



News

of the Iowa Mission District
of the North American Lutheran Church

www.iowamissiondistrict.com

August 2021

A Word from the Dean

MEETINGS, MEETINGS, MEETINGS!!!

With all the things that I truly enjoy about life as a pastor, no list I could ever compile would include meetings among them. BUT...

What is about to take place is NO ordinary meeting. In fact, I would suggest that to call it a meeting would be a grave injustice. Instead, what we will be having is an opportunity to gather together to celebrate God's working in and among our Iowa Mission District—in worship, in prayer, in fellowship, in service, and in learning. If your last experience of a large church 'meeting' was something called an "Assembly" you have no idea how much fun a bunch of Lutherans can have together. Even Convocation seems way too tame a word to describe the revitalization that we will absolutely have that day: Saturday, September 11th, at Emmons Lutheran, in Emmons, MN.

Part of the excitement will be our being joined by our 'still new' Bishop, Daniel Selbo. Part of the excitement will be having the opportunity to bring and assemble all the supplies we have each committed to our Flood Bucket Challenge (which your church and pastor should already have received). Part of the excitement will also come

from the youth we are encouraging each congregation to bring along with their voting delegation. But, the most exciting part of the day (and I mean no offense against Bishop Dan when I say this), is simply to be all together in the same place to share our joys and sorrows, our triumphs and our challenges—to BE the very body of Christ living and active in our little corner of the world for God's greater mission to the world.

Already this past month, registration materials for this event showed up in this newsletter, and can be found here again. In case you previously passed on the opportunity to register because you thought this was going to be just another one of those long, boring meetings, I am pleased to report that registration remains open. I've also heard that there is a little football game in Ames that day, but its kickoff should roughly coincide with our dismissal, so everyone's a winner!!!

Hope to see you there!

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

This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District

St. John's Lutheran Boyden, IA



For the past number of years, we have hosted a VBS for our children and those of the First Reformed Church and Presbyterian churches in Boyden who are our partners in the Boyden Ministerial Association. We are a rural church and have playground equipment in a large play area. This makes a safe setting for a large group.

Faith Lutheran Monona, IA



Special thanks to Thelma Keehner for delivering 47 quilts to the Children's Hospital in Iowa City on July 13th. The backing fabric was purchased with Thrivent Grant Dollars from two members of Faith Lutheran NALC, Monona, IA.



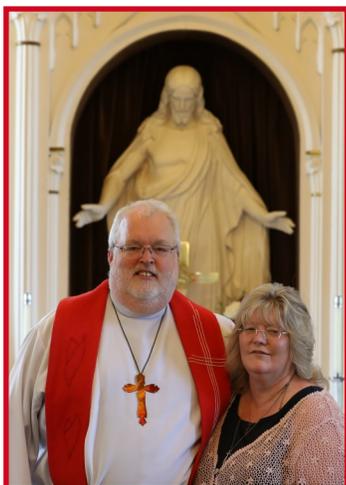
Joint Vacation Bible School

Faith Lutheran (Monona), Marion Lutheran (Gunder), and Norway Lutheran (St. Olaf) held a joint VBS this year at Faith Lutheran. Pastors Mel Harris and Marshall Hahn, and leaders from their congregations, planned and coordinated the Bible School with the help of many volunteers. On Wednesday, VBS concluded on with an outing at Turner Pointe Park in McGregor, Iowa.



Congratulations, Pastor Staley!

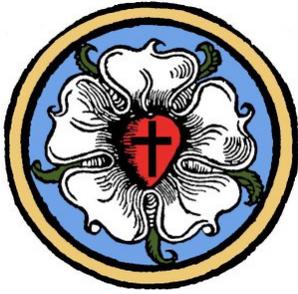
On Sunday, July 25th, Pastor Christopher Staley, the Dean of the Iowa Mission District, celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary of ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. On hand to help him celebrate were his wife, Kelly, and three children, Hannah, Phillip and Joshua—as well as the members of First Lutheran Church in St. Ansgar where he now serves, friends and members of his internship congregation, and former congregations in Luana and Ellsworth. Two local pastors who were also on hand to share this important day were Pastor Mark Hansen and Pastor Lance Kittleson. From the Iowa Mission District, Lay Minister Dannie Buhs; former Deans, Pastor Ken Kimball and Pastor Marshall Hahn; and Pastor Barbara Wills, were in attendance. Lay members of several area churches also came to wish Pastor Staley well and to acknowledge this important milestone in his ministry.



Top left: Pastor Staley and his wife, Kelly, who worked with the Anniversary Committee members to plan the reception and program following the worship service. Below left: Planning Committee members, left to right: Wendy Heuton, Janet Jorgensen, Mary Kleinwort, and Jean Lunde.



Ordinator for the worship service was Pastor Ken Kimball who led Pastor Staley in the renewal of his ordination vows. The Liturgist for the day was Pastor Marshall Hahn, Preacher was Pastor Barbara Wills, and Jean Lunde served as Lector.



“Sola”!! • Alone!! • *Solo Cristo* !! • Only Christ !! • Christ Alone!!

*Pr. Dan Hart
Sioux Falls, SD*

When the Apostle Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians, in chapter 2 verse 6 he shares “*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*” In other words, since Jesus Christ is your Lord, focus! Focus on Him! Some might say, “But that was then; this is now!” And Paul would reply “So? He is still King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and at the end of time that is what truly matters! Hold tightly to what matters for all eternity!!”

Some thirty years ago our three children were involved in the musical production of “Fiddler on the Roof” at the Dakar Academy missionary school in Senegal West Africa. The background setting is in a poor rural settlement in Imperial Russia in or around 1905. One of the teachers in the school with a loud voice played the part of Tevye the Milk Man. The story centers on Tevye, in the village of Anatevka, and his relationship with his daughters as he attempts to maintain his Jewish religious and cultural traditions as outside influences encroach upon his family's lives. He must cope with the strong-willed actions of his three older daughters who wish to marry for love. Their choices of husbands are successively less palatable for Tevye. An edict of the Tsar eventually evicts the Jews from their village. All the way through the musical, and as they leave Anatevka, the voice of Tevye repeats, “Tradition! Tradition.”

There are a lot of people who are stuck on, or prone to sing along or cry out like Tevye, “Tradition!” For Tevye, that is where his focus was. That is where his hope was bound. That’s the way he grew up. Repeating the past is where his hope was. And as reality caught up with him in Tsarist Russia it was sad! So sad!! That was

where he looked for hope.

However. More than likely, you have heard the song “In Christ Alone.” It is a popular Christian song written in 2001 by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend who live and work in the United Kingdom. The music for this song, with a strong Irish melody, is written by Getty, and the original lyrics by Townend. The theme of the song is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus is God whom even death cannot hold:

*“In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song.
This cornerstone, this solid ground. Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace.
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease. My comforter, my all in all. Here in the love of Christ I stand!”*

Note the distinct difference? The Tevyes of our world hold tightly to what was. Stuart Townend and Keith Getty put the powerful “SOLO CRISTO” proclamation to powerful, uplifting and promising music.

The Apostle Paul had not met the Christians in the cities of Colossae and Laodicea, but still, they were in his mind and on his heart. He wanted to encourage them with the greatest news ever to be told or spread! He wanted them to be able to face the future fearlessly. Why? Because Christ alone has set us free from fear! Free from the past. Christ has opened the door to eternity!

We Christians are followers of the Christ! Of Jesus, who is the Christ! On Christ, whom we can Know, Love, and Follow. Halleluia! In Christ Alone we have what we need now and for all Eternity!

A Few of My Favorite Psalms

Psalm 62

*For God alone my soul waits in silence;
from him comes my salvation.
He only is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be greatly moved.*

These opening verses of Psalm 62, repeated again in verses five and six, are both invitation and reassurance—*inviting* us to take time out from busyness, anxieties, fears, and temptations to return our focus to the One in whom we “*live and move and have our being*” (Acts 17:28); and *reassuring* us that the Lord of all creation is stronger than any person or power that might threaten us. Our world is filled with constant movement and noise, clocks built into our phones and computers, 24-hour access to even the most gruesome news “as it’s happening”, deadlines, appointments, and personal devices we carry around with us that give people from anywhere in the world continual access to us. In such an environment we can easily become overwhelmed with “sensory overload”. We often give our children “time out” periods as correctives and quiet space to calm down and “reorient” themselves. We also need such times to remember Whose we are and to give us the inner resources to faithfully follow the Lord as He calls us to do.

The invitation to *wait in silence for God alone* gives us permission to spend “time out” with the Lord. The parable Jesus told of the priceless pearl (Matthew 13:45-46) captures the essence of this invitation. The merchant in the story finds a pearl of such value that he is willing to sell all that he owns to purchase it. Sound familiar? Verse nine of the Psalm reminds us that “*Men of low estate are but a breath, men of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up, they are together lighter than a breath.*” And yet we treat the things and events of this life as if they had ultimate value and eternal significance. Each day we need some time alone with the Lord to help us keep our balance and to maintain an objective sense of what is most important in life. Only the Lord God is worthy of our total devotion and trust.

The prophet Micah reminded the people of his time that what the Lord requires of us is “*to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.*” (Micah 6:8) Walking humbly with

God includes seeking His will day by day, being willing to let go of our own agendas to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and repenting of our sins—*known and unknown, things done and left undone*. Unless we sit quietly in the presence of the Lord each day and listen to His guidance through the reading of Holy Scripture (not just reading a “third person” explanation of what a particular verse or section of the Bible says), we cannot walk humbly with God. The Lord *longs* to be at the center of our lives; to be loved by us *as He loves us*. If another person never finds time to communicate with us or to take time to be with us in some way, our conclusion is likely to be that he or she does not really care about us very much. If we never find time to be alone with the Lord, how can we say we love the Lord as much as we say we do? One of the most heartrending appeals in the Bible is what the Lord says to the people of Israel in Isaiah 65:1-2a: “*I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, ‘Here am I, here am I,’ to a nation that did not call on my name. I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people....*”

Jesus was once asked what we must do to be doing the work of God. His answer, “*This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.*” (John 6:29) Jesus also told Nicodemus in John 3:16 that all who believe in Him shall not perish. As we come to the end of Psalm 62, we find echoes of this message from our Lord: “*Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God; and that to thee, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For thou dost requite a man according to his work.*” The God of the universe is our heavenly Father Who loved us so intensely that He sent His only *begotten* Son to die for the sins of His *created* sons and daughters. He holds out His hands of love to us, begging us to come and sit patiently in His presence so that we may be strengthened, encouraged, and sustained enough to share His love and mercy with others in our sinful and hurting world.

Pastor Barbara M. Wills

Announcements

Upcoming Events

August 2-6, 2021—NALC Luther Week, Corpus Christi, TX

September 11, 2021—Iowa Mission District Convocation—Emmons Lutheran Church, Emmons, MN.

October 2, 2021—9:00 a.m.—Iowa Mission District Council meeting—Cabin Coffee, Mason City, IA

Please Pray for:

Pastor James Puotyual who is awaiting a kidney transplant.

Pastor David Schafer who is recovering from a broken ankle and scheduled for hip surgery.

Pastor James Glesne who is undergoing treatments for Multiple Myeloma

Amy Cooper (wife of Pastor Jason Cooper) who is undergoing cancer treatments and evaluation.

Pastor David Steffenson who is undergoing chemo for pancreatic 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

From the Treasurer:

Greetings in the name of Jesus!

First, a huge thank you to each and every congregation that has supported our mission district - may the Lord bless you real good!

Secondly, just a reminder that the financial or fiscal year in our district runs from September 1st through August 31st. This means we're entering the last quarter of the year. If your congregation intends

to have contributions reflected in the current year, please make sure they reach the Treasurer **no later than Friday, August 27th**, to ensure they are deposited in time.

Contributions are to be sent to:

Pr. Gary Burkhalter, Treasurer
Mission in Christ Lutheran Church
312 E. Mission St
Strawberry Point, IA 52076

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.

Flood Bucket Challenge

An exciting opportunity awaits us!!! We will be gathering for our annual Mission District Convocation on Saturday, September 11th at Emmons Lutheran in Emmons, MN. We are pleased that NALC Bishop Dan Selbo will be joining us that day. But the excitement to which I'm referring is the opportunity we have to "STUFF THE TRUCK" for our NALC Disaster Response warehouse in the Rochester area.

As Dean, I have set an OUTRAGEOUS goal of our filling 100 Flood Buckets that will be taken to our warehouse to stand ready for disasters that may occur in our area. Part of what makes this OUTRAGEOUS is that the Convocation is a mere 8 weeks away. So, in order to possibly accomplish this, we need your help, NOW!

Given that we are also inviting Youth attend this year's Convocation, part of their day will involved assembling the buckets with the needed items. If you or your congregation has already filled some flood buckets, great! If not, instead of individuals or congregations bringing completed buckets, I am asking that individuals or congregations 'sign up' to bring some aspect of the whole project. The contents of a Flood Bucket are shown at the bottom of this message.

If you can bring 10 jugs of bleach, you can sign up to do just that. It may also be that you have 'connections' with someone or some company who may be willing to donate some of the items. - Maybe your company goes through many five-gallon buckets that could be re-purposed - Maybe your employer would spring for a couple dozen bottles of Pine Sol, or pairs of gloves.

Whatever is the case, I ask you to send me an email (cbstaley@netins.net), identifying which congregation you represent and what you can bring. I will keep a running tally of what is still needed. This updated list can be found on our Mission District's NEW Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/Iowa-Mission-District-NALC-100168162357099>

The true excitement will come at our closing worship where we will have a blessing of the Flood Buckets and send them on their way. There's much more to share about Disaster Response that will be made available in upcoming Newsletters and at the Convocation.

Please JOIN this challenge. Spread the word to ALL in your congregation. If we ALL do something, we can do GREAT things altogether!!!

Each flood bucket consists of:

- 1 five-gallon bucket WITH lid (can be previously used, but need to be cleaned out)
- 1 jug bleach
- 2 large trash bags
- 1 roll paper towels
- 1 container Comet or scouring cleanser
- 1 bottle Pine Sol or liquid cleaner
- 1 scrub brush
- 1 pair rubber gloves (Playtex dishwashing type)
- 1 pair leather gloves (large)
- 1 pair cotton gloves (large)



*Pastor Christopher Staley
Dean, Iowa Mission District*

Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

Saturday, September 11, 2021
Emmons Lutheran Church, Emmons, MN

The 2021 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at Emmons Lutheran Church, Emmons, on Saturday, September 11. Our theme is “Christ Alone” and we are pleased to have Bishop Dan Selbo 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 District. As you prepare for the convocation please be thinking of nominations for Treasurer of the Mission District and the following Council positions: Two lay members (one 3 year and one 2 year to finish an uncompleted term) and one clergy (3 year). A nomination form will be included in this month’s Iowa Mission District News. Please get permission from the nominees. They will need to complete the nomination form and mail it to Mission District Secretary, Craig Lease.

According to Article 4.01 of the IA- MD Constitution *all clergy persons within the territory of the District and two lay delegates of each congregation are eligible to vote at the Convocation.*

In addition, we strongly encourage congregational participation beyond the delegates and clergy—visitors are welcome! There is no cost to 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 3:30 pm.

New this year is that we are hoping that junior and high school youth will also come with other delegates to the convocation. They will participate in a portion of the convocation, and then spend some time as a group in various activities.

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 **Pastor Barbara Wills at PO Box 202, Northwood, IA 50459** or email as an attached file to barbaramwills@gmail.com. All information requested on the form needs to be included.

(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**, Pr. Eric Meissner
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
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. Ron Voss
+Rochester, MN: **Emmanuel**, Pr. David Steffenson
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**, 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 Christopher Staley Dean—
cbstaley@netins.net
Craig Lease, Secretary—
pdlease@gmail.com
Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer—
pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com

Mission District Council Members:

Pastor Ronald Rasmussen—
bigras73@fmctc.com
Pastor Tony D. Ede—
tonyede@gmail.com
Chris Schlee—
schleemasonry@hotmail.com
Kathy Scharnhorst—
gaf@butler-bremer.com
Lyle Hollander
lhollander@frontiernet.net

Disaster Response Coordinator:

Betty Burkhalter
bettyburkhalter@hotmail.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

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.



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