



News

of the Iowa Mission District
of the North American Lutheran Church

www.iowamissiondistrict.com

August 2020

A Word from the Dean

PRAYING HANDS

“By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”—John 13:35

Albrecht Durer was a famous artist from the 16th century. While studying his art, Durer and a friend roomed together. Both showed promise as artists, but the meager income they earned on the side was not enough to pay the rent, food and other expenses. So they decided that one would go to work to support the other in his studies. Durer offered to go to work first but his friend insisted that Durer finish his studies while he worked.

In time, Durer completed his studies and became an accomplished artist and engraver. Returning to his room one day, he announced that it was time for him to go to work so his friend could study art. However, by this time his friend's hands had become so rough and swollen from his handwork he could no longer hold and use a paintbrush with the skill he once had. His career as an artist had ended.

Durer was extremely saddened by his friend's disappointment. One day upon entering the house he heard his friend praying with his hands held in a reverent attitude. At once, he knew what he could do to create a lasting tribute to his friend's generosity and sacrifice. Durer's picture, entitled "Praying Hands" became his most famous work, and has been reprinted countless times as an illustration of simple, profound faith and reverence.

It is a reminder to each of us that the simplest, most humble act can have the most profound effect when done in love and service for another. With the pandemic we have been facing and the unrest and turmoil taking place in our country it is understandable for people to become focused on their own personal worries and cares. With the forced isolation and limited contact with others it is easy to turn inward in our thoughts and actions. In such a time it is more important than ever to find ways to reach out to one another. Sometimes it just takes a word, a call, or a friendly note to be reminded that there are others who care about us.

I received just such a note the other day – nothing earth-shattering or urgent, just a note saying, "I am thinking about you." It made my whole day. Even with the limitations on our contacts with one another, there are many ways that we can show our care for each other – and show that we are disciples of our Lord.

Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean, Iowa Mission District, NALC



Sola Fide—The Object of Faith

*Pr. Christopher Martin
St. John's Lutheran Church Vilmar
Greene, Iowa*

Many years ago when I was serving a parish in rural south-central Pennsylvania, I spent a lot of time visiting a woman named Helen. Helen was a life-long member of our small, rural congregation in the mountains of south-central Pennsylvania, and had served as our treasurer there for longer than anyone could remember. Helen had been being diagnosed with Stage IV ovarian cancer. I spent many months making many trips to visit her in hospitals, and long-term care facilities, as her condition took her and her family on many ups and downs before her death 9 months after her diagnosis. In a moment of time where Helen could have easily been angry or frustrated about her situation, every time I visited her, she always simply said “I trust in my savior, Jesus and His gifts of life and salvation. I’m not afraid of what’s to come, and I’m at peace with whatever happens.” The nurses and doctors that took care of her often would share with me how much they loved being able to care for Helen, because she wasn’t afraid to share a word of hope and a word about Jesus, and would often invite them to be a part of our devotional services I would conduct at her bedside.

Over the years, I’ve heard a lot of people talk about “faith” in some way, shape, or form. But the question behind that is “what is the object of a saving faith?” Many times, we hear people talking about faith as some generic, abstract concept, but very little about the object of our faith. As a Christian, through the Word of God, we learn that the object of a saving faith is our Savior, Jesus Christ. We read in Ephesians 2: “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, ESV) The gift of faith is exactly that, it’s a gift, that is given to us by the work of the Holy Spirit through God’s Word. The Spirit leads us to fix our eyes on Jesus, who is described in Hebrews 12:2 as “the founder and perfecter of our faith.” A true Christian faith is not a faith that is focused inward on ourselves, it’s focused upward toward God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but then leads us to also be focused in daily life outward toward others.

Having been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, who suffered, died, and rose again for us to defeat the power of sin, death and the power of the devil in our lives, we are set free to love and serve others in our daily life. As the Holy Spirit takes up residence within us, we bear fruit that witnesses of the living faith in Jesus Christ that we have inside. We bear fruit such as: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. (Galatians 5:22) This fruit is not the object of our faith, nor is it the way in which we earn our way into God’s kingdom. These “Fruits of the Spirit” as we often call them, are responses to our faith so that we may build others up and share with them the object of our faith, which is our savior, Jesus Christ.

I pray that through this extremely trying time in many of our lives with this Pandemic and everything else that’s going on, we as people in the NALC and the Iowa Mission District may be used by the Holy Spirit in our everyday lives to share the object of our faith, Jesus Christ, with others in our daily lives so others may have their eyes drawn to Christ and the life, peace, and salvation that only He can provide!

Florence Vieker a lifelong member of St. John's Lutheran Church-Vilmar of rural Greene, Iowa, passed away at her home near Allison on June 25th after a several year battle with cancer. Florence had served as the church secretary at Vilmar from 1967 until late last year, and for the past 25 years, had served as one of the church's organists up until the COVID-19 suspension of services in March of this year. It is estimated she taught piano and organ lessons to thousands of young people in Butler County and the surrounding area throughout her lifetime. Florence's funeral service was held at Vilmar on July 2nd. The photo of Florence with Pastor Chris Martin was taken at her retirement celebration in December, 2019.



This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District



Before

During the past couple of years Peace Lutheran Church in Northwood has had a problem with squirrels getting into the upper front of the church. We recently contacted Window World in Mason City for an estimate. They gave us the most amazing gift! They offered to do the repairs free of charge—and also repaired the window frames on the upper level on both sides of the building. Their late co-owner, Joel Showalter, loved giving—St. Jude’s was one of his favorite charities—and in honor of his memory, his wife, Katy, continues the tradition. We are a most grateful recipient of their gracious generosity!



After

Since the Iowa Mission District Convocation has been moved to on line, the disaster relief donations will be picked up at Mission In Christ in Strawberry Point only.

The truck will be in Strawberry Point on Friday, September 18 and will leave on Sunday, September 20. Feel free to bring your donations to Mission In Christ between now and Saturday, September 19. Please give me a call or send me a text to 815.323.9999 letting me know when you will be bringing your items by. I will need to be certain the church is open.

To make the loading of the truck easier, it would be very helpful if your donations (other than flood buckets, rakes, shovels and hoes) are in a box that has been labeled with its contents and taped shut. Pack completed kits with like items together: baby care kits in one box, school kits in another box, etc. Clearly label the contents in large block letters. Please also complete the Donation Log which is included with this newsletter.

Also included with the newsletter is a NALC Tax Deductible Receipt for you to use if needed.

NOTE: There are a variety of lists of the items needed floating around. The current listing of the kit contents (baby care kits, flood buckets, health kits and school kits) is on the NALC website (www.thenalc.org). In addition to the kits, blankets, quilts, Bible and gift cards (Home depot, Lowe’s, Walmart, etc.) are always needed.

Thank you for your support!

Betty Burkhalter
bettyburkhalter@hotmail.com
815.323.9999



Above: On Sunday, July 19, the Reverend Marshall Hahn, Dean of the Iowa Mission District, installed the Reverend Dan Baker as Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sheldon, Iowa.



Announcements

Upcoming Events

August 7-8, 2020—NALC Convocation online. Go to www.thenalc.org to register. Visitors are free, delegates' registration is \$25.

2020 IOWA MISSION DISTRICT CONVOCATION

The Iowa Mission District Council met via Zoom for a special meeting to discuss the 2020 Convocation scheduled for September 19. At this meeting, the council decided it was not advisable to hold an in-person Convocation this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Instead, we will conduct the necessary business via email. The council decided that there were 2 items that we needed to do – Election of Council Members and Approving the Budget. The process for taking care of these items will be as follows:

ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Nominations for Council Members may be sent to Secretary Craig Lease by August 15 for any of the following positions: **Dean** **Clergy Council Member** **Lay Council Member**
Be sure to secure the person's willingness to serve and have them complete the biographical form available in the newsletter (Page 7) and mail to Secretary, Craig Lease.

The names of the nominees with their biographical information will be included in the September newsletter. ***Pastors of each congregation will inform their delegates to email their votes to Secretary Craig Lease no later than September 14.***

APPROVING THE BUDGET:

The Iowa Mission District Treasurer will send out a copy of the 2019 – 2020 Treasurer's Report and the 2020 – 2021 Proposed Budget in the September newsletter.
Approval of the Proposed Budget will also be done via email. Pastors of each congregation will inform their delegates to email their votes to Secretary Craig Lease (pdlease@gmail.com) no later than September 14. Because of the logistics involved, there would be no provision for submitting amendments to the budget. It will simply be submitted for approval.

It is unfortunate that we will be unable to meet together as the Iowa Mission District, but, as with so many other events this summer, it seemed to the council to be the best option available to us. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or any of the Iowa Mission District Council members.

Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean, Iowa Mission District, NALC

Please Pray for:

Amy Cooper (wife of Pastor Jason Cooper) who continues to battle cancer and is continuing treatments.

Pastor David Steffenson who is undergoing treatments for pancreatic cancer.

All who are at risk for getting COVID-19, those who suffer from it, all who are caring for the sick, researching treatments and preventive measures and trying to make wise decisions for the public good.

Our nation in these times of fear, hatred and violence.

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.



Sharing the Faith Grace-fully

The Witness of Zacchaeus

*Zacchaeus was a wee little man,
A wee little man was he.
He climbed up in a sycamore tree
For the Lord he wanted to see.
And as the Savior passed that way
He looked up in the tree.
And He said, "Zacchaeus, you come down.
For I'm going to your house today.
For I'm going to your house today."*

I don't know how old I was when I learned this little song, but it's been a part of my music repertoire for as long as I can remember. It's also been a part of my faith life for as long as I can remember. One of the interesting things about music is that it stays with us. I've been a chaplain in long-term care facilities and worked with Alzheimer's patients who could no longer speak, but who could sing hymns and liturgy learned long before they were old enough to understand the theological underpinnings of the song texts. This little tune about Zacchaeus was no doubt written to teach young children a Bible story without considering the long-term effects of the musical medium—that it would likely be a part of the children's lives until the day of their death. Music is a powerful way to share the faith. But that's a topic for another time. What interests me today is the witness of a "wee little" tax collector named Zacchaeus and the story of his conversion—and the witness of his faith through the ages.

We really don't know much about the man, Zacchaeus. His story is short—as was his stature. He was a tax collector, a less popular figure in ancient Israel than in 21st century America. In the first place, this Jewish man worked for the Roman government so may have been viewed as a traitor to his people. He handled Roman coins which bore the image of Caesar who was considered a god—a clear violation of the first commandment and a practice that constituted the sin of idolatry. In addition, tax collectors were notorious for "overcharging"—as long as they turned in the appropriate amount of tax to the Roman officials no one apparently asked any questions about how much extra they collected from citizens and kept for themselves. The term "sinners" might have been considered an understatement. Although

they were able to accumulate great wealth, it's doubtful they were invited to dinner parties by the more "righteous" segment of the population. And this man, Zacchaeus, was a *chief* tax collector—probably in the business for a considerable time and with others working under him.

And yet, this *sinner* was so interested in the Rabbi Jesus, that when he heard he was in the neighborhood, Zacchaeus was determined to see him. Being too short to see over the heads of the crowd of people who blocked his view of the road, this wealthy man cast aside his dignity, ran ahead of the crowd around Jesus, and *climbed a tree* in order to get a good look at the Lord as He passed by. Imagine his shock when Jesus stopped right below the branch he was clinging to and invited himself to supper! Others around Jesus and Zacchaeus who heard this exchange were also shocked—Jesus, a holy man, was about to enter the house of a sinner and pollute himself. He would be *unclean*! And others who considered themselves far more worthy of Jesus' attention were, no doubt, jealous that Jesus would choose to associate with such an unworthy fellow.

But Zacchaeus was overjoyed! He welcomed Jesus into his home. What's more, he repented of his dishonesty, making a huge donation to the poor and arranging to return to his victims four-fold any money he had gained fraudulently. This conversion story was so amazing that it ended up in Luke's gospel, and has been an inspiration and example to uncountable numbers of people through the centuries. The lesson we might learn from Zacchaeus about sharing our faith is that walking faithfully and humbly with the Lord—welcoming Him into our hearts and lives—speaks far more loudly than any number of lectures and well-planned strategies ever could. As the old saying goes, "*What you do speaks so loudly, I can't hear what you're saying.*" May what we do, and the way we live as God's people, speak loudly of His love and mercy in Christ Jesus!

Pastor Barbara M. Wills

Congregations of the Iowa Mission District

Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Call Process
Avoca: **Trinity**, Pr. Eric Meissner
Badger: **Badger Lutheran**, Pr. Scott Meier
Boyden: **St. John**, Pr. Dan Hart
Des Moines: **Unity Evangelical Lutheran**,
Pr. Donna Joseph; Pr. Diane Joseph
Dorchester: **Waterloo Ridge**,
Prs. Bill and 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**, 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. David Klappenbach
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. Dan Baker
+Sibley: **Faith**, Pr. Tim Nappe
Spencer: **Trinity**, Call Process
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 Marshall Hahn, Dean—
stolafparish@netel.net
Craig Lease, Secretary—
pdlease@gmail.com
Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer—
pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com

Mission District Council Members:

Pastor Christopher Martin—
pastorcwmartin@gmail.com
Pastor Ronald Rasmussen—
bigras73@fmctc.com
Chris Schlee—
schleemasonry@hotmail.com
Kathy Scharnhorst—
gaf@butler-bremer.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 Paul Breddin—515--528-2284
Pastor James Glesne—563-380-8110
Pastor Jack Miller—(507) 798-2408
Pastor Paul Weeg- -641-381-0675



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 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.

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

DONATION LOG

Date	Name and Address of Donator	Organization or Congregation & City	Item(s) Donated	\$\$ Amount	Staff Intls
_ / _ / _	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	\$ _____	
_ / _ / _	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	\$ _____	
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NALC Disaster Warehouse
810 Main Street
Caldwell, Ohio 43724
740-509-1132
www.thenalc.org/disasterresponse
EIN: 20-2983991

DONATION RECEIPT

Name: _____

Address: _____

NALC Representative: _____ Date: _____

Donated Goods:

Monetary Donation:

Amount: _____

Thank you for your donation to NALC Disaster Response. Your support helps NALC fulfill its mission: To serve people who seek self-sufficiency, coming alongside them with spiritual, emotional and material support as they move toward independence.

The NALC Disaster Response and its staff cannot place a value on donated goods and assumes no responsibility for the value placed on donated goods. The NALC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and confirms that you received no goods or services in exchange for this donation and that your gift is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. **Please keep this receipt for your records.**