



Nebraska Lutheran Reporter



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

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK . . .

Lutheran schools across Nebraska will join all of the LCMS schools in celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week March 6-12, 2011. Under the theme "Securing Each Child's Future—Making Disciples," based on John 8:31b-32, LCMS schools will fill the week with special and meaningful endeavors, including special chapel services, faculty recognitions, fun-filled student events, family-focused activities, and giving thanks to God for the ministry taking place.

Great things occur in these schools every day. The greatest of them is that students hear the Good News of Jesus and learn how to be His disciples, both now and into the future.

Contact your local Lutheran school to learn more about how the students and teachers will be celebrating National Lutheran Schools Week. Find a list of LCMS schools in Nebraska on the District website at www.ndlcms.org/locator/schools/index.html.

This ministry is made possible because the 249 congregations of the Nebraska District provide financial support for the office of Superintendent of Lutheran Schools through their faithful mission and ministry gifts to the Nebraska District. Thanks be to God for this great ministry made possible through His people.



Securing Each Child's Future
Making Disciples

*"If you abide in my word,
you are truly my disciples,
and you will know the truth,
and the truth will set you free."*

John 8:31b-32a

FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

Securing Each Child's Future – Making Disciples



"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31b–32)

March 6-12, 2011, is National Lutheran Schools Week for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Nebraska District of the LCMS is blessed with a wonderful heritage of Lutheran Christian schools. Currently, there are 71 preschools, 38 elementary and 4 high schools across the District.

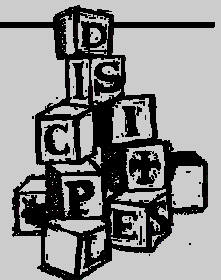
The theme for the week's focus on Lutheran schools is "Making Disciples!" So what is a disciple? What does this word mean in 2011? How are the words "Christian" and "disciple" connected today?

The Bible uses various words to describe Christians. God's Word calls Christians "children of God" (Galatians 3:26); "sons of God" (1 John 3:1); "blessed of the Father" (Matthew 25:34); "believers" (Acts 5:14); "saints" (Ephesians 2:19); "the salt of the earth and light of the world" (Matthew 5:13, 16a); and "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a special people" (1 Peter 2:9). But the descriptor most often used by God is "disciple." In fact, it occurs more than 250 times in the New Testament.

A disciple is a student of a great teacher. And this student not only learns what the teacher has to impart, but also how to live by imitating the teacher and passing on His teachings. Jesus said that taking up residence in His teaching would make people into His disciples, which would lead to knowing the truth and that truth would give freedom. Indeed, Jesus is a unique teacher who not only offers Divine knowledge and wisdom, but even more the freedom from sin and death. He leads His disciples to see the sacrifice of His perfect life to give them forgiven lives. It is in this forgiveness that there is freedom.

Jesus is the primary Teacher in our Lutheran schools so that the students can be His disciples in their families, their communities, yes, wherever God takes them. A Christian teacher once invited a student to help him teach. The only instruction given to the student was to follow and do what the teacher did wherever they went. So, together they walked the school halls, cheered at a ball game, visited a nursing home, and picked up supplies for a classroom project. The boy finally asked, "When do I get to help teach?" The teacher responded, "You have been teaching everywhere you have gone. Did we not offer people God's blessings? Did we not treat people with respect? Were we not forgiving when needed? Did we speak of Jesus?"

Rev. Russ Sommerfeld



**BUILDING
DISCIPLES**

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.

FOCUSED ON OUTREACH MINISTRY . . . LCEF outreach mission grant applications were mailed to congregations and ministries seeking grant proposals for programs or activities affecting the local community in reaching those who do not know Jesus as their Savior. The LCEF Committee will award 25 \$1,000 grants to outreach-focused congregations or ministries throughout the Nebraska District.



After seeking God's guidance for mission outreach opportunities in local communities, congregations and ministries may return the completed LCEF mission outreach grant application to the Nebraska District office by April 1. Recipients will be selected and notified by May 15. Applications may be downloaded on the Nebraska District website: www.ndlcms.org.

JESUS OF NAZARETH: WHAT ELSE DO WE KNOW? . . . is the title of a seminar to be presented by Dr. Paul L. Maier on Saturday, June 25, at Faith Lutheran Church in Lincoln (8701 Adams Street). Dr. Maier, professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University and third vice-president of the LCMS, will add a fresh dimension to the Scriptures, illuminating them with important evidence from archaeology and secular history. Doors open at 9:00 a.m., and lunch is included in the ticket price of \$20. Tickets are required and may be reserved by emailing contact@faithlincoln.org. More information is available on the church website at www.faithlincoln.org.

NEW LUTHERAN HOUR SPEAKER NAMED . . . Rev. Gregory Seltz of Orange, California, has accepted the position of Speaker of The Lutheran Hour® radio program. Seltz follows the Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus, who retired from full-time duties at the end of 2010 after serving in the Speakership since 2002. Seltz officially began his ministry with LHM on a part-time basis February 1 and will become full-time on or before June 1.

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE TO OFFER SCHOOLS FOR SPEAKERS AND WRITERS IN NEBRASKA . . . The Women's Leadership Institute (WLI), a servant institute of Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, is sponsoring schools for speakers and writers at Concordia University Nebraska in Seward the week of May 23-27. Instructors will be Dr. Jane Fryar and Ruth Koch. Participants will have opportunity for:

- Intensive instruction and immersion in writing and speaking.
- Direct teacher feedback and coaching.
- Peer encouragement and support in a cohesive learning community.
- Instruction at the writing school organized in collaboration with editors at CPH.
- Vetting for the WLI Speakers Bureau through participation in the speakers school.
- Building a Lutheran theological foundation of Law and Gospel necessary for speaking or writing in the congregation or other church environments.

Find more information and registration materials at <http://blog.cuw.edu/wli/resources/wli-resources/wli-schools/>.

CALLED TO GLORY . . . Burnell Beyers, pastor emeritus, Fremont, departed this life on Monday, January 17. Pastor Beyers served his vicarage at St. Paul, Bancroft, then served the following congregations during his pastoral ministry: St. Matthew, Cedar Bluffs; Our Redeemer, Wahoo; St. John, Scottsbluff; and Trinity, Fremont; as well as congregations in Minnesota.

JOURNEY
Romans 8:35-39
Nebraska/Iowa West District Gathering 2011

Plan soon... Text friends... Be there
...for students in 9th-12th grade, 2011

Nov. 18-20, 2011
Embassy Suites, La Vista, NE
Registration \$115/person
Rooms \$115/4-persons

<http://www.NEYOUTH.org>

News items and ministry stories for the Reporter are always welcome. The deadline for submission for the April 2011 Reporter is **Monday, February 28**. Please submit items to Reporter@ndlcms.org or PO Box 407, Seward, NE 68434.

COMING EVENTS

Nebraska District LLL Convention, Divots Convention Center, Norfolk.....	March 25-26
Administrators'/Early Childhood Educators' Conference, The Leadership Center, Aurora.....	April 14-15
National LWML Convention, Peoria, Ill.	June 23-26
Worship Conference, St. John, Seward.....	July 27-29
Educators' Conference, Christ, Lincoln.....	October 20-21
Fall Pastors Conference, Embassy Suites, LaVista.....	October 24-26
District Youth Gathering, Embassy Suites Convention Center, LaVista.....	November 18-20

CALLS IN THE DISTRICT

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Jessica Luebbe (S'03), Student Financial Services Counselor, Concordia University Nebraska, to non-candidate.

ORDAINED MINISTERS

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. Jacob Heine (StL'06), assistant, Bethlehem, Delmar, N.Y., to associate, Christ, Lincoln.

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Brad Birtell (StL'92), St. John, Columbus, to St. Luke's, Manhattan, Kan.

Rev. David Gaddini (StL'00), Fellowship of Faith, McHenry, Ill., to 1C: A Mission Church of the LCMS, Columbus.

Rev. Shawn Kitzing (StL'00), Immanuel, Loup City, to Our Redeemer, Staplehurst.

Rev. Larry Rodencal (StL'81), Peace, Cincinnati, Ohio, to St. John, Ord.

Rev. Aaron Unseth (StL'07), associate, First, El Cajon, Calif., to associate, King of Kings, Omaha.

STATUS CHANGE

Rev. Jeff Ernstmeyer (StL'03), Our Redeemer, Elwood, to non-candidate status, effective December 31, 2010.

Rev. Eugene Gierke (Spg'71), Nebraska District LCMS and LCEF to emeritus status, effective July 2, 2010.

Rev. Mark Schlamann (FtW'01), candidate to non-candidate status, effective December 1, 2010.

Rev. Craig Whitson (StL'84), St. Paul, Malcolm, to emeritus status, effective December 31, 2010.

ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

Rev. Keith Christiansen (FtW'83) as pastor, St. John, Pierce, January 23.

Rev. Andrew Ratcliffe (StL'07) as associate pastor, St. John, Seward, January 9.

ANNIVERSARIES

Trinity, Ogallala, 125th, June 12, with a 9:00 a.m. service.

St. Peter, Wymore, 75th, June 26.

Zion, Omaha, 125th, August 28, with services at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

LUTHERANS IN MEDICAL MISSIONS FORUM TO HIGHLIGHT LUTHERAN MALARIA INITIATIVE . . .

The seventh annual LIMM Needs and Resources Forum will be held April 1-2 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Wichita, Kansas. Holy Cross is a pilot congregation of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI). The LMI is a partnership of Lutheran World Relief and the LCMS. Its purpose is to mobilize U.S. Lutherans in the global effort to eliminate malaria deaths in Africa by 2015. Bobbie Lautenschlager, CEO of LIMM, shares "Because LMI was passed at the LCMS 2010 National Convention by a resounding number of votes, we at LIMM wish to facilitate the learning curve of congregations and individuals on what they can do to obtain this important goal. Put the date on your calendars now and plan to come or send a congregational delegate for this pivotal event."

Rev. John Nunes, president and CEO of Lutheran World Relief (LWR), will speak at the Friday night banquet and in the plenary session on Saturday. Kansas District President Rev. Keith Kohlmeier will serve as chaplain for the event. The Saturday lunch will feature speaker Linda Reiser, LWR board member. Other speakers include Jacob Fiene of World Relief and Human Care, who will report on the LCMS response for the LMI and on the mercy medical programs developed in Haiti, and Rita Nickel, RN, who will report on the community health education training in partnership with the Lutheran Church of Chile.

Registration and program information is available at www.limm.org. Accommodations at the Marriott Wichita (316-651-0333) for the special rate of \$88 per room plus taxes are available when booked before March 15 for the *Lutherans in Medical Missions Forum*. Additional charges for the Forum are \$55 per person.

Lutherans in Medical Missions, an RSO of the LCMS, has been serving the worldwide Lutheran church since 1994. LIMM provides expert medical consultants and assists in funding human care projects when requested by LCMS World Mission, its international church partners, and its international mission staff.

More information can be found online at www.limm.org or call 866-676-5466.

SECURING EACH CHILD'S FUTURE – MAKING DISCIPLES

Lutheran schools are such a blessing to the students who attend, as well as to their families. Many Lutheran schools in the Nebraska District are busy teaching the students what it means to be a disciple—a follower of Christ. Here are some short stories of the amazing things God is doing through the Lutheran schools of the Nebraska District.

To Know Him, and Make Him Known

By Matt Stueber

Students at **Messiah Lutheran School in Lincoln** have been very active in community service this year as we live out our theme: **To Know Him, And Make Him Known!**

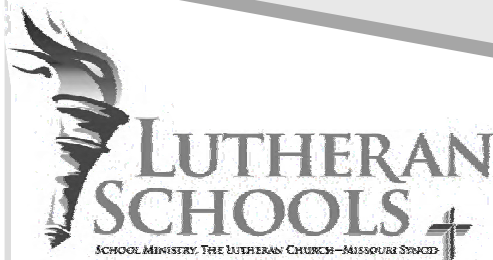
At Christmas, rather than the traditional classroom gift exchange, Messiah classrooms each select a local or international charity to support. This year's Christmas outreach projects included: City Impact, Trinity Hope, Omaha Children's Hospital, People's City Mission, Capital City Humane Society, Cedars, and Blue Star Moms.

Since Christmas, the attitude of service continues to grow. Mrs. Jackie Glines' fifth graders spent a week in January sharing Random Acts of Kindness in the Lincoln community. Students dispersed into the community in small groups and passed out roses at the Department of Motor Vehicles, delivered treat bags to workers at People's City Mission, took Messiah's facilities director out for ice cream, and gave stuffed animals to students at a lower-income public school in town. One week later, Miss Jessica Sunderman led an outreach field trip for Messiah fourth graders to Lincoln's Kids Against Hunger site. The class packaged enough food for 8,640 meals!

Principal Matt Stueber is excited about the impact that the school's service projects are having on individual students. He says, "It has become the norm for Messiah students to choose service opportunities over gifts when planning their own birthday parties! It has been awesome watching God's Spirit work in our teachers, parents, and students as we strive **To Know Him, And Make Him Known.**"

Faith, Lincoln

We currently have two Korean children that are students in our school staying with host families. Every day they hear the Good News shared with them and we see in them a changing heart. In addition to the two Korean students, we have two young Korean ladies who are doing eight weeks of student teaching with us. One of them has become a Christian and the other feels "something in her heart" that is different. So we continue to share the Good News and pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to continue working in her. This was not of our doing, but of God's plan.



FROM THE DESK OF Stu Tietz

A man from Ethiopia came to my office at **Faith Lutheran School in Lincoln** this summer asking if his two daughters, Lydia and Biruh, could come to Faith school. He wanted Christian teachings for his daughters, but he had no money to pay for them. I told them we would make it happen for his daughters and he said "My wife is at home praying for this, this very minute." When I told him that we could make it happen and would enroll his two daughters, his smile was so large, and with a sincere heart he said "This is the happiest day of my life." Five months later he came to talk with me again – this time to ask if his two daughters could be baptized. In addition, he purchased four of the DVDs that were made of the children's Christmas service in which they proclaimed the message of Christ's birth. He bought one for his family and three to send back to his family in Ethiopia where his sister would share the DVDs with the people of his town and interpret the message to the people who have not heard of Jesus. This was not of our doing, but of God's plan.

LUTHERAN SCHOOLS IN NEBRASKA

Preschools	71
Elementary Schools	38
High Schools	4

STUDENTS IN NEBRASKA LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

Daycares/Preschools	2985
Elementary Schools	2807
High Schools	613
Teachers in Nebraska Lutheran Schools	438