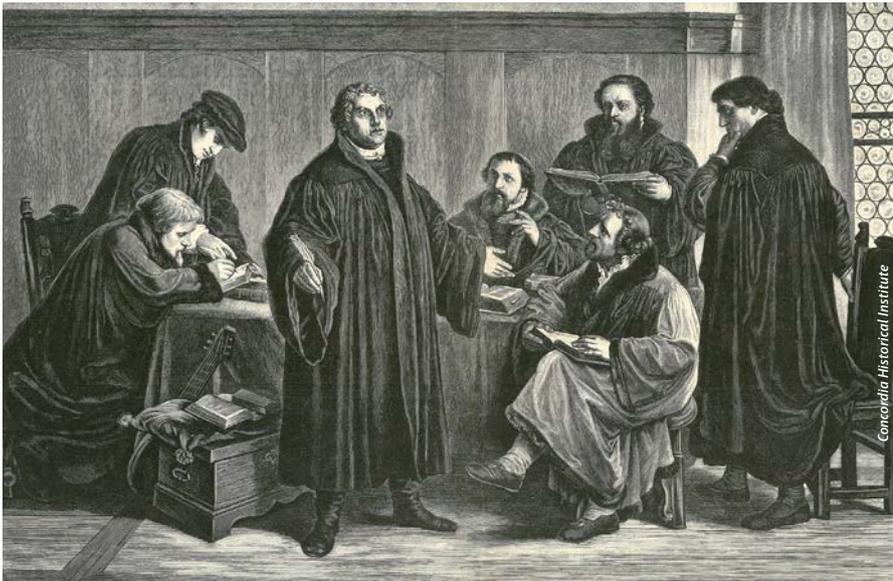




DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH DAKOTA

You are free indeed!



As is our custom in October in the LCMS, we celebrate the Reformation that was led by Martin Luther. He disputed the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, and taught that salvation is received by faith alone in Christ, who made payment for our sin so that we are free from condemnation and have the free gift of eternal life through Him.



Rev. Arie Bertsch
District President

This Gospel was lost and not proclaimed in the church of Luther's day.

As a monk in the Roman Catholic Church, Luther was taught — and he believed — that a person could earn God's favor and salvation by performing good works. Thus Luther felt that his salvation depended on what he did, that he had to win his salvation, that everything depended on his efforts. Luther learned in God's Word that this is not the way a person is saved. Luther was operating under a false concept of God and salvation, but God's Word set him free.

Thus Luther sought to reform the Roman Catholic Church. It never happened, and we celebrate the Reformation not because of the man Martin Luther, but rather the teaching of God's Word that Luther proclaimed. The

LCMS is faithful with the continued proclamation of being set free from sin, death and the devil by grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone.

From God's Word alone the church proclaims grace alone by faith alone in Christ alone. But the question is: Do we individually really believe this and take it to heart as we live this life?

It is easy to become doubtful that salvation is free, and feel that we have to do something for this. You see, our sinful nature likes to look to ourselves, even in the good works that we do trying to earn eternal life instead of receiving it totally free — without merits of our own — from God through His Son Jesus Christ. We may even think that we have to do the work of accepting, deciding for and choosing Christ (as some today proclaim). This "decision, accepting and choosing" theology is simply falling back into the works righteousness of the Roman Catholic Church of Luther's day. It's putting trust in yourself instead of God's gift of faith in Jesus' work on the cross, given to us freely by the Holy Spirit working through Word and Sacrament.

Another easy sin to fall into is relying on our pedigree. Our grandparents and parents were in the church and supported the church, and so we think because we are in that lineage we have earned God's righteousness.

Also, it is easy to put our intelligence above the proclamation of freedom from sin, death and the devil through Christ

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Gathering registration deadline is Oct. 10

The North Dakota District Middle School Gathering will be held Oct. 21-23 at Ramada Inn (3333 13th Ave. South, Fargo).

The registration cost is \$150 plus housing. The deadline to register is Oct. 10. For more information, contact Pat Sebastian, Gathering coordinator, at 701-471-3289 or patsebbis@aol.com.

The guest speaker will be Brian Young of Creation Instruction Association (CIA) in Juniata, Neb. An internationally known speaker and author, Young was a teacher and principal for 10 years before becoming director of CIA and the Semisaurus mobile creation museum. He has been speaking on creation and biblical authority for 25 years, participating in debates at universities, visiting prisons and sharing at churches, schools and camps around the world. He uses the Bible as the foundation for science and education.

The service project will be Mercy Meals. The goal will be to pack 10,000 meals. Mercy Meals provides a nourishing meal for just 15 cents by packing and distributing precisely formulated ingredients.

Part-time attendees are also welcome. If you can attend only parts of the Gathering, please specify which parts: Thursday evening; Friday morning; Friday afternoon; Friday evening; and/or Saturday morning. The cost for each segment is \$30 and does not include breakfasts or a sleeping room.



Adult counselors will be expected to help with small-group Bible study discussions, prayer and congregation sharing times. Each youth and teen counselor will be assigned to an adult counselor, with one adult counselor for about every seven students. If a congregation registers with less than seven youth, one or more youth from another church may be assigned to your congregation group.

It is the responsibility of congregations to provide adult (at least 21 years old) drivers for transportation to and from the Gathering.

Confirmed youth may serve as teen counselors if recommended by their pastor or adult counselor. Teen counselors are an important part of this Gathering because they can have a strong, positive influence on middle school-age youth.

32nd Annual North Dakota District **MEN'S RETREAT**

Jan. 14-15 • Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads, St. John

Our world doesn't have to look far to see the effects of sin on our fallen world. Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, speaker of "The Lutheran Hour," will encourage attendees to find hope in a hopeless world. For more information, contact Corey Isaak at corey.isaak@gracefargo.org or 701-281-0240.



Rev. Dr.
Michael Zeigler

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

alone. We may have been taught through our public education system that God doesn't exist, that we are just a product of evolution rather than creation. If you believe this, then it is just by chance that you are here and you have no Creator and thus have no need for a Savior.



Next, there may be a temptation to make our own savior. We fashion him out of clay that we hold and mold in our own hands, to be what we want our savior to be according to our own ideas and desires. We replace the Savior who holds us in His hands that were pierced for our salvation to overcome our self-centered, egotistical, arrogant ideas and desires.

There is also blindness and deafness that come when we believe that being a Christian is a burden that requires much of us. The lack of faith or false faith has taught and guided some to give up all to be a Christian when, actually, the Savior only desires that you give up darkness, disease, death and decay in exchange for light and life forever!

You see, there are so many distractions and temptations that lead us to our own efforts for salvation. Christ says put away your efforts. None are satisfactory for the payment of sin for salvation.

The risen Christ still bears the wounds on His body, the nail-prints in His hands and the spear-pierce in His side, for these testify that He has won the victory and crushed the head of the enemy.

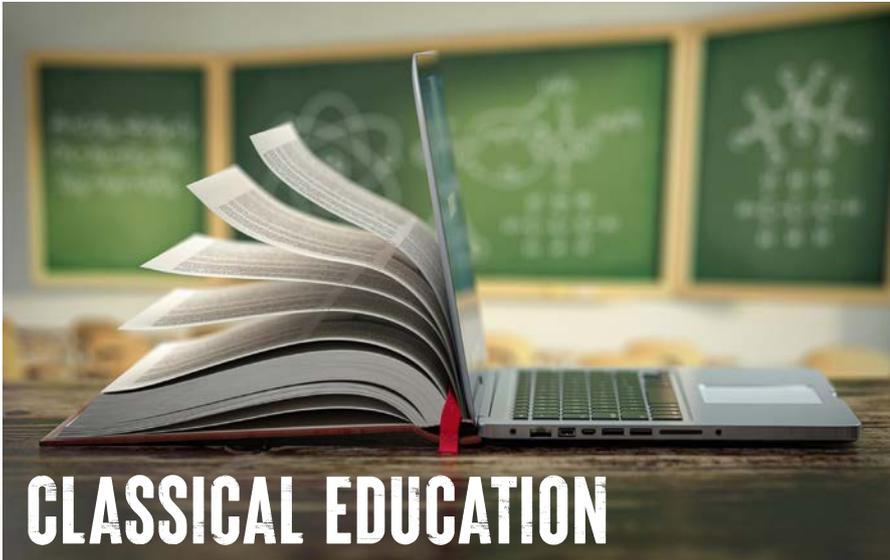
And now, victorious, the Son of God cries out to the world:

"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." **John 8:36**

There is no better news. Once the world was lost forever to the bondage of sin and death. Now the Son of God offers freedom for all.

We declare this message because we have been set free. On this celebration of the Reformation, rejoice in this great freedom, which the Lord grants you by the words: "You are forgiven of all of your sins and where there is the forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation."

You are free indeed! Amen.



CLASSICAL EDUCATION

What's that again?

You've probably heard that Martin Luther School, Bismarck, is working to implement facets of classical education. This model of education is a time-tested philosophy that many of our Lutheran schools have been using for decades. In several districts, all of the Lutheran schools are classical.

We are so excited to be able to offer this opportunity to the Bismarck-Mandan community! Here are just a few snippets of information about classical education.

Classical education helps our students learn how to learn.

- ▶ Students in the grammar stage (grades K-5) are hungry to learn and absorb information, especially when it is presented in ways that work naturally for them.
- ▶ Classical education helps students acquire knowledge that sets them up to be lifelong learners and critical thinkers.
- ▶ We include memory work and daily group recitations that help students retain knowledge. It is a small but very important part of the day.

Classical education values the study of history.

- ▶ The study of the past — all of it, the good and the bad — is important. If we avoid studying the past, we risk repeating mistakes in the future.

Classical education engages students in science.

- ▶ Students learn through direct teaching, hands-on experimentation, observation and documentation to become students of science. Classical education provides students opportunities to learn how to think like scientists.
- ▶ Students learn to understand the differences between laws, facts and theories. This is vital, especially as youth progress in their studies.

Classical education strives for mastery in mathematics.

- ▶ Classical education reviews students regularly in math facts and concepts in ways that work for students in the grammar stage. Mastery of math facts is emphasized so that students are able to move forward with a solid foundation as they are introduced to more advanced mathematical concepts.

Classical education values wisdom.

- ▶ The classical education model helps our students focus on that which is good, true and beautiful. We look to the classics because those works have withstood the test of time.
- ▶ As we teach reading, we use quality, age-appropriate literature that lends itself to a discussion about virtues

and wisdom. This helps students gain an appetite for quality literature and learn to recognize the good, true and beautiful.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Prov. 9:10

Classical Lutheran education is grounded in Christ. True wisdom comes from Him and Him alone. The cultivation of virtuous living is wonderful but rings empty if we cannot look to Christ and what He has done for us. We share His love throughout the day and thank Him for His grace and mercy. We recognize that His work on the cross has completed what we cannot do.

Again, this is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to sharing the model of classical education and its great value. We haven't even discussed music, art, drama, physical education, technology, STEM/STEAM and Latin. There really is so much more.

I welcome your questions. Feel free to contact me about enrollment, especially if you have a kindergarten-age child, as this is when you have a great opportunity to begin that strong foundation.

Denise Wolfram

Principal, Martin Luther School
 • 701-224-9070
 • wolfram@lutherschools.org

North Dakota District CONVENTION

Jan. 23-26
Ramada Hotel • Fargo

Highlights include Opening Divine Service at Immanuel, Fargo; ministry updates; Synod and district updates; Bible study with Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, LCMS president; hymnody essays, rejoicing in witness, mercy and in the Lord; daily Matins and Vespers; resolutions; elections and installation of officers.



GLS welcomes more children!

Dinner auction is Nov. 12

We are again praising God for providing Grace Lutheran School (GLS), Fargo, amply and in His good timing. As of this writing, we have 88 students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, which means we grew again! After a one-year hiatus, we have reopened our pre-kindergarten classroom and it is full.

It takes a large number of volunteers to make GLS a place where children thrive. Together with our volunteers, we are able to share the Word of God with our children and our community in a building that functions well. We would like to thank the multitude of volunteers who helped throughout the summer. The love people have for this school is indescribable and we are humbled.

A Celebration of Grace dinner and auction will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 12, at the Sanctuary Events Center. Those in attendance will have access to the live auction, and enjoy a delicious meal and other fun events. Those not able to attend can still bid on silent auction items online. Tickets for the dinner and auction are \$40 and only 200 are available.

Tickets will be available soon at gracelutheranschoolfargo.com. Online bidding is free and open to everyone.

In preparation for the silent and live auction portions of A Celebration of Grace, we are now accepting donations of time, talent and treasure. If you are a maker or crafter, consider donating a piece of your work. If you possess a special skill, consider donating a learning experience. We are always looking for new and unique ideas for the auction. Donations can be dropped off at the school or call 701-232-7747 to arrange a pick-up.

Amy Hirsch • GLS office manager

Campus ministry available

If you have students in your congregation attending the University of North Dakota or North Dakota State University this fall, please pass along their information to Rev. Dan Suelzle (Wittenberg Lutheran Chapel, Grand Forks) or Rev. Steve Schulz (Immanuel, Fargo) so that they can hopefully get them involved in campus ministry.

Contact Dan at dsuelzle@me.com or 701-215-2592; or Steve at steve.schulz@live.com or 701-639-0542.

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