



News

of the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church

www.iowamissiondistrict.com

July 2022

A Word from the Dean

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)

Years and years ago, it was very common that soldiers were given tiny scripture books that would easily fit in a pocket. Most such books contained the New Testament, the Psalms, and Proverbs. While a person could easily read through chapters of the books of the New Testament and the Psalms, the book of Proverbs was more like a box of chocolates. Sometimes one or two verses would contain nuggets of wisdom that would be easy to understand and easy to remember. The book of Proverbs is attributed to King Solomon, a man who was granted great wisdom by God upon his becoming king (although one might question the wisdom of having 700 wives in addition to 300 concubines).

It is this particular nugget, however, that has been on my mind. Pride is a word that has used quite a bit, particularly in the month of June. There have been parades and other festivities in which many have reveled in many things that God’s Word teaches are abominations. When St. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, he was greatly upset with reports he was hearing from there. He wrote: *“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, . . . And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn?”* (1 Corinthians 5:1, 2). Having heard the Gospel of grace, there were some in that church who understood this to mean it was lawful to do anything, even those things expressly forbidden by God’s Word.

But as the calendar turns from June, there will be a little less of these displays, though they aren’t likely to go away entirely as the culture

has become so immersed with the need to celebrate these things.

On the other hand, as we turn to July, another flavor of pride will be heralded. And in this case, it is often most deeply felt by those who were offended by the pride exhibited during the month of June. As our nation prepares to celebrate its independence yet again, the pride of being an American is on full display. The song by Lee Greenwood by a similar name has become nearly as beloved as our National Anthem and “God Bless America”. And while we enjoy many freedoms in our country because of the careful ways in which our founders constituted our nation, we should be careful that this gratitude for those founders and for the many who have fought and died in various battles to maintain those freedoms does not blossom into full pride.

We read in Jeremiah 9:23–24: *Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”*

Instead of pride, ought we not to be thankful to God, and ought not this thankfulness lead to lives lived in and through and for Christ? As we consider the many things for which we would be grateful, let us always remember and boast in the one from Whom such blessings flow.

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

This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District

First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Manchester, Iowa

Below: Pastor Tony D. Ede shares the Gospel with the younger members of the congregation on Pentecost Sunday. Right: Following the worship service that day, new confirmands process from the sanctuary behind Pastor Tony.



Mission in Christ Lutheran Church Strawberry Point, Iowa

Right: The church building receives a little stonework "curb appeal" from congregational members Chris Schlee and his son, Zane. Chris is also a member of the Iowa Mission District Council. Below: Pastor Gary Burkhalter, Mission in Christ's pastor, is accompanied by his confirmation student as they lead a funeral procession to the cemetery.



This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District continued

Iowa Mission District Pastors/Lay Ministers' Retreat 2022

Pastors and lay ministers met for the annual retreat of the Iowa Mission District at the Best Western Starlite Village in Fort Dodge, Iowa, on June 6-7. Pastor Gary Burkhalter presided at the opening worship, and the Reverend Doctor Chris Croghan, from Luther House of Study, preached on the Gospel text for Holy Trinity Sunday. Dean of the Iowa Mission District, Pastor Christopher Staley played the piano for our opening worship and presided at the other worship services during the retreat.

Professor Croghan was also the presenter of the theological discussion on Monday evening. His presentation was based on Romans 3:21-22: "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe...." On Tuesday morning he also shared information about the Luther House of Study and their Master of Divinity program.

In addition to offering pastors and lay ministers the opportunity to connect with each other and offer mutual support for ministry, the retreat helps keep them informed about Mission District and NALC news. Also on Tuesday morning, Pastor Staley gave an update on his ministry as our Dean and the latest news from around the North American Lutheran Church.





Our Hope Is Built

*Pr. Gary Burkhalter
Mission in Christ Lutheran Church
Strawberry Point, Iowa*

Some years ago, I was blessed to have as my professor in Lutheran hymnody the gifted hymn writer, commentator, and theologian, Gracia Grindal. Professor Grindal remarked several times throughout the course that as worshippers we tend to sing what we believe, and believe what we sing. The first part of that merely states the obvious; singing is a natural expression of the human soul and spirit. That which fills our hearts tends to ^{naturally} burst forth from the human instrument, the voice.

It is the second half of her observation that should give us pause, that we tend to believe what we sing. It is the reason that especially as Lutherans we are careful about the hymns we adopt into the divine service. It is deceptively easy for snippets of questionable theology to lie just beneath the lyrics of songs that on the surface may seem delightfully pious. It is always the goal in Lutheran hymns to make sure that God is the actor of every verb and the subject of every sentence. This is because as sinful creatures, it is frighteningly easy for us to slip into singing about what we are doing rather than what our triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is doing, has done, and will do for us. We are not partners alongside Christ Jesus in our salvation! The only thing we bring to the table is our sin which made it necessary!

With the theme of this year's articles being hope, it is intriguing to note that within the Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW), not counting other forms such as *hopes*, *hoped*, *hoping*, etc., just the word *hope* occurs 97 times, but I'd like to consider its use in one hymn in particular: *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*, number 294.

*My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.*

*[Refrain]
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.*

The hymn text was written by Edward Mote, and as the refrain hints, is based on Jesus' parable of how the wise person who not only hears Jesus' words but acts on them is like the astute contractor who builds on rock, not sand.

But I'd like to focus for a moment on the first verse. The opening phrase is an example of attention being paid to good theology. Notice the passive tense of the verb: *my hope is built*. The author is not declaring that he has decided to trust, or that he is choosing to hope. Use of the words *is built* indicate that Someone apart from or outside himself is doing the building!

The next words – on nothing less – suggest the superlative quality of the foundation of Jesus' blood and righteousness. The connotation is also that there is nothing more than this foundation: it is the blood and righteousness of Christ alone – nothing more, nothing less!

The next phrase, *no merit of my own I claim*, speaks to what Luther calls our alien righteousness; it is not our own, but like Abraham, it is ascribed or attributed to us by Christ Jesus. It reflects the truth declared by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians: *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The final phrase before the refrain – *But wholly lean on Jesus' name* – combines two of my favorite scripture passages: Proverbs 3:5-6 and Acts 4:12. The Proverbs text cautions us not to *lean on* anything other than the Lord, while Acts declares there is *no other name* under heaven by which we must be saved.

The *hope*, the firm expectation and anticipation of the Christian is not the *sinking sand* of mere improvement, but the *solid rock* of a new creation in Christ Jesus.



Here I Stand Confession and Conviction: *Hallowed Be Thy Name*

When our Lord Jesus taught His disciples the prayer that we call “The Lord’s Prayer”, it was in response to their request: “*He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’*” (Luke 11:1) The disciples had seen Jesus pray often, and He also spoke to them about praying. Last month we talked about the opening address of this beautiful prayer, “*Our Father who art in heaven.*” After addressing the Lord God as our heavenly Father, we pray, “*hallowed be thy name.*” I don’t think it’s a coincidence that this was the first petition of the prayer that Jesus taught. First things first! The first three commandments of the Ten Commandments define who God is and how we are to relate to Him. The same is true of the first few petitions of the Lord’s Prayer: Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done.... When we pray, it is in the context of this sacred relationship.

It is important to know who we’re addressing when we speak to someone and to acknowledge our relationship with that person. We speak in different ways to our parents, siblings, spouses, children, friends, bosses, doctors, and others. Our language may be more relaxed with family members than with strangers, and we show greater respect to those in positions of authority. Last month we considered our “child to parent” relationship with the Lord of all creation—that as our Father, we can approach God on the basis of being “family”—we do so with a sense of trust and expectation, but also with respect. Now we consider Who our Father in heaven is *in His Being*.

In the first Commandment, the Lord says, “*I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods.*” Being God is no small thing—the CEO of a large corporation is small potatoes when compared to the Creator and Lord of the entire created order. The president of a powerful country, a king, even an emperor, is nothing at all next to the Lord God. He alone embodies all holiness, power, purity, intelligence, wisdom, patience, love—all that is good, noble, vast, eternal—there is no end to His attributes and abilities. As the psalmist says, “*By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps*

in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood forth.” (Ps. 33:6-9) Thus, when we approach the Lord in prayer, we do so humbly and with a recognition of His holiness and authority over us and all creation. The second commandment says we shall not take the name of the Lord our God in vain, which means that we are to keep His name holy. So we pray, “*Hallowed be thy name.*”

In the Small Catechism, Luther says, “*God’s name is holy in itself, but we ask in this prayer that we may keep it holy.*” Then he goes on to say that God’s name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and also when we live in accordance with it. (How often do we consider that our actions often speak more loudly than the sounds that come from our mouths?) But considering the second commandment, keeping the Lord’s name holy also involves the words we speak in our daily conversations. In his explanation of the second commandment, Luther says that we are not to use the Lord’s name superstitiously, nor should we use His name to curse, swear lie or deceive. It’s a good practice as we pray this petition in the Lord’s prayer to pause a moment and do a personal inventory of the ways in which we’ve used the Lord’s name. Too often I hear the words “God d_m_” in tense situations. “Oh God!” or “Christ Jesus!” also comes quickly from people’s mouths when they aren’t praying. The Lord’s name is holy and should only be used respectfully and reverently. When we truly love another person we are pained to hear them being put down or referred to in ways that belittle or betray them. How much more should we honor the name of our God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Finally, keeping the Lord’s name holy is an invitation to give Him thanks and praise for all His mercy and grace. The Psalms give us many examples of ways in which we can hallow the Lord’s name. Psalm 146 is one of my favorites: “*Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have being.*” (verses 1-2)

Pastor Barbara M. Wills

Disaster Response Warehouse Update

Thank you for your continued support of the Iowa Mission District (IMD) Warehouse as well as the national NALC Disaster Response. Your support is greatly appreciated especially by the recipients of your donations.

As I mentioned a couple of months ago, a fully stocked warehouse has 500 of each of the items: Bibles, Flood Buckets, Health Care Kits, Quilts & Blankets, and School Kits (500 *each* Elementary and High School).

I recently took 53 Health Care Kits and 5 Elementary School kits to the warehouse, but we are still very short on Kits.

Can you help restock the warehouse? If each congregation in the IMD could commit to putting together 15 Health Care Kits, 15 Elementary School Kits and 15 High School Kits, we can restock our warehouse rather quickly! In July & August we will begin seeing school supplies on sale.

What happens once you have your kits ready to go? You can either mail them to the warehouse (11530 Highway 52 SE, Chatfield MN 55923) or contact me (Betty Burkhalter 815.323.9999 – call or text) and I will come pick them up and get them to the warehouse for you!

Not able to put the kits together? You can make a financial donation to this project by mailing a check to me and I can purchase the items and assemble the kits for you. Financial donations for this project can be sent to Mission In Christ, Attention Betty Burkhalter, 312 E Mission Street, Strawberry Point IA 52076). Make your check payable to Mission In Christ with a note in the memo IMD Warehouse Kits. Bethany Lutheran in Laurens recently took advantage of this, and it worked great!

I have estimated each Health Care Kit and School Kit, fully assembled, comes in around \$15 per kit.

Reminder: Let me know who in your congregation will be your Disaster Response contact.

Betty Burkhalter
Disaster Response Coordinator

What's in a kit? Here is the link to the listing from The NALC's website:
https://thenalc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/NALC-DR-Kits_rev_Feb2021.pdf

Announcements

Upcoming Events

July 25—August 1, 2022—Youth Mission Trip to southern Louisiana for hurricane relief. Youth who have finished one year of confirmation through grade 12 are eligible to go. Cost is \$400 per youth with non-refundable deposit of \$150 to reserve a seat on the bus due by April 1. Every congregation sending youth must send an adult—one adult per five youth. More information is in the article on the second page of this newsletter. Trip organizer, Pastor Tony D. Ede—tonyede@gmail.com.

August 5-6—NALC online convocation. Register at <https://thenalc.org/event/2022-online-mission-convocation/?preview=true>. The cost is \$25, and the meetings will be from 5-8 pm on Friday the 5th and noon-3 pm on Saturday the 6th.

August 27, 2022—Iowa Mission District Convocation at Zion Lutheran, Ruthven, IA. The registration form can be found near the end of this newsletter. Nominations are also needed for Mission District Secretary, lay Council member and Clergy council member. That form is also found near the end of the newsletter.

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

Please Pray for:

Pastor James Puotyual 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 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.

Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

Saturday, August 27, 2022
Zion Lutheran Church, Ruthven, Iowa

The 2022 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at Zion Lutheran Church, Ruthven, Iowa, on Saturday, August 27, 2022. Our theme is “Hope”, and we are pleased to have Eric Riesen, North American Lutheran Seminary President 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 business session to conduct the necessary business of the Mission District. As you prepare for the convocation, please be thinking of nominations for *Secretary (either Clergy or Lay), Lay representative and Clergy representative*. Each is for a three year term. A nomination form will be included in this month’s Iowa Mission District News. Please get permission from the nominees before submitting their names. The nominees will need to complete the nomination form and mail it to Mission District Secretary, Craig Lease (405 7th Street N., Northwood, IA).

Please Note:

According to Article 4.01 of the IA- MD Constitution: “***Delegates with voting privileges at a Convocation shall be the ordained ministers of the NALC within the territory of this Mission District and [two] lay delegates from the member congregations***”. In addition, we strongly encourage congregational participation beyond the delegates—visitors are welcome! There is no cost for 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 3:45 pm.

Junior High and High School youth are also encouraged to attend the convocation. It is hoped that we can have youth attendees on a regular basis to promote their interest and involvement in the Church beyond their home congregations.

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 mail to **Kathy Scharnhorst, Registrar, at 1594 Garden Avenue, Waverly, IA 50677**. It is most helpful in keeping track of registrations if each person being registered is listed on a separate sheet. If you wish to submit your registrations via email, please fill out the form and send the information as an attachment to **kscharnhorst51@gmail.com**.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and/or email: _____ / _____

Congregation & Town: _____

Clergy _____ Lay Delegate _____ Visitor _____ Youth _____

Biographical Information of Nominee

Name: _____ Date: _____

Position for which you are being nominated: _____

Congregational Member at: _____

City: _____

Occupation: _____

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

How do you understand your faith?

How have you been active in the church?

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

Please sign below to indicate you are willing to serve if elected and mail this completed form to:

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

Signature

Congregations of the Iowa Mission District



Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Dan Buhs, Lay Minister
Avoca: **Trinity**, Call Process
Badger: **Badger Lutheran**, Pr. Scott Meier
Boyden: **St. John**, Pr. Mark Jamison
Des Moines: **Unity Evangelical Lutheran**,
Pr. Donna Joseph; Pr. Diane Joseph
Dorchester: **Waterloo Ridge**,
Pr. Bill Odermann; Pr. Diane Odermann
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
(Pr. David Schafer, Interim)
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
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**, Pr. Kim Thacker
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—
cbstaley@netins.net
Craig Lease, Secretary—
pdlease@gmail.com
Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer—
pqburkhalter52@hotmail.com

Mission District Council Members:

Pastor Ronald Rasmussen—
bigras73@fmctc.com
Pastor Tony D. Ede—
tonyede@gmail.com
Pastor David Klappenbach—
klappenbach98@rpt.coop
Chris Schlee—
schleemasonry@hotmail.com
Lyle Hollander
hollander@frontiernet.net
Dean Armstrong—
jdedarmy@laurens-ia.com

Disaster Response Coordinator:

Betty Burkhalter
bettyburkhalter@hotmail.com

Mission District Registrar

Kathy Scharnhorst
kscharnhorst51@gmail.com

Mission District Communicator

(newsletter editor/web master):
Pastor Barbara Wills—
barbaramwills@gmail.com

*The Iowa Mission District
has 37 congregations.*

Pastors available for pulpit supply:

Pastor James Glesne—563-380-8110
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. Contact information: 712-331-4245. Or email

9 at pastortim.milford@gmail.com

The Iowa Mission District website may be found at: 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.