



# News

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

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

July 2023

### *A Word from the Dean*

#### **From Every Mountainside Let Freedom Ring**

Summer is a time for many things: vacations, family reunions, boating, camping, fishing, making hay, county fairs, ball games, and so forth. It is also during the summer that we, as a country, celebrate our independence. The 4th of July is a day for parades, picnics, and fireworks, and it is a time to celebrate the freedom and rights won for us as a nation.

For Christians, every day could be Independence Day since we can, each day, celebrate that we are no longer slaves to sin. As Paul wrote in Galatians 5:1, "*For freedom Christ has set us free.*" As Americans, our freedom gives us rights. As Christians, however, the freedom won for us by Jesus should not lead us to focus on our rights. Paul goes on to say in Galatians 5:13, "*Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another.*" Having been freed from our bondage to sin, we are invited to a different yoke: that of service to others.

As our country celebrates its freedom this month, let us as Christians also celebrate our freedom. We have been freed FROM: *Sin, death, and the devil.* We have been freed BY: *Grace* (God's love that He lavishes upon us, even though we do not deserve it). We have been freed THROUGH: *Faith* (given to us through the Holy Spirit, which trusts the Word of God that Jesus' perfect life and death were the all-sufficient sacrifice to pay for our sins) And we are freed FOR: *Works*, which God has prepared for us to do for our neighbor. We read all this in Paul's 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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*" Ephesians 2:8-10

In Christ,

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

#### **Iowa Mission District Council Meeting Notes**

The Iowa Mission District (MD) Council met Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Reports from the Secretary, Treasurer, Communicator, and Dean were approved.

Our Disaster Relief Coordinator, Betty Burkhalter, reported that eight families in southeast Iowa were grateful to receive disaster relief following recent tornadoes. Also reported was the need to restock our MD Disaster Relief warehouse with various items.

Upon a recommendation from Pastor Gary Burkhalter, MD Treasurer, the Council approved transferring a large portion of the checking account balance into a savings account.

Pastor Tony Ede reported on the Youth Retreat that was held at Riverside Bible Camp in April.

Dean Staley updated the MD Council on the plans for the MD Pastors' Retreat.

Further plans were made for the 2023 MD Convocation, September 16th at Faith, Monona. It was decided that the offering at the MD Convocation will be split the NALC Disaster Relief Fund and the ministry of the World Missionary Prayer League (WMPL).

The MD Youth Mission Trip is scheduled for July 24-31 for Port Charlotte, FL. Registration for the trip closed on May 1.

The canoe trip for youth and families on the Root River will be held on July 15th.

The council approved a request to reimburse Pastor Doug Hedman (Trinity, St. Charles, MN) for Interim Ministry training, not to exceed \$2,500, from the MD Scholarship Fund.

The site of the 2024 MD Convocation was discussed. Pastor Solveig Zamzow will consult with the Council of St. John, Plainfield. Possible keynote speakers were discussed.

Pastor Zamzow has agreed to make regular contact with congregations of the MD that have a vacancy.

The next meeting of the IMD Council will be 9AM on Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, at the Cabin Coffee in Mason City.



## Faith

*Pastor James Glesne  
Decorah, Iowa*

“You just have to have more faith!”

How many times have you heard someone say that or perhaps you have said that to somebody else. That little statement is loaded with a variety of meanings. It is almost too big a topic to be handled in a short article but perhaps we could focus on just a couple of thoughts regarding this word “faith”.

Now if we look at the dictionary and what it has to say it defines faith as “a complete trust or confidence in someone or something”, or “a strong belief in God or in the doctrines of religion, based upon spiritual apprehension rather than proof”. Okay, did that help? Well, maybe a little.

So often we think about having more faith as something that we do as if it is a commodity to be earned or gathered in. But is that correct?

There is an exchange between Jesus and the disciples regarding faith in the series *The Chosen*. If you have not had the opportunity to view this series I recommend it very highly. The disciples are saying to Jesus “increase our faith”. But Jesus responds to the disciple Philip by saying “It’s not about size, Philip. It’s about who your faith is in. If you are secure in your faith in God, trusting in His promises, choosing His will for your life instead of your own ....( At this point Jesus pinches His thumb and forefinger together) this sized faith is enough.”

The apostle Paul further reminds us of what God does for us in Ephesians 2:8-9: *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.”*

So often as we live our lives out day by day, we are assailed with doubts and Satan trying to divert us. It is so easy to lose hope, and yes, to think that we are losing our faith. It is exactly at this point that we need to immerse ourselves in Scripture, and to remind ourselves of what Martin Luther said: “Ask God to work faith in you, or you will remain forever without faith, no matter what you wish, say or can do.”

I am reminded of the father who at the end of his wits came to Jesus pleading that Jesus would heal his demon possessed son. He came before Jesus and said *“I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief.”* (Mark 9:24)

Once again, often we struggle to increase our faith by doing Christian works, by praying more, by reading the Bible or, by doing, doing, doing. But it is not about us and what we do but rather as Scripture reminds us by faith through God’s grace, we are forgiven. We receive the gift of salvation through faith, by faith, because of what Jesus Christ has done for us.

Here are some additional Bible verses that speak to this idea of faith.  
Matthew 21:22, Luke 1:37, 2 Corinthians 5:7, Romans 10; 17, Hebrews 11;1.



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

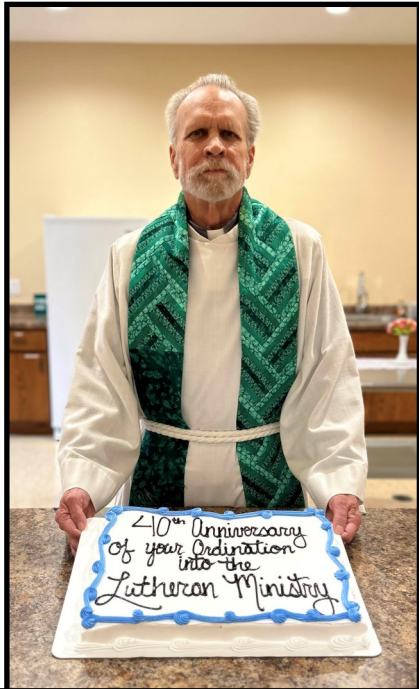


### **Iowa Mission District Pastors'/Lay Ministers' Retreat**

On June 12-13 the pastors and lay ministers of the Iowa Mission District gathered at the Best Western Plus in Waterloo for their annual retreat. Theologian for the retreat was the Reverend Doctor Mark Mattes from Grand View University in Des Moines. Dr. Mattes preached at the opening worship service on Monday, and gave a theological presentation that evening entitled "Assurance of Salvation". The annual retreat is a time for those in pastoral ministry to gather for worship, learning, mutual encouragement, and fellowship. Such times of refreshment helps to strengthen ministry in their congregations. Many thanks to Pastor Staley and Pastor Burkhalter who led the worship services and did the "behind the scenes" work to make the retreat a blessing for those who attended.



***This and That From Around  
the Iowa Mission District, continued***



**Pastor Mel Harris  
Celebrates 40 Years of Pastoral Ministry**

*Faith Lutheran Congregation celebrated with Pastor & Jacki, Pastor's 40th Anniversary of Ordination into the Lutheran Ministry on Sunday, June 11, 2023. Actual anniversary date was June 5th.*

*A special treat of cake & ice cream and other goodies, served by Faith Women's Board, was enjoyed at the fellowship time.*

*President Brent Bruns thanked & congratulated Pastor on behalf of the congregation. The gift from the congregation was a quilt as well as many written notes from the congregation's membership.*

*(from Wendy Bentien)*

**Nominations NEEDED**

**As the Mission District Convocation is drawing nearer, we still have not received any nominations for the positions on the Mission District Council. These positions are Dean (which must be a pastor in the Mission District), a Clergy Council Member, and a Lay Council Member. Nomination forms can be found in this month's issue. Please prayerfully consider if you may be called to serve in such a way, or if you would like to nominate someone else, please ask that person whether you could make such a nomination.**



## Abiding in Christ: For the Sake of Others

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* This is the first sentence in the Bible. It is also where we must begin when we ask the existential questions of life: "How did I get here?" "How do I find meaning in life?" "What is my purpose?" The list goes on, and in our modern time can take some interesting—and sometimes troubling—twists and turns. But for those of us who are Christian, we must always begin with this understanding—God created us and all things. As we read through the creation story, we find that before the Lord made humans, He made everything else—sun and moon, sea and land, plants and animals. All that we would need when we arrived on the scene was created before we got here—the scene was set, the "props" in place, those things that would be required to sustain our lives were ready and waiting. What was the purpose of the physical world that God created? It was created to sustain human life.

There is a quote that has apparently erroneously been attributed to Pope Francis, but which nevertheless expresses this important truth: *"Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves...."* The quote continues, but before we get to the rest of it, we need to consider that the purpose of these gifts of God was to sustain human life—the life of those who were created in the image of God. Why did God create us in His image? *"In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it....'"* (Genesis 1:27-28a) The orthodox Presbyterian catechism says that our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. As we read through the Bible, it becomes clear that the Lord created us in His image so we could be in relationship with Him—so we could love Him and communicate with Him, and be His children. When we turned away from the Lord to follow our own desires—eating the forbidden fruit and bringing sin, distrust and discord into the world, the Lord promised an offspring of Eve who would crush the head of the ancient evil serpent and restore us to a right relationship with our Creator. Volumes can be, and have been, written about how the Lord brought this about and what it all means. The Bible, from beginning to end, addresses this issue and its meaning. But we will fast-forward to the incarnation of Christ—God Himself coming into the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, "conceived by the Holy Spirit and

born of the Virgin Mary", coming with the sole purpose of giving Himself for our sin—to restore what we damaged by ignoring our original purpose. Taking all our sin and brokenness upon Himself, Christ Jesus went to the cross, descended into hell to crush the head of our ancient foe, and ascended to everlasting life so that we could again be in a proper relationship with the Lord God.

Throughout His ministry Jesus also taught us about who we are, *whose* we are, and our purpose for being here. Summed up in the two great commandments Jesus said that we are to love the Lord God with all our being and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We did not bring ourselves into being—we were created by the Lord God. We are not our own—we were bought with a price: *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The purpose of the created order sheds light on our own purpose in life: *"Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other."*

Who am I and why am I here? We ask these questions and go looking in all the wrong places for answers. We ask the questions and look for ways to entertain ourselves at the expense of others and use others to fulfill our desire for comfort and pleasure. Instead of beginning at the beginning—with God—we begin with ourselves. The two commandments our Lord gives us turn this around—our purpose is to love the Lord God and to share His love with others. From the beginning we were called into community—community with the Lord and with one another. Community is fractured whenever we turn inward and seek our own will. It is built up and nurtured when we seek the will of the Lord.

In John 15:10, Jesus says, *"If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."* Our purpose is to abide in the love of Christ—for the sake of our Lord and for the sake of others. In doing this we glorify God, enjoy a loving relationship with Him, and discover life's true meaning and joy.

Pastor Barbara M. Wills

# Announcements

## Upcoming Events

**July 16-22, 2023—NEXUS Institute** - Grand View University, Des Moines, Iowa (high school aged)  
**July 24—August 1—Iowa Mission District Youth Mission Trip.** Destination, Port Charlotte, Florida, to help with hurricane recovery. Cost is \$350: \$150 non-refundable deposit with registration (before May 1) and remaining \$200 due by July 1.  
**August 7-11, 2023—NALC Luther Week** (convocation) - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
**September 16, 2023 Iowa Mission District Convocation**—Faith Lutheran Church, Monona, Iowa  
**September 30, 2023—Mission District Council Meeting.** 9:00 a.m. at Cabin Coffee in Mason City.

## 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.  
**Pastor Andrew Loomis** who has been diagnosed with an autoimmune system illness. Please pray that he will be healed from his chronic pain.

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 to NALS, Disaster Relief, Great Commission Society, etc. are to be made out to the NALC with the specific fund written on the memo line of your check.*

## 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).

## Pastors available for pulpit supply:

Pastor Natacha Kemp—507-785-0412  
Pastor James Glesne—563-380-8110  
Pastor Andrew Loomis—712-298-6587  
Pastor Jack Miller—507-798-2408  
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 at [pastortim.milford@gmail.com](mailto:pastortim.milford@gmail.com)

## Mission District Pulpit-Supply Guidelines

Suggested guidelines for supply pastors in the Iowa Mission District is \$200 plus IRS recommended mileage reimbursement.







## ***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**, Pr. Jeremy Winter  
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  
[cbstaley@netins.net](mailto:cbstaley@netins.net)  
Pastor Solveig Zamzow Secretary  
[solveigzamzow@gmail.com](mailto:solveigzamzow@gmail.com)  
Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer  
[pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com](mailto:pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com)

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

Pastor Tony D. Ede  
[tonyede@gmail.com](mailto:tonyede@gmail.com)  
Pastor David Klappenbach  
[klappenbach98@rpt.coop](mailto:klappenbach98@rpt.coop)  
Pastor Ryan Henkel  
[pastorhenkel@gmail.com](mailto:pastorhenkel@gmail.com)  
Lyle Hollander  
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Dean Armstrong  
[idedarmy@gmail.com](mailto:idedarmy@gmail.com)  
Elise Patzke  
[ekbieri@gmail.com](mailto:ekbieri@gmail.com)

### **Disaster Response Coordinator**

Betty Burkhalter  
[bettyburkhalter@hotmail.com](mailto:bettyburkhalter@hotmail.com)

### **Mission District Registrar**

Kathy Scharnhorst  
[kscharnhorst51@gmail.com](mailto:kscharnhorst51@gmail.com)

### **Mission District Website Administrator**

Pastor Gary Burkhalter  
[pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com](mailto:pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com)

### **Mission District Communicator/Newsletter Editor**

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

*The Iowa Mission District  
has 38 congregations.*

**The Iowa Mission District website may be found  
at: [www.iowamissiondistrict.com](http://www.iowamissiondistrict.com).**

# Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

Saturday, September 16, 2023

Faith Lutheran Church, 19999 Pleasant Ridge Road, Monona, Iowa

The 2023 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at Faith Lutheran Church, Monona, Iowa, on Saturday, September 16, 2023. Our theme is “Faith”, and we are pleased to have the Reverend Dr. Amy Little, the North American Lutheran Church General Secretary, 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 *Iowa Mission District Dean (Clergy)*, *Lay representative and Clergy representative* to the Mission District Council. 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, Pastor Solveig Zamzow (619 Elm Avenue, #309, Story City, IA 50248).

## 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.*)

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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:

*Pr. Solveig Zamzow, Secretary  
Iowa Mission District, NALC  
619 Elm Avenue, #309  
Story City, IA 502*

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Signature