



# News

of the Iowa Mission District  
of the North American Lutheran Church

[www.iowamissiondistrict.com](http://www.iowamissiondistrict.com)

August 2018

## *A Word from the Dean*

### **SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

When our children were little and we would travel, they would often make fun of me for pointing out the different churches that I would see along the way, and the comments I would make about them. One thing I often noticed were the messages that were on some of the sign boards out front. Here is a sample of what I would find:

Come in and get a faith lift.  
The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.  
God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.  
Some minds are like concrete: thoroughly mixed up and permanently set.  
Don't wait for 6 strong men to take you to church.  
God answers knee-mail.  
What caterpillars call the end, God calls a butterfly.  
A perfect church wouldn't have you. Join ours.  
Prayer is the best wireless connection.  
God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.  
A clear conscience makes a soft pillow.  
Christians keep the faith – but not from others!  
The best vitamin for a Christian is B1.  
What part of "Thou shalt not" don't you understand?  
To belittle is to be little.  
It's hard to stumble when you're on your knees.

What others have you seen? I know of a book with statements even better than these. Here is one:

*O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.*  
– Psalm 136:1

*Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean, Iowa Mission District, NALC*

### **From the Treasurer**

Please remember that the Iowa Mission District's Fiscal Year ends on August 31st. Any donations you desire to be included in this current Fiscal Year need to be postmarked by August 31st and mailed to the Iowa Mission District, PO Box 141, St Ansgar, IA, 50472.



## Sola Scriptura—A Light to My Path

Pr. Barbara M. Wills  
Peace Lutheran Church  
Northwood, Iowa

*Thy word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.*  
(Psalm 119:105)

We live in a world filled with spiritual darkness—the darkness of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, immorality, cruelty, violence—the list goes on. Too often we find ourselves focusing on all that is wrong with the world, ourselves and others—separated from God and each other by chasms of hatred, misunderstanding, and fear—an abyss of sin. At such times it feels as if our lives are shrouded in darkness, and the path before us, unclear and impassable, looms as a black cloud—a “valley of the shadow of death”. Where do we find the map—the GPS—to guide us? How do we gain strength and direction to move forward?

Five hundred years ago, an Augustinian monk also felt overcome by angst and overwhelmed by his seemingly endless and unfruitful search for direction, forgiveness, and peace of mind. Martin Luther did all the things he had been taught to do—and more. Fasting, flagellating himself with a whip designed for self-flogging, confessing every sin he could think of, he nearly killed himself in his futile efforts to conform to what he thought was God’s will. Engulfed in despair and darkness, he finally noticed a tiny light appear when his confessor and mentor, Johann von Staupitz, gave him a teaching assignment at the University of Wittenberg. Immersing himself in Holy Scripture, particularly the letters of St. Paul to the churches at Galatia and Rome, Luther began to literally “see the light”. The light of Christ, revealed through the Bible, grew stronger and brighter day by day. Finding the answer to his quest, Luther came to see that it was God’s grace given in the life, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus that brought forgiveness and clothed us in righteousness—not our own futile efforts. And this “Good News” was revealed to us through the words of Holy Scripture. And thus, as Lutheran Christians we speak of the “solas”—the “onlys”: Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone.

In Psalm 119:105, the psalmist prays to the Lord, “*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*” The word he speaks of at that time in the history of God’s people, is the Law given to the people of Israel in the covenant the Lord made with his people through Moses on Mt. Sinai. “*And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of*

*the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”* (Exodus 19:3-6) And there on the mountain of God, the Lord gave to Moses the words of the covenant, the commandments that would be a lamp to their feet and a light to their path through the ages.

The covenant on Mt. Sinai was but a step along the way to the full intention of the Lord’s grace and mercy toward humankind. In fulfillment of the Lord’s earlier promise to Abraham, through his and his wife, Sarah’s descendants, another covenant was to come in the blood of the only begotten Son of God, Jesus. In the fullness of time, the angel Gabriel visited a young virgin named Mary, a descendant of Abraham and Sarah, and announced to her that she would conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit and bear a son who would save His people from their sins. The Gospel of John describes this Son, Jesus, in this way, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*” (John 1:1-5) Following his death and resurrection, Jesus walked with two of his disciples along the road to Emmaus, “*And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*” (Luke 24:27)

*Sola Scriptura*, the Holy Scriptures alone, reveal God’s love and grace that is finally and eternally given to His people in Christ Jesus, the Light of the world.

*“Healer of our ev’ry ill, light of each tomorrow,  
give us peace beyond our fear,  
and hope beyond our sorrow.”*

“Healer of Our Every Ill”, Marty Haugen)

## *This and That from around the Iowa Mission District*

The Laurens Chamber and Community Boosters 2018 summer Celebration was held July 13-15. Bethany Lutheran Church was well represented during the three-day celebration. Friday night, July 13<sup>th</sup> Bethany sponsored a Sundae Stand serving ice cream sundaes in the park as the week end festivities commenced. A Laurens Ministerial Association's sponsored ecumenical hymn sing in the city park was led by Bethany's Pastor Scott Baker and Bethany's organist Shirley McKiernan. This hymn sing preceded the fireworks display. On Saturday morning Bethany had the only church sponsored float in the parade, once again pulled by Myles Pedersen's antique Farmall tractor. This year's celebration theme was Adventure and Explore Laurens. Our float's theme was "Walking with Jesus and Explore the Bible". Members riding on the float wore hiking boots, tennis shoes, sandals, safari hats and binoculars with walking sticks while distributing candy and small beach balls that had printed on them "walking with Jesus" to the crowds as the float made its way along the parade route. Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> was capped off with our worship service at Bethany and then the Cub Scouts, who meet at Bethany, sponsored a pet wash at the fire station along with a Pet Blessing done by Pastor Baker! We had a successful weekend and our members contributed significantly to the Community's annual celebration success.



Members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Rochester, MN, participated in the Byron, MN, "Good Neighbor Days Parade" on Sunday, July 22. The float entry was a Jesus boat with the caption, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men". Emmanuel received a Thrivent Action Team gift of \$250 in support of this evangelical



outreach. More than 4,000 pieces of candy were distributed, along with 300+ airplanes ("fly high with Jesus") and 180+ beach balls ("Jesus loves you!"). Emmanuel fliers and worship invites were also handed out. More than 2 dozen servants of Emmanuel participated in this community outreach. We were practicing Emmanuel and sharing the love of Jesus in daily life. It was a beautiful day. The SON was shining!

*This and That from around the Iowa Mission District continues....*

Members of Peace Lutheran Church in Northwood enjoyed a “Peaceful Iowa Excursion” on Saturday, July 21st. An annual event, the excursion is an opportunity for fellowship and education. This year members visited the Bily Clock Museum in Spillville, home to the beautifully detailed clocks created and carved by the “Bily brothers”, Frank and Joseph, during the early 1900s. The brothers were devout Roman Catholics whose faith shines through many of the designs in the clocks. Other events of the day included a visit to St. Wenceslaus Roman Catholic Church (oldest Czech Catholic Church west of the Mississippi River), a picnic in the park in Spillville, and a stop at St. Anthony of Padua Chapel, the smallest Catholic Church in Iowa—it seats only eight people.



**Above left:** Headed for Houston, Texas on a mission trip to help with clean-up from Hurricane Harvey, youth groups, pastors and other chaperones from the Iowa Mission District stopped at Peace Lutheran Church in Edmund, Oklahoma the first night of their trip.  
**Above right:** One crew of the mission team is doing concrete work at the host church, Peace Lutheran in Rosenberg, Texas.  
**Left:** Everyone needs a break, and at the Houston Dynamo soccer game the group not only enjoyed an outing but took Jesus along and shared their faith!  
**Right:** Another work project was helping to repair a house that had been damaged by the hurricane.



Youth and adults from the following congregations participated in the mission trip: St. John's, Boyden; Eagle Grove, Eagle Grove; First, Manchester; St. John: Western Douglas, Plainfield; St. Olaf Parish (Norway & Marion), St. Olaf & Gunder.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2018 Upcoming Events

**August 15-17**—NALC Convocation, Crowne Plaza Convention Center, Denver, CO.

**September 15**—Mission District Convocation, First Lutheran, St. Ansgar. Keynote speaker will be Rev. David Wendel.



During the Iowa Mission District's youth mission trip to Houston, Randy Brown (center) was baptized in the Gulf of Mexico by Pastor Tony D. Ede. Randy's baptismal sponsor was his daughter, Kelsey. Members of the Body of Christ present at his baptism were the sixty-five members of the mission team. We welcome Randy as a brother in Christ and rejoice with him in the love of Christ.

### Iowa Tornadoes Relief

Mary Bates, the head of the NALC domestic disaster relief program, sent an email on July 23 to offer support for congregations in Iowa who suffered from the 27 tornadoes that swept through the Marshalltown area on Friday, July 20. If any of your parishioners or congregations were affected by these tornadoes you may seek assistance from NALC Disaster Relief by contacting Mary at [disasterresponse@thenalc.org](mailto:disasterresponse@thenalc.org) or by phone at 740-509-1132. If you want to offer help with clean-up or repair projects, please also contact Mary or touch base with our Dean, Pastor Marshall Hahn ([stolafparish@netel.net](mailto:stolafparish@netel.net)). To send financial assistance, please make checks out to the NALC Disaster Response and add "2018 Iowa tornadoes" to the memo line on the checks. Mail checks to **NALC Disaster Response**, 2299 Palmer Dr., Suite 220, New Brighton, MN 55112.

### Donations and Correspondence

Checks sent to the Mission District for support should be made out to the *Iowa Mission District, NALC*, and mailed to Pastor Christopher Staley at **PO Box 141, St. Ansgar, IA 50472-0141**.

Correspondence for Mr. Craig Lease, Mission District Secretary, should be sent to **405 7th St. N., Northwood, IA 50459**

Items for the Mission District newsletter (pictures, news, etc.) are best sent via e-mail to Pastor Barbara Wills at [barbaramwills@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramwills@gmail.com).

*The Iowa Mission District website may be found at: [www.iowamissiondistrict.com](http://www.iowamissiondistrict.com). If your congregation has a web site, and you would like to have the web address linked to your church name on the Mission District web site, please send the web address to me, Pastor Barbara Wills, at [barbaramwills@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramwills@gmail.com).*



## ***Following Jesus—Luther Style*** ***Mutual Up-building in the Body of Christ***

In the third article of the Apostles' Creed we confess our faith in the work of the Holy Spirit. We have confessed that we believe in God, the Father Almighty who created all things. We have affirmed our faith in Christ Jesus, in His divine and human nature and His work of salvation for us through His suffering, death, and resurrection. We have stated our belief in His ascension to sit at the right hand of the Father, and His return to judge the living and the dead. Now our attention turns to the Holy Spirit. Although we do not recount in the creed the record in Acts 2:1-4 of the Holy Spirit coming upon the *gathered disciples* on the day of Pentecost with the sound of a mighty wind and the flames, as of fire, resting upon those who were present, we nevertheless, recognize this event as the beginning of the Church. And in the creed we speak of the outcome of this momentous event as we confess: *"I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."*

In the Small Catechism Luther explains the work of the Holy Spirit as that of calling, *gathering*, enlightening and sanctifying (or making holy) the people of God. It is a fact, recorded in Scripture, that our Lord Jesus called together twelve men to be His disciples. In addition to these twelve there were others around Him who were part of His followers—women who helped with the financial support (Luke 8:1-3), seventy who were sent out on a mission trip (Luke 10:1-23), and various individuals whom Jesus healed, taught and interacted with in the context of His ministry and in the midst of those who were gathered around Him. And on the night in which Jesus washed His disciples' feet and gave them their final instructions, He also emphasized the importance of their love for one another: *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:34-35). The inescapable conclusion is that we, as children of God in Christ, are called to faith in Christ within the community of believers. We may be able to be religious without the Church, but I'm convinced we cannot be Christian without it. Becoming disciples through the Word of God and the Sacraments instituted by our Lord Jesus is done in the context of the Church.

In the modern world, many folks tend to think of the church as an organization. While it's true that it is necessary in the world to have organizational

structures and written codes or constitutions to help us live together equitably and to be accountable to one another, it is evident from the biblical witness that the Church is NOT an organization in the way that the Lion's Club or a school board are organizations. Because we are gathered by the Holy Spirit in the name of Christ—*"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them"* (Matthew 18:20)—and all are "branches" attached to the vine of Christ (for apart from Him we can do nothing—John 15:1-6), we are part of Christ and each other in a way that transcends the world's relationships. The Apostle Paul describes the Church as the Body of Christ, and each of us as a "member" of that Body. (1 Corinthians 12:27) He advocates the building up of the body of Christ through the use of the gifts each of us is given by the Holy Spirit for particular service within the Church, (1 Corinthians 12:4-31) and in 1 Corinthians 13, he emphasizes the importance of a sacrificial love that is patient and kind, not insisting on its own way or being resentful or boastful—the kind of love our Lord Jesus commanded in John 13. So important is this love within the Body of Christ that without it our profession of faith becomes like a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal—meaningless noise.

Day by day, as children of God in Christ, we are called to share our faith—not just to those outside the Church, but also by loving each other within the Church—not as within a private club with special privileges, but so that others will know that we are disciples of Christ. Gathering together for worship helps us support and encourage each other's faith, and receiving the gifts of Word and Sacrament join us together with our Lord and each other. Participating in Bible Study together gives us the opportunity to learn and to teach as we stand together under the authority of Holy Scripture. Showing compassion for each other's sufferings, offering prayers for the concerns of our brothers and sisters in Christ, and reaching out with material help when needed are concrete expressions of the love Christ came to share with a world lost in darkness and sin. Knit together in the Body of Christ—the Church—we live as faithful disciples and witnesses of the love of Christ and spread His light into a dark and sin-filled world.

*Pastor Barbara M. Wills*

## *Congregations of the Iowa Mission District*

Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Dan Buhs, Lay Minister  
+Atlantic: **Holy Trinity**—Call Process  
Avoca: **Trinity**, Pr. Eric Meissner  
Badger: **Badger Lutheran**, Pr. Scott Meier  
Boyden: **St. John**, Pr. Mark Lund  
Dorchester: **Waterloo Ridge**, Call Process  
Eagle Grove: **Evangelical Lutheran**, Pr. Jason Cooper  
Eagle Grove: **Samuel Lutheran**, Pr. Rich Taylor  
Ellsworth: **Trinity**, Pastor Jon Rollefson  
Emmons, MN: **Emmons**, Pr. David Schafer, Interim  
Gilmore City: **First**, Tracy Nerem, Lay Minister  
Grafton: **Emmanuel**, Pr. Solveig Zamzow  
Greene: **St. John (Vilmar)**, Pr. Christopher Martin  
Gunder: **Marion**, Pr. Marshall Hahn  
Harlan: **Bethlehem**, Pr. Ronald Rasmussen  
+Huxley: **Shepherd of the Prairie**, Scott Licht, Lay Minister  
Irwin: **St. Paul**, Pr. Ronald Rasmussen  
Laurens: **Bethany**, Pr. Scott Baker  
Manchester: **First**, Pr. Tony D. Ede  
+Monona, **Faith**: Pr. Mel Harris  
+Northwood: **Peace**, Pr. Barbara Wills  
Palmer: **St. John's**,

Plainfield: **St. John**, Pr. Kim Thacker  
Readlyn: **St. Matthew**, Pr. Jean Rabary  
Readlyn: **Zion**, Pr. Jean Rabary  
+Robins: **Servants of Christ**, Pr. Ron Voss  
+Rochester, MN: **Emmanuel**, Pr. David Steffenson  
Ruthven: **Zion**, Pr. Thomas Summerfield  
St. Ansgar: **First**, Pr. Christopher Staley  
St. Olaf: **Norway**, Pr. Marshall Hahn  
Sheldon: **St. Paul**, Pr. Craig Nissen  
+Sibley: **Faith**, Pr. Tim Nappe  
Spencer: **Trinity**  
+Strawberry Pt.: **Mission in Christ**, Pr. Gary Burkhalter  
Thor: **Ullensvang**, Pr. Darryl Landsverk  
Waterville: **Old East Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball  
Waukon: **Old West Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball

+ indicates mission congregation

*The Iowa Mission District  
has 37 congregations!*

### **The following pastors are available for pulpit supply:**

Pastor Paul Breddin—515--528-2284  
Pastor James Glesne—563-380-8110  
Pastor David Steffenson—253-302-9845 (Sundays)  
Pastor Paul Weeg- -641-381-0675



### **Iowa Mission District Leadership**

Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean—[stolafparish@neitel.net](mailto:stolafparish@neitel.net)  
Craig Lease, Secretary—[pdlease@gmail.com](mailto:pdlease@gmail.com)  
Pastor Christopher Staley, Treasurer—[cbstaley@netins.net](mailto:cbstaley@netins.net)

### **Mission District Council Members:**

Pastor Barbara Wills—[barbaramwills@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramwills@gmail.com)  
Pastor Gary Burkhalter—[pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com](mailto:pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com)  
Pastor Mark Lund—[pastormarklund@gmail.com](mailto:pastormarklund@gmail.com)  
Gregory Olson—[golson@ruthventel.com](mailto:golson@ruthventel.com)  
Chris Schlee—[schleemasonry@hotmail.com](mailto:schleemasonry@hotmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Pastor Barbara Wills—[barbaramwills@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramwills@gmail.com)

# Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

**Saturday, September 15, 2018 at First Lutheran Church, St. Ansgar, IA**

The 2018 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at First Lutheran Church, St. Ansgar, on Saturday, September 15 .

## Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

**Saturday, September 15, 2018 at First Lutheran Church, St. Ansgar, IA**

The 2018 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at First Lutheran Church, St. Ansgar, on Saturday, September 15. Our theme is “Sola Scriptura” and we are pleased to have the Rev. David Wendel, Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry and Ecumenism, as our keynote speaker. The Convocation is our opportunity to gather as brothers and sisters in Christ for the purpose of fellowship, worship, learning and sharing of ideas and to hear up-dates on the work and mission of the NALC. We also will have a short period of time to conduct the necessary business of the Mission District. As you prepare for the convocation please be thinking of nominations for Treasurer (either clergy or lay), a lay member and a clergy member for the Mission District Council. All terms are for three years, and a nomination form is included in this month’s Iowa Mission District News.

According to Article 4.01 of the IA- MD Constitution *all clergy persons within the territory of the District and two lay delegates of each congregation are eligible to vote at the Convocation.* In addition, we strongly encourage congregational participation beyond the delegates and clergy. There is no cost to the event other than a free-will offering for lunch. A worship offering will also be taken and designated to a worthy domestic or international cause. The day will begin at 8:00 am with registration and a time for fellowship with coffee and refreshments. A service of Holy Communion will begin at 9:00, and the closing of the convocation will be at 3:00 pm.

To help with planning, and so that we may have appropriate name tags for delegates and visitors, we ask that you fill out the registration form below and return it, via the postal service *no later than Tuesday, September 5,* to **Pastor Christopher Staley, First Lutheran Church, 212 N. Main Street , St. Ansgar, IA.**

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*(Please fill out a separate form for each person.)*  
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Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone/email: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation & Town: \_\_\_\_\_

## Biographical Information of Nominee

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position for which you are being nominated: \_\_\_ Treasurer; \_\_\_ Lay Council Member  
\_\_\_ Clergy Council Member

Congregational Member at: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us something about yourself (*family, hobbies, etc.*)

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How do you understand your faith?

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How have you been active in the church?

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Please list one of your favorite Bible verses and tell why it has meaning for you.

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Please sign below to indicate you are willing to serve if elected and mail this completed form to the Mission District Secretary at the address below.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Mr. Craig Lease, Secretary  
Iowa Mission District, NALC  
405 7<sup>th</sup> Street N.  
Northwood, IA 50459*