



News

of the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church



www.iowamissiondistrict.com

February 2024

A Word from the Dean

Webster defines "temptation" this way: "The act of tempting or state of being tempted; an enticement to evil; that which is presented as an inducement, enticement, or allurement."

As we enter this season of Lent, our minds are filled with many different thoughts and images. One of the thoughts that stands out for many is that of the humanity of Jesus. Jesus was indeed God, but He was also very much human. And if God were ever to fully understand the human condition, He had to endure all that you and I have to endure: the joys, the pains, the struggles, and the temptations of life.

In the first Sunday of Lent, we read of what happened to Jesus right after His baptism. In Mark's account of it, the Spirit drives Him into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. We have to look at the Gospels of Matthew and Luke to learn more about the contents of these temptations. Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into loaves of bread. All of us know how scrumptious is the smell of fresh-baked bread, but Jesus, even in his hunger, refused to perform such an act to prove that He was the Son of God.

Satan then tempted Jesus to throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple to prove His trust in God, quoting a portion of Psalm, "*For he will command his angels concerning you... on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.*" As before, Jesus refused to fall to this temptation.

Finally, Satan promised to give Jesus power over all the kingdoms of the world, if Jesus would simply fall down and worship him. But, again Jesus was able again to resist the temptation, avowing His fealty to the one true God.

St. Paul refers to Jesus as the Second Adam, and contrasts the First Adam's failure to resist temptation with Jesus' ability to resist every temptation. As we are all children of Adam, we fare just as well as he did in the face of temptation. All of us may have moments when we can overcome individual temptations. But there are (many) other times when we are in a particularly vulnerable place, or when our will-power is not all it should be, that we fall into temptation.

More importantly than these earlier temptations, Jesus resisted the temptation to flee the arrest and beatings that were about to follow his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. And again, He resisted the temptation to call upon the Heavenly Host who were on high alert to rescue Him from the cross, in spite of the taunts from the crowds and the thieves being crucified beside him.

What is perhaps most compelling in each of these encounters is how Jesus never calls upon His divine powers to overcome the temptations. Instead, in the face of each temptation, He turns to His Father, His Word, and prayer: the same defenses we are given in our own strivings against the devil. And although we ultimately fail in the face of our temptations, we have a Savior Who bore all our sins on the tree that we might be dressed in His robe of righteousness and be welcomed to our eternal home.

Have a blessed Lent,

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



Valentine Ashes

Pastor Marshall Hahn

Marion Lutheran Church, Gunder, Iowa

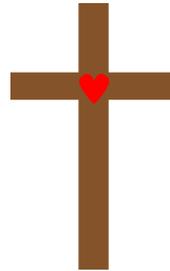
Norway Lutheran Church, St. Olaf, Iowa

*“For God so loved the world
that He gave His only Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not
perish but have eternal life.”*
(John 3:16)

February 14 is Valentine’s Day. This day is named after St. Valentine, a 3rd century Roman priest who was martyred on February 14 under Emperor Claudius II. Not much is known for certain about St. Valentine, but there are two legends associated with him. The first claims that Valentine originally got into trouble with the Roman authorities for marrying couples who were in love but could not legally get married. It seems Claudius had outlawed weddings in an effort to recruit men into his army thinking that marriage would be an obstacle to recruiting new soldiers.

The second legend concerns the daughter of Valentine’s jailer. The jailer had become so impressed with Valentine’s wisdom that he asked him to help his daughter with her lessons. The girl was blind and needed someone to read material for her to learn it. Valentine became friends with both the jailer and his daughter and before he was executed he sent the girl a letter thanking her for being his friend and encouraging her to stay close to Jesus. He signed it, “From your Valentine”.

These two legends are the reason St. Valentine’s Day has become a holiday of friendship and romance. It is why we send cards “From your Valentine” to those we care about. It is a holiday celebrating love.



This year Valentine’s Day is also Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of the season of Lent. On the surface it might appear to be a strange juxtaposition, but it is really quite fitting if you think about it. What greater love can we celebrate but the love God has shown to us in sending His Son to us to be our Savior. As Jesus has said,

“Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

(John 15:13)

Indeed, our love for one another is built upon and comes from the love God has shown to us.

“We love, because He first loved us.”

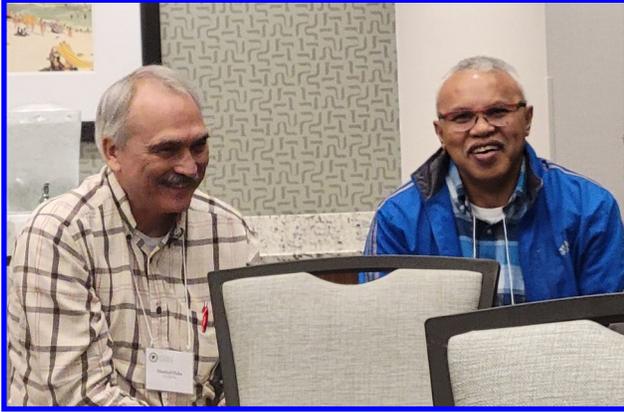
(1 John 4:19)

Whether it is the love between sweethearts, in our families, or between good friends, true love is a reflection of the self-giving, sacrificial love that our Lord has shown to us in offering up His life for our sake.

In many of our congregations the Ash Wednesday liturgy includes the Imposition of Ashes in which ashes are placed upon the congregants in the form of a cross as a sign of repentance and renewal. That cross of ashes is a visible reminder of that “greater love” Jesus has shown toward us. This Valentine’s Day as we celebrate the love we share with those we care about in our lives, may we think especially of the great love God has shown for us and for the whole world by sending His Son to offer His life for us on the cross.

This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District

NALC 2024 Clergy Retreat: *I Will Give You Rest*



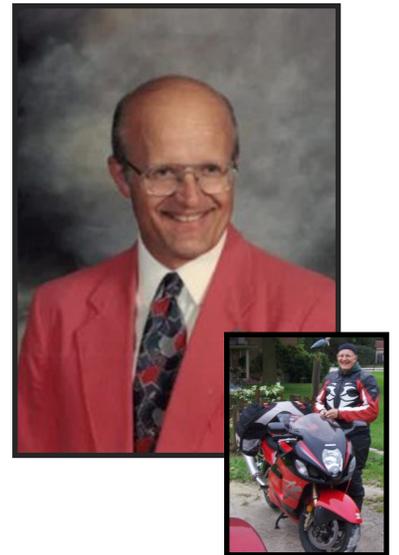
A number of pastors from the Iowa Mission District gathered in Orlando, Florida, with other NALC pastors from around North America during the week of January 15-19 to refresh themselves for ministry. The week included theological lectures and discussion, opportunities to touch base with Bishop Selbo and other NALC staff, and time for relaxation and refreshment to sustain them for ministry. At left, Pastor Marshall Hahn and Pastor Jean Rabary enjoy the opportunity for fellowship with other pastors.

Reverend David Harold Andreae

March 18, 1943—January 20, 2024

Pastor David Andreae died on Saturday, January 20th, at the Elkader Care Center. His funeral is being held at St. Sebald Lutheran Church, rural Strawberry Point, the congregation in which he was baptized and confirmed.

A 1969 graduate of Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Pastor Andreae served a three-point parish in North Dakota for twenty-two years before returning to Iowa, where he served Big Canoe and Highland Lutheran Churches in rural Decorah for twenty-two years. He retired from full-time ministry in 2013. Following retirement, he joined Old West Paint Creek Lutheran Church, and as an NALC pastor, he did pulpit supply for congregations in the Iowa Mission District. After being diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, Pastor Andreae moved into Assisted Living at the Elkader Care Center.



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NALC Dates: July 21-27, 2024

www.grandview.edu/NEXUS ➔



Pondering the Parables: The Unfaithful Steward

“[Jesus] also said to the disciples, ‘There was a rich man who had a steward, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’” And the steward said to himself, “What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that people may receive me into their houses when I am put out of the stewardship.” So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, “How much do you owe my master?” He said, “A hundred measures of oil.” And he said to him, “Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.” Then he said to another, “And how much do you owe?” He said, “A hundred measures of wheat.” He said to him, “Take your bill, and write eighty.” The master commended the dishonest steward for his shrewdness; for the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal habitations.” (Luke 16:1-9)

Sometimes our Lord’s parables leave us scratching our heads and wondering if we heard the story correctly. In many of the parables we find that the person who we assumed would be the “bad guy” turns out to be the one who repents and is held up as an example of faithfulness. But that doesn’t happen with this parable. The steward in this parable is called in by his master and told that he was being fired for wasting his master’s money and must give an account of his misconduct. At this point in the story, we might expect him to either start making excuses or to begin begging for mercy. Instead, Jesus says this guy goes to his master’s creditors and digs an even deeper hole for himself! Not only is he *not* repentant, but he adds insult to injury by implicating two of his master’s creditors in telling them to lie about what they owed. In effect, he says, “Here, you owe my master this much, let’s reduce that number and tell him you owe less than that.” And these guys fall in with the plan! Even though people have been known to try to make as much profit as possible in their business dealings, it seems almost ludicrous that they would put their reputations at risk at this point, since the steward admits to them that he’s been caught in the act of cheating his master. As many times as I’ve read or heard this parable, it still amazes me that a person might actually add to his or her crime after being found

out. Especially when this happens in one of Jesus’ parables, I keep thinking, “Did I read that right?” Shouldn’t this man be repenting? It’s almost as if he’s proud of his dishonesty.

As the story continues, my expectation is that the master going to exact a really heavy punishment on this man: Perhaps have him severely beaten. Or even throw him and his family into debtors’ prison! But the unexpected turn in this parable is dumbfounding. The dishonest steward’s master commends him!! He praises his shrewdness and cunning! Whatever can Jesus mean by holding this man’s dishonest conduct up as an example for His disciples? How can we interpret Jesus’ recommendation to “*make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon*”? This is our Lord who says that He did not come to destroy the Law and that “*not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.*” (Matthew 5:18) This is Jesus who teaches us to love one another as He has loved us—even to giving up life itself for the sake of the Gospel. At no point in His teaching does our Lord permit cheating others or taking unfair advantage of them.

Perhaps the key to this parable is in Jesus’ words that “*the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light*”. We are called to be faithful and forgiving, but not to be naïve or foolish. In Matthew 10, Jesus says, “*Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.*” (v. 6) And even though our Lord gave Himself up to be crucified for our sins, He nevertheless never trusted Himself to those around Him: “*Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he ... himself knew what was in man.*” (John 2:23-25) As followers of Christ, we are to be faithful and trustworthy because our trust is in Him alone. Jesus follows up this parable with this admonition: “*...if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*” The bottom line: We are to be as single-minded in following Christ as the dishonest steward was in following “mammon”.

Pastor Barbara M. Wills

Announcements

Upcoming Events

July 21-27, 2024—NEXUS Institute—at Grand View University, Des Moines. The week is being sponsored by the NALC. For more information: <http://www.grandview.edu/NEXUS>

August 9, 2024—NALC online Convocation—all day meeting online

September 21, 2024—Iowa Mission District Convocation—at St. John, Western Douglas

Please Pray for:

Pastor James Puotyal who is awaiting a kidney transplant.

Pastor Doug & Faith Hedman & Family as they grieve the death of their son Adam who died January 10, 2024.

Family of Pastor David Andreae who died January 20, 2024.

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.

Pastors available for pulpit supply:

Pastor Natacha Kemp—507-785-0412
Pastor Jack Miller—507-798-2408
Pastor Mike Wikstrom—480-203-1556
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

Mission District Pulpit-Supply Guidelines

In October of 2022, the Mission District Council voted to recommend that congregations pay a visiting pastor \$200 for a worship service in addition to the current IRS mileage rate. At a subsequent meeting, we also decided to recommend that congregations do the same for a visiting pastor who performs a wedding or a funeral. Any honorarium that the family might want to give to the pastor would not be deducted from this, as the pastor is providing a service to the congregation. We also recommend that a congregation which has more than one worship service in a day, pay an additional \$50 to the pastor for each additional service. (The current IRS rate is \$0.67 per mile, but changes nearly every year.)



Congregations of the Iowa Mission District

Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Dan Buhs, Lay Minister
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**, Pr. James Glesne
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)**, Pr. Tamara Keen
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**, Call Process
+ Monona, **Faith**: Pr. Mel Harris
Northwood: **Peace**, Pr. Barbara Wills
+ Osage: **First Grace Lutheran Church**
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**, Call Process
Thor: **Ullensvang**, Pr. Darryl Landsverk
Waterville: **Old East Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball
Waukon: **Old West Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball

+ indicates mission congregation

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Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer
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