

March/
April 2018

Nebraska District Reporter



"The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." Psalm 24:1

Dear Child of God,

You are the precious possession of the Lord.

Not all my possessions are precious—not even the more valuable ones. My vehicles are a good example. I enjoy what they do for me in getting me where I want to go. I also appreciate what they allow me to do. I still do not treat them as precious.

It is kind of fun to look for a new (or new to you) vehicle, but I don't like haggling over the price. I don't like spending the money. I don't like paying for repairs. And I'm not all that wild about keeping them clean, inside or out. I still do all of these things. I know these things are all part of the deal in having, using, and enjoying the benefits. But I'm not crazy about doing them. They are valuable in their cost and in their use, but they just aren't that precious to me that I want to pamper them.

Thankfully the Lord does not share a similar attitude toward you and me as His "possession." We belong to Him. Everything does. He has created you and formed you. He has chosen and redeemed you. He has called and equipped you. You are His precious possession.

Unlike my attitude toward vehicles, He took great delight in your creation as He watched over every detail of your coming into being. He specifically gifted you in special ways to serve in this world. As you use those gifts to work in your vocations, you glorify His name. He never flinched in paying the price to redeem you from your sin. He leads you into the joy of His grace and the work of reaching out with His heart. You are His precious possession.

You are a creation of God. You are a temple of the Holy Spirit. You are an instrument of the Lord as He works His will through you. You are a vessel into which He pours His love as He uses the gifts of others to serve you.

"The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." That includes YOU!

In the joy of receiving His gifts and being His gift,
Nebraska District President, Reverend Richard Snow

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News items, congregational anniversaries, and ministry stories for the *Reporter* are always welcome. The deadline for submissions for the May/June *Reporter* is April 15. Please submit items to [Kim Myers at reporter@ndlcms.org](mailto:reporter@ndlcms.org) or by mail. Visit our website at ndlcms.org for more information or to subscribe to the *Reporter* by email.

Congregations, leaders and related organizations connected and growing in their mission of discipling the saved and proclaiming Christ to the lost.

DISTRICT CONVENTION REMINDERS

The Nebraska District will gather in convention **June 15-16 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney** under the theme *Reconciled In Christ, For the World*. Congregations of the District that have not returned the Voting Delegate Information Form to the District Office should do so immediately.

All church workers and lay members of the Nebraska District are invited to attend the Convention to learn more about the Nebraska District, the LCMS, and the reconciliation opportunities God places before each of us every day. Delegates and all church workers will receive registration information after Easter. Guest registrations will be also be mailed to church offices and made available online at that time.

To be better stewards of our resources, this year's workbook will be available for viewing or downloading from the District's convention website, <http://convention.ndlcms.org/>, in early May and will not be mailed by paper or USB. Detailed instructions on accessing the workbook from our website will be provided in the workbook mailing, which will be sent out in early May.



CALLED TO GLORY

Robert Dennis Fiala, Commissioned Minister—Teacher Emeritus, departed this life on January 30, 2018 in Lincoln, Nebraska. Bob served as a history professor at Concordia University, Nebraska from 1965 to 2005, as an adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, as a visiting professor of history at Tunghai University in Taiwan, Normal College of Foreign Languages in Beijing, and Oak Hill College in London.

Jean Prochnow, Commissioned Minister—Teacher Emerita, departed this life on December 18, 2017. She served at Concordia High School, Seward, from 1958-1961 and St. John Lutheran School, Seward, from 1961-2002.



SAVE THE DATE!

Middle School Youth Gathering
November 17-18, Embassy Suites, LaVista

—Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good—

An update from Nebraska District Treasurer, Paul Pettit:

We are truly blessed to have dedicated servants across the District making a ministry difference, locally in your congregations and communities, regionally in partnership as a District, through your Nebraska District office, and beyond.

Your generous support, together with wonderful investment returns this fiscal year, encouraged the Board of Directors as they stepped forward with the remodeling projects for the University Lutheran Chapel—Lincoln and the Nebraska District Office. The projects are being coordinated with The Steier Group guiding us in a campaign for support for those projects and for congregational projects with participating congregations pursuing their own projects. Preparations are well underway with excitement at the ministry impact potential and a bit of anxiety surrounding the major tasks before us. President Snow and the Steier Group have completed an initial round of regional meetings where they shared information about the projects and how we can partner together. Thank you to all who participated in one of those meetings.

The Board adopted our fiscal year 01-31-19 operating budget at their December 2017 meeting with anticipated sources of funds totaling \$3,635,674 and anticipated uses of funds totaling \$3,769,436. The board will evaluate and modify the budget at their March meeting to reflect final decisions surrounding the two remodeling projects and the Steier Group campaign. Members of the Board of Directors and district staff continue to make presentations to congregations, leadership teams, and others with more detail on district ministry activities and the budget. If you are interested in receiving a presentation, feel free to contact us to schedule a time.

On a daily basis, the District Office helps fund our Synod, supports pastors and church workers, assists congregations in exploring new opportunities for outreach, provides resources to the District's Lutheran schools, assists congregations and members with estate and planned giving, and plans faith formation events and conferences for youth and adults throughout the District. Through your personal giving and your congregation's gifts to the District, you are part of this work. We hope this information about the District's budget items will be helpful.

The Nebraska District is one of the top 5 districts in terms of providing *Synodical Support*. The *North American Missions* budget includes expenses such as missions and outreach, human care, campus ministries, ethnic and immigrant ministries, specialized ministries, congregational and church worker care, and events. *Preparing Church Workers* funds tuition assistance for elementary and secondary students at our Lutheran schools, and scholarships for Concordia University System students preparing for full-time service in the church. *Direct Services to Congregations* includes parochial and parish education, youth and educational services and events, congregational nurture, stewardship, and revitalization. *Mission and Ministry Support* includes communications, archives, events, finance, general services, District vehicles and office building, conventions, LCEF operations, fund raising, and gift planning. *Ecclesiastical and Program Administration* includes the District President's office, vice-presidents, circuit visitors, reconcilers, events, and the Board of Directors. The District Office staff and Board of Directors are happy to provide more information, including full disclosure presentations, to congregations upon request.

District Support, Revenue and Gains	Year to Date 12-31-17	Financial Year Ending 01-31-13	Financial Year Ending 01-31-08
Congregational Remittances - unrestricted	1,906,624.28	2,686,689.72	2,741,985.28
Other Income, Fees, and Reimbursements	604,028.61	446,213.91	707,139.07
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	524,155.77	448,141.79	562,865.83
Total Operational Support, Revenue and Gains	3,034,808.66	3,581,045.42	4,011,990.18
<i>Expenses and Losses</i>			
Synodical Support - Unrestricted	768,419.00	1,122,500.00	1,500,000.00
North American Missions	887,477.87	903,752.16	1,244,001.44
Preparing Church Workers	79,905.58	145,141.49	137,125.63
Direct Services to Congregations	597,566.56	401,833.36	386,826.29
Mission and Ministry Support	561,656.81	582,972.97	874,993.23
Ecclesiastical and Program Administration	380,142.41	247,514.26	251,004.13
Total Expenses and Losses	3,275,168.23	3,403,714.24	4,393,950.72
Operational Change in Net Assets	(240,359.57)	177,331.18	(381,960.54)
<i>Non-Operational Financial Activity</i>			
Interest, Investment, and Property Gains (Losses), Net	293,858.85	237,352.23	69,241.04
Increase (Decrease) in Restricted Net Assets	213,762.17	533,948.80	(78,347.08)
Total Non-Operational Financial Activity	507,621.02	771,301.03	(9,106.04)
Total Change in Net Assets	267,261.45	948,632.21	(391,066.58)

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION FOR NEBRASKA COLLEGE STUDENTS

Nebraska District financial support is available to anyone preparing for full-time service in the church. Applicants must demonstrate financial need and have completed their FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Applicants must be enrolled at a Concordia University System school; Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne; or Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The Concordia University System (CUS) consists of the 9 LCMS-operated universities located in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Austin, Texas; Bronxville, New York; Irvine, California; Mequon, Wisconsin; Portland, Oregon; River Forest, Illinois; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Seward, Nebraska.

Application forms may be printed from the District website at www.ndlcms.org/scholarships/.

Please note that the deadline for completing the application process is May 1 for the first semester of each academic year and December 1 for the second semester. Only one application is needed per academic year.

In addition to Nebraska District financial aid, there are several other scholarships offered through groups in the Nebraska District.

The LWML Nebraska North provides scholarships for students preparing for careers in full-time church work and full-time enrollment in the CUS. The Nebraska District Student Aid Committee administers these grants, and the application form is the same as the District Financial Aid Application Form. That form may be obtained from the scholarships page of the District website or from the financial aid offices of the CUS universities and seminaries, with May 1 and December 1 deadlines.

The LWML Nebraska South also offers assistance to students from the LWML Nebraska South region who are going into full-time church work. Information and applications may be obtained from the student's local LWML society or at www.lwmlnesouth.org. Completed applications are due June 1. For direct questions, contact Heidi Crawford at hcrawford777@gmail.com.

The **Nebraska District Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL)** is another organization providing scholarships for students studying for full-time church work, including pastor, DCE, DPM, deaconess, liturgical arts, and education. Applications and supporting information may be printed from the scholarships page of the District website or obtained by contacting Virginia Von Seggern at 87127 512th Ave., Orchard, NE 68764; virginia.vonseggern251@gmail.com; 402-655-2254 or 402-360-4060. The application deadline is May 22.

The **Gil and Blondie Vogt Scholarship Fund** is designed to assist Nebraska students preparing for LCMS church vocations at any LCMS university or seminary. Requests for information or applications should be sent to King of Kings Lutheran Church, Attn: Vogt Scholarship Committee Chairperson, 11615 I Street, Omaha, NE 68137. The application deadline is April 15.

ANNIVERSARIES

Immanuel, Beemer, 150th, July 8, 10:30 a.m. service with guest preacher Rev. Michael Frese, great-grand-nephew of Immanuel's first pastor and associate pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN. There will be a catered lunch and activities to follow in the afternoon. For more information, please contact Rev. Robert Mayes at revmayes@hotmail.com, or call 1-402-528-7253.



Building Together. In Christ. For Mission. Chapel Spotlight

Perhaps the largest mission field for the Nebraska District is on college campuses. This could not ring more true than at the state's largest campus at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Since 1956, the University Lutheran Chapel has ministered to students in Lincoln, bringing Christ to young adults at a crucial time for faith development. Over those decades, the Chapel has touched thousands of lives.

The Chapel was our introduction to Lincoln, our home away from home, and now our inspiration to give back to the student ministry.

Adrian & PC Chan, and family, '05

During college, the Chapel was more than just a building to me...it was a family where I made life-long friends, a community that gave me the opportunity to travel & serve others, and most importantly it was where I learned more about Jesus—my Savior, King, Friend—the One to whom I owe it all.

Ann Grant, '13

The Chapel has been an incredible place to share my love for Christ with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I've been blessed with great guidance and comfort at the Lutheran Chapel.

Jared Onnen, Junior

The chapel has given me a place to make friends with the same interests as me: making music and praising our Lord!

Lauren Brickett, Sophomore

We arrived at Lincoln in the summer of 2000. We received a lot of help when we just got there and were still confused by the culture differences. Things like furniture and English conversation partners help us to adapt to the new life. We enjoyed very much the first Thanksgiving dinner in a friendly home of Nebraska's farmers. Most importantly, we became Christ's followers and we were baptized in the Chapel. Things are up-and-down, and we travel through the big plain to Wisconsin, to Tennessee, to Texas, and finally arrived in California. We now live in Albany, California, with our two boys, Leo and Andy. Chapel has a great impact on international students like us. We are just one of the many. We really appreciate that. It planted seeds in the hearts of all of us who were invited to Chapel. May God bless the great mission of Chapel.

Shaohui Sun & Yi Qu, '04

Additional stories will be shared at <http://www.ndlcms.org/building-together/>.

CALL ACTIVITY IN THE NEBRASKA DISTRICT

ORDAINED

CALLS ACCEPTED

Rev. Mark Anderson (StL'11) Bethel, Morton, IL, to associate, Beautiful Savior, LaVista

Rev. Timothy Gierke (StL'76) emeritus, Nebraska District, to Immanuel, Hooper

Rev. Christopher Maronde (FtW'10) associate, Good Shepherd, Lincoln, to associate, St. John, Decatur, IN

Rev. Andrew Ratcliffe (StL'07) associate, St. John, Seward, to St. Paul's, Perham, MN

Rev. Adam Snoberger (StL'12) associate, Trinity, Grand Island, to senior, Trinity, Grand Island

Rev. Russel Troester (StL'08) candidate, Nebraska District, to Shepherd of the Valley, Santa Ynez, CA

CALLS DECLINED

Rev. Joshua Baumann (StL'12) associate, Faith, Pierre, SD, to associate, Holy Cross, Kearney

Rev. Brad Birtell (StL'92) St. John, Columbus, to Memorial, Sioux Falls, SD

Rev. John Diener (FtW'94) Grace, Wyoming, MI, to senior, Grace, Wayne

Rev. Marcel Kohlmeyer (StL'05) St. Peter, Orchard, and St. Paul, Venus, to Our Savior, Aberdeen, and St. John, Columbia, SD

Rev. Matthew Mau (StL'13) St. John, Waco, to St. John's, Louisville, IL

Rev. Benjamin Perkins (StL'13) associate, Trinity, Mountain Lake, MN, to Good Shepherd, Fremont

Rev. Jonathan Rathjen (StL'95) Trinity, Auburn, to senior, Mt. Calvary, Huron, SD

Rev. Ryan Seymour (FtW'12) St. John, Beemer, and Zion, Bancroft, to Mount Olive, Norfolk

STATUS CHANGES

Rev. Phillip Hannemann (Spg'75) candidate, Nebraska District, to emeritus

Rev. Calvin L'Heureux (FtW'91) candidate, Nebraska District, to emeritus

Rev. Danny Nietfeld (StL'72) assistant, Pilgrim, Bellevue, to emeritus, Nebraska District

Rev. Kris Rebentisch (StL'88) candidate, Nebraska District, to resigned from clergy roster

Rev. Steven Sirek (FtWCq'97) candidate, Nebraska District, to emeritus

INSTALLATIONS & ORDINATIONS

Rev. Lonnie Felcher (StL'10) as pastor, Peace, McCook, January 21

Rev. Timothy Gierke (StL'76) as pastor, Immanuel, Hooper, February 11

Rev. Jeffrey Kuddes (StL'92) as pastor, Trinity, Blue Hill, January 14

Rev. David Rempfer (StL'82) as assistant pastor, St. John, Seward, January 14

Rev. Adam Snoberger (StL'12) as senior pastor, Trinity, Grand Island, February 11

Rev. Aaron Staub (StLSMP'18) as SMP pastor, Concordia Lutheran Schools, Omaha, January 18 (ordination held January 14)

Rev. Steven Stork (FtW'82) as pastor, Good Shepherd, Milford, January 7

COMMISSIONED

CALLS ACCEPTED

Donald Bader (S'76) Campus Ministry Coordinator, Pacific Hills, Omaha, to Executive Director, Living H2O Lutheran Campus Ministry (RSO), Omaha

Sarah Glover (S'04) candidate, Rocky Mountain District, to Director of Child Care Ministry, St. John, Battle Creek

Tetsuya Sugita (IVCQ'01) Director of Music, Peace, Grand Island, to Director of Music, Christ, Norfolk

Timothy Vogel (S'09) teacher, Christ, Yuma, AZ, to teacher, Concordia Lutheran Schools, Omaha

CALLS DECLINED

Remkea Ockander (S'00) DCE, Divine Shepherd, Omaha, to principal, Hope, Levittown, PA

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Robert Fiala (S'60) emeritus status, Called to Glory, January 30, 2018

Eunice McCarty (S'78) Director of Family Life Ministries, Trinity, Grand Island, to emerita

Jean Prochnow (RF'58) emerita, Called to Glory, December 18, 2017

Myron Reick (S'73) emeritus, Nebraska District, to emeritus, Ohio District

Sandy Reick (S'73) emeritus, Nebraska District, to emeritus, Ohio District

PLACEMENTS

Amanda White (TX'12) Director of Students, King of Kings, Omaha, January 7

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 5-6, Spring Administrators' Conference, Carol Joy Holling Center, Ashland

April 9-10, Spring Pastors' Conference, Younes Conference Center, Kearney

April 13: Friends of Jamaica Meeting, Trinity, Arapahoe

June 15-16, Nebraska District Convention, Younes Conference Center, Kearney

July 28, Retirement Workshop for Concordia Plan Services Members, The Rock, Seward

September 27, Nebraska District Treasurers'/Business Managers' Workshop, The Rock, Seward

September 28, Fall Administrators' Conference, The Rock, Seward

October 4-5, Circuit Visitors'/Vice-Presidents' Conference, St. Benedict Center, Schuyler

October 18-19, Educator's Conference, Concordia Jr./Sr. High, Omaha

October 22-23, Fall Pastors' Conference, River's Edge Ramada Hotel/Conference Center, Columbus

November 17-18, Middle School Youth Gathering, Embassy Suites, LaVista