



DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH DAKOTA

Honored to serve

By Rev. Arie Bertsch
District President

The 59th North Dakota District Convention in Dickinson has come and gone. Now we move forward to the future of Christ's Church as a district of congregations and pastors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

I am honored to have been elected as the North Dakota District president and look forward to humbly serving you, our congregations and pastors. Therefore, I have resigned my call to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Minot, after serving as their pastor for 16-plus years. This made for some sadness, but also an opportunity for them to move to the next chapter of their ministry, and for me to move to the next chapter of my life and service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now I will be able to give all of my attention and focus to the district, as I have been elected to do.

The convention theme was "Unity in Christ" from Eph. 4:1-16. We were blessed with the presence of LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, who preached during the opening worship service and gave a presentation on our Synod, followed by a time for questions and answers.

During the convention, our keynote speaker was the Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast,



▲ The crucifix used at convention was borrowed from St. Peter, Hannover, and brought by Rev. Russell Fitsch.

◀ Bertsch presents Harrison with gifts reminiscent of North Dakota.

president of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., and his presentation was titled "*De Ceremoniis Ecclesiasticis: On Church Usages or Ceremonies, Sometimes Called Mitteldinge or Adio-phora.*" Rast's presentation brought together *adiaphora* (things neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word) and unity as we walk together as a synod.

We also had presentations in God's Word by district pastors on unity in Baptism, Communion, Confession and Mission.

One of the resolutions adopted at convention was



For results from the convention go to nodaklcms.org/district-convention

to extend term limits for the district president from three terms (of three years each) to five terms.

Another regards the location of the district president's office, which will be determined by the district president and the Board of Directors.

Two resolutions regarding mission were passed — to give \$10,000 a year to the Christ's Care for Children ministry in Kenya, and \$25,000 per year to help fund LCMS mission work in Santiago, Chile.

Also, to build on unity of

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Higher Things to hold retreat April 20-21

'The Christian Conscience'

What is the conscience? How does the devil work in our conscience? And, how does the Holy Spirit work to train and comfort the conscience? Join Higher Things for a retreat in which the biblical teaching of the conscience will be explored, what affects it, what hurts it, and how the Lord Jesus intends to give us a clean, clear, good and joyful conscience through the Gospel.

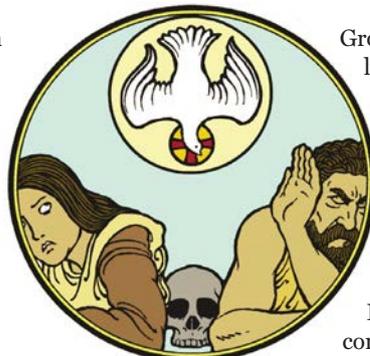
The retreat will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Hankinson, from 6 p.m. on Friday, April 20, to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 21.

The cost is \$50 per person, which covers all expenses for the retreat including all

classes, food, activities and lodging at the church. Boys and girls will be housed separately throughout the church. There are no shower facilities; bathrooms are located throughout the church. Attendees should bring sleeping bags and pillows.

The Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller will be the presenter. He is pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Aurora, Colo. He is also the co-host of "Table Talk Radio," host of the video Bible study series "Grappling with the Text," and the author of "Has American Christianity Failed?" (CPH, 2016). Wolfmueller and his wife, Keri, and their four children live in Aurora.

Register online at higherthings.org/retreats or download a registration form.



Groups may pay securely online or bring your registration payments to Immanuel Lutheran Church. Or just bring everything with you when you arrive for the retreat. Please RSVP by April 13.

For more information, contact Tana McKenna at ziongwinner@gmail.com or 701-308-0411.

Higher Things is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Its mission is to help parents, pastors and congregations promote a Lutheran identity among youth. Higher Things accomplishes this through conferences, retreats and various print and online media. Visit higherthings.org.

What's new at Shepherd's Hill?

By Rev. Jon Bonine
Executive Director,
Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our table at the district convention. It was a joy to get to know more of the people of the district. We are getting geared up for spring and summer and our summer camp brochures are being sent out. Check with your church or your mailbox for your copy.

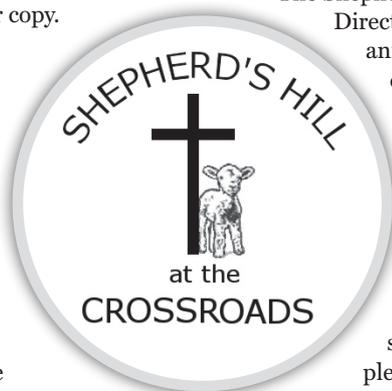
Wanted: summer staff

To make our summers happen, we hire quality Lutheran youth to be our camp staff. Each year, these young adults have the opportunity to share our faith in Christ Jesus and impact lives. We are

always on the lookout for potential staff. If you know of someone who would love to work at camp, pass along their name or ask them to visit the National Lutheran Outdoors Ministry Association website at NLOMA.org. NLOMA coordinates summer staff for all LCMS summer camps.

Annual board meeting

The Shepherd's Hill Board of Directors will hold their annual meeting at 1 p.m. on March 3. Elections to serve a three-year term on the board will be held. Each district congregation is invited to send two delegates to the meeting. If you would be interested in serving on our board, please let us know!



New at camp

We have some new events planned for the spring, including a retreat March 9-10. Called the Vocation Vacation, I will lead a discussion on how God calls you to serve your neighbors. We will gather on Friday for supper and wrap up mid-afternoon on Saturday. Please visit shretreat.org or our Facebook page at facebook.com/SHRetreat for more information.

Discounts!

During the late winter months of February and March, we are offering a 25-percent discount on all bookings. In April, we are offering 50 percent off for all clergy reservations to give our pastors a time of recouping after Lent and Easter.

And don't forget the possibilities of confirmation retreats as your celebration draws closer!

If you haven't been up to Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads in a while, we invite you to stop by and see what is happening.

Delegate wins iPad Mini

In appreciation of the North Dakota District pastors and convention delegates, Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) sponsored an iPad Mini giveaway at the district convention Jan. 22 in Dickinson.

Tami Ulland, LCEF district vice-president, presented the gift to Mitch Semanko during the Monday evening banquet.

Semanko served as the voting delegate for Immanuel, Fargo (pictured).

LCEF provides LCMS ministries with loans, investments and ministry support services. Learn how you can become a ministry partner with LCEF at lcef.org or contact Tami at 701-360-1469 or Tami.Ulland@lcef.org.



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

walking together within the district, a resolution was adopted to form a handbook on policies, procedures and guidelines to be distributed to pastors and congregations.

I close with St. Paul's words:

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." — Eph. 4:1-7



Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard (Zion, Gwinner) presents "Unity in Communion."



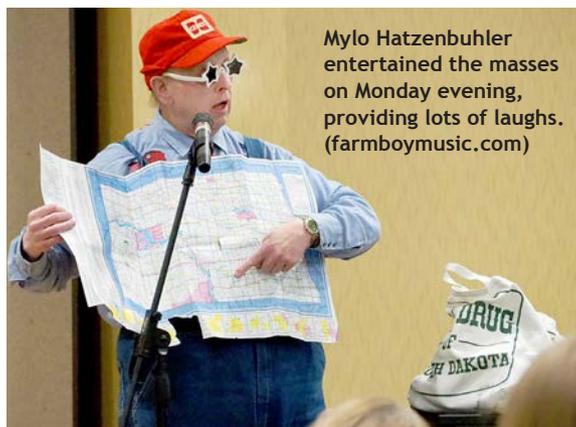
▲ Rev. Rick Jones speaks about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.



Harrison teaches Rev. Jacob Swenson (St. John and Trinity, Hillsboro) the finer points of paper football.



◀ Richard Jostes, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, gift officer, talks about the free tuition offer from both seminaries this coming year.



Mylo Hatzenbuhler entertained the masses on Monday evening, providing lots of laughs. (farmboymusic.com)



Convention delegates and attendees listened intently to the speakers throughout convention.

Men gather for annual retreat

The annual North Dakota District Men's Winter Retreat was held Jan. 12-13 at Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads. The featured speaker, the Rev. Dr. James Gimbel, president of Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, presented to 28 men. His presentation, "Beyond 500: Why the Heart and Sola of the Reformation Still Matters," focused on the four *solas* of our Lutheran Heritage, *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Gratia*, *Sola Fide*, and *Solus Christus*.



CSL workshop to be held in West Fargo

“On Being Confessional Today” is a summer workshop being held by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), July 9-11 at St. Andrew Lutheran Church, West Fargo. CSL Continuing Education workshops provide an opportunity for exploration of contemporary topics that influence the practice of ministry, and are designed for pastors, church workers and laypeople.

The workshop will be led by the Rev. Dr. Joel Okamoto, CSL associate professor of Systemic Theology and chairman of the Department of Systemic Theology.

The notion of “confessionalism” is confused and confusing today. For many American Protestants, any version of confessionalism — any church that identifies itself with creeds and confessions — is strange, if not wrong-headed. But even among Lutherans it can be hard to tell what the word “confessionalism” is supposed to mean. Why? Because “confessional” and “confessionalism” are used frequently as mere labels. This happens when “confessional” is played off against “missional,” and when one speaks of “confessional Lutheranism” as if there were other, non-confessional forms of

Lutheranism.

“Confessional” and “confessionalism” become words to express approval or disapproval — which is the same reason many Christians choose words like “biblical,” “liturgical” and “confessional.”

This workshop will discuss what it means for Lutherans today to take the meaning and responsibilities of their confessionalism seriously. We will explore what confessionalism is, and why it should make sense for any and all Christians. And we will consider what it means for the life of our churches, like how to regard and read the Bible, how to regard and use the Creeds and Confessions, and how to think about and perform practices like preaching and the administration of the Sacraments.

Continuing Education credits are offered through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. For details and registration visit csl.edu, go to “Resources” and select “Summer Workshop Series,” which is under “Continuing Education.”



Send submissions for the district supplement to:
Marie Johnson
news@nodaklcms.org