



**News
of the Iowa Mission District
of the North American Lutheran Church**

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A Word from the Dean

FEAR AND TREMBLING

“And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone for they were afraid.” - Mark 16:8

The first witnesses to the resurrection were so frightened by what they had learned and seen that they fled for their lives, afraid to tell anyone! What they discovered at the tomb was too amazing, too wonderful to be true. Yet, it was true! Jesus, who was crucified, was alive! By His resurrection, the whole world had changed. Death was overcome by life, suffering transformed into glory, despair given way to hope. Marvelous and amazing, to be sure, but hard to take in all at once. Perhaps this is why these women were frightened into silence. Perhaps it was all just too much for them. They had come to the tomb to prepare Jesus' body for a proper burial. But they were not prepared for what they found!

In a way, Easter can be a frightening day. Because it changes everything we think we know about the world. It means a new world, a new life, a new reality. In our day-to-day life we make so many accommodations and compromises with the way things are that we may be reluctant to accept anything that is so radically new. We can be frightened by it all, just as the women were. But this is the world God invites us to enter. A new world, a new creation.

There is a tradition that points to Easter as the 8th day of creation. After the Sabbath, after the day upon which God rested, after the day upon which Jesus 'rested' in the tomb, the Sunday of the resurrection is the first day of the new creation. This is when our Lord begins to make 'all things new.' At the close of the book of Revelation, there is the scene of the new heaven and the new earth that God brings in at the end of the ages. But that new world begins on Easter morning.

And we are called to be a part of that new day. As Paul writes in II Corinthians, in Christ Jesus you are "a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come." That is one of the greatest promises in all of Scripture. Because of Christ Jesus, because of His suffering and death on the cross for my sake and His victory over that suffering and death in the resurrection, I can be made new! This is what Jesus' resurrection means. It means that our lives can be transformed – our sorrows taken away, our sins forgiven, our future made secure in Christ Jesus. It can be a bit frightening to contemplate, to be sure, but it is more than a little exciting, too! We are invited into this great new adventure of our life in Christ! Christ is risen! And because He lives, we can live, too! Alleluia!

Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean, Iowa Mission District, NALC



Sola Gratia:

Pastor Daniel Hart

Romans 12:3: *For by the **grace** given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has given us -- &--*

Romans 12:6: *We have gifts that differ according to the **grace** given to us.*

Recently, a pro golfer's usual caddy couldn't make the trip so the golfer made a deal with a local caddy who knew the course. This caddy would get \$200 for a normal day as caddy. The golfer made a deal with the caddy of \$2000 up to \$5000 for the day depending how well the golfer advanced - instead of the usual 10% of the prize money his normal caddy received. Turned out that this particular golfer won the tournament! The grand prize ended up being **\$1,350,000!** This very happy Tournament Champion having received such an amazing prize for a day's work gladly wrote a check to the caddy for **\$5,000** and thanked him for his services in accordance with their agreement. Would you say that this golfer was an example of grace-filled generosity?

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Romans had a very clear vision of generosity! Paul knew how self-focused he had been before meeting the Risen Christ on the road to Damascus. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that the one we now call St. Paul was blinded on the road that day, but in fact (like all humans born into this world) he had been born blind to true reality and had remained so until that very

day. He had remained blind to the truth until he came face to face with the Risen Lord Jesus.

Agape Love, God's Love, is the love that enables a servant of Jesus Christ to actually see the needs of others. Not only that, but Agape Love also includes the passion and desire to fulfill those needs as well as one can with all the other gifts that one has access to by the amazing grace freely given us by our Creator and Redeemer. God's Love is gracious because we don't earn it, nor can we honestly claim that we deserve it. It is all gift – an awesome gift that is ours to share, always and forever.

The Apostle Paul, with open eyes and heart, joyously proclaims that all disciples of the Risen Lord Jesus the Christ have many gifts to share that graciously vary according to the amazing **grace** gifted to us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are not our own. We have been bought with the ultimate generous gift – the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. HE has graciously gifted us to be His servants on this earth we didn't choose to be born onto. It is His Grace working through His Holy Spirit that continues to call, gather, and equip His people. United as His people we are not alone nor are we helpless. For by the **grace** given to us, we His disciples are able to continue to encourage one another to see Him, follow Him, and according to the **grace** given to us, participate in the growing mission His disciples have in this His world.

This and That from Around the Iowa Mission District



Faith Lutheran Church in Monona held their first worship service in their new sanctuary on March 3rd (above left). Center: Worshipers enjoy food and fellowship in the fellowship hall, and the children seem to like their new Sunday School room (right). The dedication for the new church building is planned for June 9th at 3:00 p. m.

Events at Emmanuel Lutheran, Grafton



Above: Good food, fellowship, and items for sale marked the annual soup supper at Emmanuel on March 3rd. Then, on March 17th, Pastor Solveig Zamzow asks: “Can Lutherans celebrate St. Patrick’s Day?” She goes on to say: “In Grafton they can! Emmanuel Lutheran took another opportunity to combine worship, learning and fellowship on March 17th. The congregation gathered for a group photo after a worship service that highlighted hymns with Irish tunes. Pastor Solveig Zamzow drew the ministry of St. Patrick into her sermon based on the text of Philippians 3, “..do not live as enemies of the cross of Christ”. After worship about sixty persons came together in the Fellowship Hall for a Power Point presentation on the life and ministry of St. Patrick. Thanks to Pastor Zamzow’s spouse, who is a Reformation scholar, the presenter, Council member Merlin Bartz, was able to make a ‘Luther connection’ to the good Saint. The morning closed out with a catered Irish Dinner of Corned Beef, cabbage and potatoes.”



Steadfast In God's Word *Praise the Lord! Alleluia!*

When I was in my late teens—well over fifty years ago—I came across an old, non-Lutheran, catechism in a long-ago Sunday school room. Never having seen a catechism, it intrigued me, and I began to glance through it. The very first question was (and I paraphrase because I can't remember the exact wording): “**What is man's purpose?**” The answer: “**To love God and worship Him forever.**” I had been raised in a denomination that put a great deal of emphasis on Bible study and reading, and knew my Bible fairly well by then, but I had never heard the purpose of my *being* put into such a direct and succinct formula. In fact, if I had been asked my purpose by anyone, I would more likely have identified it this way: “Obey God's commandments and don't make Him mad.” The message to love God and worship Him was forever burned into my memory.

What does it mean to love the Lord and worship Him? When we read the Old Testament, most of us seem to concentrate mostly on the Commandments the Lord gave to Moses, and mostly the ones that talk about our neighbor. What we seem not to notice is that the commands concerning our neighbor are on the “second table” of the Law, and all are grounded in our obedience to the first three commands concerning our relationship with the Lord. The first eleven verses of Exodus 20 are instructions about faithfulness to the Lord—having no other gods, using the Lord's name only in respectful and appropriate ways, and setting the seventh day apart as a “sabbath to the Lord”. It was to be a holy day, set apart for rest and worship. Only nine verses address our relationships with other people, and they are shorter, giving less detail about how this is to be done.

While we can't separate our love for the Lord from our love for our neighbor—Jesus makes that clear in Matthew 25 when he says that whatever we do for another person we're actually doing for Him (verses 40 & 45)—nevertheless, God comes first, and if we do not give Him appropriate worship, we will be unable to love our neighbor in healthy and God-pleasing ways.

Many of the Psalms call us to worship—to recognize God's sovereignty over us, His provision for our needs, and to give Him the thanks and praise He deserves. The word worship means to show reverence and adoration; the word glorify means to praise and worship. The psalms tell us how to do these things. Psalm 100 is a call to worship:

“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the lands!

² *Serve the LORD with gladness!*

Come into his presence with singing!

³ *Know that the LORD is God!*

It is he that made us, and not we ourselves;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

⁴ *Enter his gates with thanksgiving,*

and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him, bless his name!

⁵ *For the LORD is good;*

his steadfast love endures for ever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.”

Some of the psalms are songs of praise, recounting numerous reasons for us to give thanks to the Lord—Psalms 40, 99, 106, 136, 139, and 147 are just a few that can be used as prayers in this way. Others give instructions on ways to do it—through singing and playing musical instruments (Psalms 149 and 150) for example. As we use Holy Scripture to guide us in our praise of the Lord, we grow in our understanding of what it means that the Lord loves us, and may discover new ways to express our love for Him. Among the methods possible for praying the psalms, we may read the psalm aloud, pausing to contemplate how each verse applies to our 21st century situation and how the Lord protects, saves, and provides for our needs as He did the for the needs of the ancient Israelites. We might try singing simple chants (suggested psalm tones are on pages 290-291 in the front of the LBW), letting the rhythm of the music carry our words of praise to the Lord. Or we can use a journal to write out the psalm verses and add our own thoughts, insights and personal reasons for praise. And when you gather in worship with other Christians, *sing* the liturgy and hymns! Many of our liturgical responses and a number of hymns are based on particular psalms or other passages of Scripture.

As a former monk, Martin Luther also prayed the Psalms and there are a number of resources that indicate how he understood them and used them in his own life of faith. Two books that share some of Luther's commentary about the Psalms are from Concordia Publishing House: [Psalm by Psalm](#), and [Reading the Psalms with Luther](#).

The Lord wants to hear our voices make a joyful noise! (He never said we have to be able to carry a tune!!) But however you use the psalms in prayer, remember your purpose—to “love the Lord and worship Him forever!”

Pastor Barbara Wills

Congregations of the Iowa Mission District

Ackley: Our Saviour's, Dan Buhs, Lay Minister
Avoca: Trinity, Pr. Eric Meissner
Badger: Badger Lutheran, Pr. Scott Meier
Boyd: St. John, Pr. Mark Lund
Dorchester: Waterloo Ridge, Call Process
Eagle Grove: Evangelical Lutheran, Pr. Jason Cooper;
Intern: Andrew Loomis
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. Dave 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
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. Crai
+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 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

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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