—that effective socialization can occur in many forms; email, phone, sign, verbal, skype, yada, yada, yada. However, it needs to be an essential component of healthy living and healthy serving. What’s the flip side?

Though it may feel good and appear safe, it is not healthy to endlessly burrow in the church office behind closed doors or in the parsonage study. This represents a huge conundrum for many more introverted pastoral personality types; they expend enormous energy daily in putting themselves “out there.” They need some internal and personal down-time to maintain balance and sanity. Perhaps it is a wise practice for us to allow each other little “attitude adjustment” moments at the end of a church worker day to reset the buttons before we unburden ourselves on family members, and vice versa.

Further, it is helpful in terms of engagement in your vocation to have friendships, particularly a good friend at work; and especially to have your spouse be a “best” friend forever, or BFF, to borrow from my text-savvy nieces. Once again, I share with you the physician’s observation of the oft self-imposed isolation of pastoral ministry. Pastors and teachers need good friends to encourage wellbeing.

Finally, one interesting observation; take a walk! Combining exercise with socialization multiplies the benefits to your health...heart, soul, mind and strength.

So *paint* or *point*, or *text* or *skype*, or better yet go on a walk with your best friend, but really work on relationships on a daily basis. And remember, your sustainable social wellbeing really flows out of your relationship with Christ; He assures you of safety, comfort and rest, which you, in turn, can give to those BFFs as you serve well, with a life well-lived.



To learn more about Grace Place Lutheran Retreats, visit their website:

www.graceplaceretreats.org.



* Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements, Jim Harter and Tom Rath, Gallup Press, May 4, 2010

GRACE PLACE LUTHERAN RETREATS . . . Church workers and spouses in the Nebraska District are encouraged to consider a Grace Place Lutheran Retreat this year. Grace Place retreats offer preventative wellness skills, attitudes and resources to Lutheran professional church workers and leaders and their families, so they can carry forth the Gospel message of salvation in Christ, and live and serve His people abundantly in body, mind and spirit. Through generous grants, church workers and spouses can attend a week-long retreat for \$395.

June 6-10: Single church workers —Colorado Springs, Colo.
June 13-17: Church workers and spouses—Milford, Iowa
June 20-24: Church workers and spouses—Plymouth, Ind.
June 27-July 1: Church workers and spouses—Snowmass, Colo.
(Grant provided by the Rupert Dunklau Foundation — Nebraska workers encouraged to attend this retreat)

July 11-15: Church workers and spouses—Trego, Wis.
Aug. 1-5: Church workers and spouses—Mackinac Island, Mich.

For more information, visit www.graceplaceretreats.org.