



# News

## of the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church

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

October 2022

### *A Word from the Dean*

#### **“Come Ye Thankful People, Come”**

So begins a beloved hymn that we associate with the time of into which we are entering. The temperature at our house bottomed out at 32 degrees this morning, ever more leaves are turning and falling from our trees, and the fields are turning from green to brown, and some are already emptying. The season of autumn is upon us, my personal favorite, except for those days when the winds howl for days on end, and the skies turn a ghoulish gray and the air is damp with drizzle.

But today is not one of those days. Instead, the morning began with a heavy frost, but has given way to the bluest of skies. And so we, as the song would suggest, can “raise a song of harvest”. While some parts of our state continue to suffer under drought conditions, other fields are bursting with God’s bounty. And yet, if we continue in this song, we soon realize that the harvest being described is not the one that require combines and grain trucks.

Instead, the song recalls the parable of the wheat and the tares. Jesus tells of a man who planted his field with wheat and then slept. And during the night, an enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. These grew together in the field unnoticed until each began to take on their different characteristics. The man’s workers were distressed at this, and questioned the field’s owner about what had happened. He clearly had planted only wheat, and knew that the tares could be there only by the hand of the enemy.

The workers’ solution was to pull out the tares so that the wheat could continue to grow, unencumbered by the rival plantings. The owner, however, was adamant that this solution not be put into effect. His concern was that the attempt

to pull out all the tares could result in some of the wheat also being pulled out. This was entirely unacceptable. Instead, the wheat and tares were allowed to grow side by side, and only at the harvest would there be a sorting of the wheat and the tares.

This parable was one that confounded the disciples and so they asked Jesus later to explain it to them. His explanation was fairly simple. The field was the world, while the one who sowed the good seed was the Son of Man, and the good seed were the sons of the Kingdom. The enemy was the devil, who sowed sons of the evil one. The harvest was the end of the age, and the reapers would be the angels who would sort it all out so that all the sons of the Kingdom would go into the Kingdom of their Father. Although he doesn’t identify the workers whose solution was to pull out the tares during the growing season, it seems that any of us would qualify. In our zeal to rid the fields of the offending weeds, we may well end up uprooting the valuable wheat, or the sons of the Kingdom as Jesus described them. Instead, the goal was that all those good seeds must be preserved until the end of the age so that they could enter into the Kingdom of their Father. For that final day of harvest we still await, and we join in the song:

*Even so, Lord quickly come  
to your final harvest home.  
Gather all your people in, free from sorrow,  
free from sin,  
There, forever purified, in your garner to abide.  
Come, with all your angels, come.  
Raise the glorious harvest home!*

*Pastor Christopher Staley, Dean,  
Iowa Mission District, NALC*



## Hopes

*Pr. Paul Breddin  
West Des Moines, Iowa*

As I age and medical issues increase, I find I have one overwhelming hope, namely to make another trip to my homeland on the other side of the world, in order to visit my siblings and other relatives, friends, important places in my life, and the family funeral plot in the local rural cemetery, where my grandparents, parents, and many other family members are buried. The fulfillment of that hope, however, has become more and more improbable for a number of reasons.

For the Christian, however, there is one hope which is not only probable, but very definite. That hope rests and relies on the promises of God given in and through Jesus Christ. Christian hope isn't based on one's feelings, or the good deeds that one has done, or one's wants and desires. It is based entirely on God's grace and mercy.

The hymn by Isaac Watts begins and ends with the words, "O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come". Those words are like bookends or pillars surrounding the rest of the hymn. Christian hope cannot be separated from God's promises. In Holy Baptism God's Word combined with the water works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal life to all who have faith. A Christian believes God's hope-giving promise in Holy Baptism. By faith in Christ we start our life on this earth, and by hope we continue that life until we draw our final breath. In other words faith does not and cannot exist without hope in God's promises given in Holy Baptism.

Faith teaches us that there is eternal life for those who believe. Hope adds that we should

stake all that we have on that promise: I believe. I am baptized. I am forgiven. I have God's promise of eternal life and salvation. What more can one ask? Our earthly life, no matter where it takes us or the experiences it may give us, is a long journey during which we are preserved by our hope of salvation and eternal life, grounded in the promises of a loving and gracious God.

Hebrews 11:1 tells us that "*faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*". My hoped-for trip back to my homeland on the other hand is nowhere near assured, despite my wishes and desires. Too many earthly issues are standing in the way, some of which cannot be removed.

However, by faith Christians can be assured of the "hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began". (Titus 1:2). St. Paul continues in Romans 8:24. "*For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we wait for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*"

I would dearly love to have my trip home to the other side of the world, but that hope isn't assured. However, the hope of meeting my Lord and Savior when I draw my last breath is assured, because it rests on the promises of my merciful and gracious God – promises of forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation – given to me in Holy Baptism.

Thanks be to God for such a blessed assurance!

# ***This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District***

## **St. Olaf Lutheran Parish**

On September 11, the St. Olaf Lutheran Parish held a Rally Sunday Tractorcade to kick off the start of the Sunday School year. The parish held an Opening Worship Service at Norway Lutheran followed by the Tractorcade from Norway Lutheran to Marion Lutheran in Gunder. The Tractorcade included tractors, UTV's and a People Carrier to carry those not driving the route. At Marion, the parish held an Outdoor Closing Worship service followed by a Pork Dinner. There was also a Bouncy House for the kids to enjoy! It was a fun way to celebrate the beginning of the new Sunday School year!

*Pastor Marshall Hahn*



**2023 NEXUS  
Institute for Youth**

**July 16-22, 2023**

The Lutheran church needs a new generation of pastors and leaders who break the mold and lead communities of transformation. The NEXUS Institute is a week-long theology program on Grand View University's campus for high school students. It is a life-changing experience of theological learning, Christian community, and vocational exploration that exists to raise up church leaders of the future.



All applicants must be current high school students (grades 9-12) who want to grow in their faith and understanding. Applicants who are interested in or open to working in ministry someday are given preference. Applicants should want to follow God's leading in their lives and have an interest in better understanding what a difference following Jesus makes in everyday life. For more information contact Kate Faas at 515-263-6104 or [kfaas@grandview.edu](mailto:kfaas@grandview.edu). You can also check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/nexusinstitute/> or <https://www.instagram.com/nexusinstitute/>.



## Here I Stand Confession and Conviction: *Captive to God's Word*

On the eve of "All Saints' Day", October 31, 1517, the Augustinian monk, Brother Martin, post 95 statements to the doors of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. This simple act set off a chain of events that rocked the Medieval Church and changed the entire course of human history. What was it about those statements that caused such an uproar? And what was it about Brother Martin that brought him to that decisive moment in his life?

As Lutheran Christians, we are probably all familiar with Martin Luther's story and many of the events that led to the Reformation. However, whenever we consider historical events, they may seem almost unreal, and the people who instigated them, and lived through them, "bigger than life". When we read "just the facts", the needs, fears, hopes and weaknesses of people may get lost in the mists of time. The people and events may not seem plausible, and we forget that there was suffering, uncertainty, and the possibility of failure that people had to work through, and somehow overcome, as they lived through the day-to-day events that eventually became historical facts. Statues of Luther holding an open Bible depict a man of confidence and strength. Pictures of him nailing the 95 theses onto the doors of the castle church show a monk whose demeanor is resolute and determined. Even the stories of Luther's early fears and inability to find peace with God are overlaid by his later certitude and trust in the Lord.

We are approaching the annual celebration of the Reformation—a day that changed the world. We might wonder what it was that gave courage to the young monk nailing the sheets of hand-written statements to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg in the fall of 1517 and standing in opposition to the most powerful monarch of his time at the Diet of Worms in the spring of 1521. What deep reserve of faith and certainty led him to say these words to men who had at their disposal all the secular authority and military power in the world of his time: "*Since then Your Majesty and your lordships desire a simple reply, I will answer without horns and without teeth. Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me.*

*Amen.*"? (p. 144, *Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther*, Roland H. Bainton, Abingdon, Nashville, 1978) As we consider Luther and his words, we also might be asking ourselves if we, too, could have stood as courageously against all these powerful men.

The key to Luther's courage is in his statement: "*My conscience is captive to the Word of God.*" Our Lord once told those who turned away from Him that "*Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin*" but that "*if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.*" (John 8:34, 36) Luther's early struggles and the answers he found in the Scriptures had convinced him beyond all doubt that the Lord Jesus had utterly destroyed the power of Satan and sin in His death and resurrection, and that our love and trust in Christ, the incarnate Word of God, was the only thing that can bring forgiveness, life, and salvation. God cannot be bribed with indulgences, so-called good works, or any other humanly devised plan or action. From the time he came to this understanding of God's righteousness and love, Luther was no longer captive to his own fears or efforts to redeem himself but was held in the love of Christ and in captivity to his Redeemer. The powers of human rulers are nothing in the eyes of the Lord. Psalm 33:16-20 lays it out clearly: "*A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save. Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death.... Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and shield.*" And Jesus affirmed this as well, when He told His disciples, "*do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*" (Matthew 10:28)

There are many who have "head knowledge" of the Lord and can easily quote Bible verses without feeling drawn to respond to His claim on their lives. But to know about God is different from knowing God. According to what our Lord Jesus says in John 8, consciences that are bound to self-will are still in bondage to sin. But the one who loves and trusts in the Lord, whose conscience is "held captive" by the Word of God, is set free to live for Christ alone.

*Pastor Barbara M. Wills*

# Announcements

## Upcoming Events

**October 8, 2022**—9 am—Iowa Mission District Council meeting.

**July 16-22, 2023**—NEXUS Institute - Grand View University, Des Moines, Iowa

**August 7-11, 2023**—NALC Luther Week (convocation) - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

**2023 Iowa Mission District Convocation**—Faith Lutheran Church, Monona, Iowa (date to be determined)

## Please Pray for:

**Pastor James Puotyal** who is awaiting a kidney transplant.

**Pastor James Glesne** who is undergoing treatments for Multiple Myeloma.

**Amy Cooper** and her family as she continues to deal with cancer.

When sending **correspondence** to the NALC please use the following address:

NALC Office  
2655 Innsbruck Drive, Suite A  
New Brighton, MN 55112-9304

Please send **donations** to this address:

North American Lutheran Church  
PO Box 860565  
Minneapolis, MN 55486-0565

## 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 Gary Burkhalter at **312 E Mission St, Strawberry Point, IA 52076**.

Correspondence for Pastor Solveig Zamzow, Mission District Secretary, should be sent to **619 Elm Avenue, #309, Story City, IA 50248**

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).



## Congregations of the Iowa Mission District

Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Pastor David Craig  
Avoca: **Trinity**, Pastor Matthew Bahnfleth  
Badger: **Badger Lutheran**, Pr. Scott Meier  
Boyden: **St. John**, Call Process  
Des Moines: **Unity Evangelical Lutheran**,  
Pr. Donna Joseph; Pr. Diane Joseph  
Dorchester: **Waterloo Ridge**, Call Process  
Eagle Grove: **Evangelical Lutheran**, Pr. Jason Cooper  
Eagle Grove: **Samuel Lutheran**, Call Process  
Ellsworth: **Trinity**, Pastor Jon Rollefson  
Emmons, MN: **Emmons**, Pastor Ryan Henkel  
Gilmore City: **First**, Tracy Nerem, Lay Minister  
Grafton: **Emmanuel**, Call Process  
Greene: **St. John (Vilmar)**, Call Process  
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. David Klappenbach  
LeMars: **St. John**, Pr. Chris Meier  
Manchester: **First**, Pr. Tony D. Ede  
+Monona, **Faith**: Pr. Mel Harris  
Northwood: **Peace**, Pr. Barbara Wills  
Palmer: **St. John's Lizard Township**,  
Marlene Nimke, Lay Minister  
Plainfield: **St. John**, Call Process  
Readlyn: **St. Matthew**, Pr. Jean Rabary  
Readlyn: **Zion**, Pr. Jean Rabary  
Robins: **Servants of Christ**, Pr. Ronald Voss  
+Rochester, MN: **Emmanuel**—Call Process  
Ruthven: **Zion**, Eric Patten, Lay Minister  
St. Ansgar: **First**, Pr. Christopher Staley  
+St. Charles, MN: **Trinity**, Pr. Douglas Hedman  
St. Olaf: **Norway**, Pr. Marshall Hahn  
Sheldon: **St. Paul**, Pr. Dan Baker  
Spencer: **Trinity**, Pr. Renae Behrends  
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



### Iowa Mission District Leadership

Pastor Christopher Staley Dean—  
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### Disaster Response Coordinator:

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### Mission District Communicator

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Pastor Barbara Wills—  
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*The Iowa Mission District  
has 38 congregations.*

### Pastors available for pulpit supply:

Pastor Natacha Kemp—(507) 358-7741  
Pastor James Glesne—563-380-8110  
Pastor Andrew Loomis—712-298-6587  
Pastor Jack Miller—507-798-2408  
Pastor Paul Weeg- -641-381-0675  
Pastor Mike Wikstrom—480-203-1556 (LCMC)  
Pastor Solveig Zamzow—641-903-9416

Pastor Tim Nappe is also available for pulpit supply. His primary focus is his ministry with "Reaching the Unreached", and he will share information about this mission work whenever he does pulpit supply for a congregation.

9 Contact information: 712-331-4245. Or email at [pastortim.milford@gmail.com](mailto:pastortim.milford@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).*

