



DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH DAKOTA

Anchored in Christ

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

HEB. 6:19-20 READS:

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”



Rev. Arie Bertsch
District President

The heading for this text is “The Certainty of God’s Promise,” which is an anchor for the soul. Notice that the anchor is outside of us; it is anchored on God’s promise. Think about it: to be anchored in or on you provides no stability. Let’s say you are out fishing in a boat and you found the ideal spot. Do you throw the anchor to another place in the boat? Or leave it in the boat? Of course not! That makes as much sense as marking your fishing spot by putting an “X” on the floor of the boat. You throw the anchor overboard to be anchored to something other than yourself. If you try to anchor to yourself, you end up floating along, driven by the current and the wind.

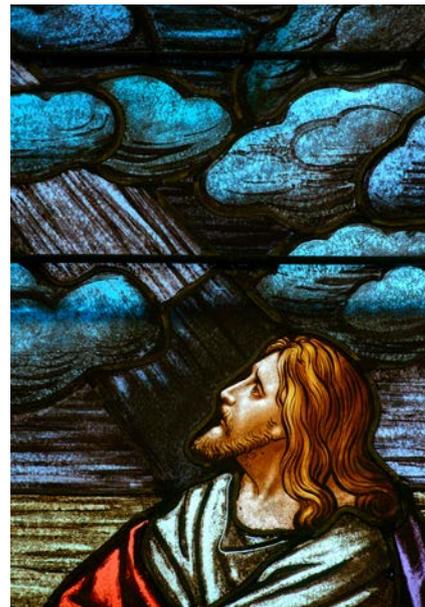
A few years ago, I got a great lead for perch fishing: You head for this certain landmark and as soon as you reach 19 feet of water, you throw your anchor overboard. It worked. My wife, Doris, and I caught large perch. We could anchor on

that recommendation because it had been tried. It was a certainty, as was promised.

So often, though, we would rather try to anchor on ourselves. We try to do what is right and live by the Ten Commandments for our salvation. Or we try to anchor on earthly things that give way and don’t hold us firm in the driving winds or currents of this life. How many people have ventured into life thinking that their health, job or education will be an anchor to hold them in a place of success? With God’s blessing this will happen. But forget about who gave you the ability or the blessing and you may become unanchored. For if you don’t give thanks and pray to God for continued blessings, He may throw the anchor back in your boat. That’s what you are saying and where you want it anyway if you don’t thank and praise God. Of course God sometimes will pull up your anchor and carry you to a different body of water for better fishing or for the purpose of meeting someone else and sharing the blessings you have had in the past anchored in Christ.

When Doris and I had anchored in the spot already found and shared with us, we were able to swing back and forth on that anchor rope to enjoy that whole area around us. So it is in your lives — when you are anchored in Christ, you can enjoy all the pleasures of life. And when the winds and currents seem to be carrying you away, you can be sure that the anchor will hold because it is on the solid ground in what God has done through His Son.

You can be sure that you are anchored



in Christ when you are anchored on the certainty of God’s promises given in His Word and Sacraments. For these Means of Grace are outside of ourselves. There it is that you receive what God has promised — forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Think about it. In Baptism you are anchored into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because He has died, you cannot die because you can only die once; and because He rose as the first fruit from the grave so shall you. God has promised that you are His child and you cannot be ripped loose by Satan or anyone else, although you could cut the rope of faith that holds you to that anchor by severing yourself from God’s Word and the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

A rope’s strength is determined by how many strands it has going through it. The more strands in the rope, the stronger it is. For even if a strand or two or more

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Churches in Chile prove insightful

In photo:

The congregation at Mision Maule in Talca, Chile, presented hand-stitched bags to, from left, Haley Ulland, Tami Ulland and Doris Bertsch.

Tami Ulland, North Dakota District business manager, recently visited partner churches in Chile. The trip was also an opportunity to visit with local ministries and see how they're developing, what problems they may have and how to fix them, as well as address funding issues. But for Ulland, it was also a journey of faith.

"It was such a re-energization, a re-invigoration," Ulland said of being immersed in a different culture and

witnessing how the people of Chile approach their faith.

Since they are partner churches, they do follow the same theology and practices of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, but what's different is that a lot of Chile's churches are mission-based.

"The mindset is so different," Ulland said. "They're true missionaries. They try to do something to give back to that community, and to provide a service where they can with an act of mercy. And the church grows out of that act of mercy, or that service that they're able to provide to the community."

One of the churches is attached to Bethesda Lutheran Home, which provides therapy services to people with disabilities. There are also churches with immigrant ministries and two attached to schools, one with about 200 children and one with 800.

Ulland said that the city of Constitución had a tsunami wipe

out a large area in 2010 and the church went in to help by talking to people in camps. A church was started there and now there's an after-school program at that location.

Ulland traveled with her daughter, Haley, who is a teacher in Park River. North Dakota District President Rev. Arie Bertsch and his wife, Doris, joined them. The four attended a pastors conference in Santiago and Bertsch preached at a few churches as well.

"We got to visit every single church that's part of the Chile partnership with us," Ulland said. "Their faith is so different, it's hard to explain to people exactly what it is. There's always such a joy coming through them of being able to confess and share their faith. And none of the churches are self-supporting, and that's why we help."

(This article was written by Brittany Brevik and was published in The Walsh County Record.)

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

are damaged it can still hold. Your rope of faith tied to the anchor of Christ by God's work and promise to you needs to be repaired and strengthened so that it will not tear loose from the anchor. There is nothing more frustrating and helpless than to see the anchor rope tear or come loose from the boat and disappear out of sight. Been there! Done that!

The anchor is still there; you are just not attached to it. Another scary situation is when the anchor rope isn't long enough for the deep waters you may find yourself in. What good is a rope of faith that is 30 feet long when you are in treacherous, 50-foot waters?

At the Lord's Supper, you strengthen and lengthen the rope of faith to the anchor of Christ. The rope of faith is strengthened and lengthened as you are assured again

that you have received what Christ promised: "the forgiveness of sins."

Also, nowhere in God's Word does God ask you to anchor in yourself. Nowhere does He say anchor your salvation for eternal life in what you have done. Nowhere in God's Word does He say anchor yourself in your weak, fluttering feelings. Nowhere in God's Word does He say a weak faith or a short rope of faith is all you need. For as soon as the winds come up or the currents get stronger, you will be washed away and end up going over the waterfalls that will kill you eternally. Once you're started over the falls, there is no time or effort on your part that will stop the tumbling and impact at the bottom of the falls.

No, we don't anchor anything in this life or for eternal life by anchoring in or on ourselves. We have hope in Jesus, who went before us to die the death of separation from God so that we don't have to.

He went on your behalf and mine. Christ is the anchor for the soul — your soul, my soul and the souls of all in the world. He is the firm and secure anchor so that we can approach God in this life and then for eternal life.

He is the anointed High Priest who can take your prayers and sins behind the curtain of the inner sanctuary. That is what you see happening every Sunday and what you are being anchored to. You come to church to be near your God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, into whom you have been anchored in Baptism. You then call upon God for the forgiveness of sins, anchored on Christ's redeeming payment for those sins. Without that anchor of Christ, we could never approach God in His inner sanctuary. For when Christ died, the temple curtain was torn from top to bottom so that now anchored in Christ, you can approach God in His holy of holies, heaven. Jesus is your anchor.

Women: sign up for retreat!



The women of the LWML North Dakota District will host their annual retreat Sept. 14-16 at the Chieftain Motel and Conference Center in Carrington.

The theme of the retreat is "V. B. S. 'Vocation Bible School.'" The presenter for the retreat is Deaconess Amy Rast, who serves as the associate director of Deaconess Studies



Rast

at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. Amy will address "our shared vocations as women, Christians, Lutherans and servants in our various vocations (mother, teacher, accountant, church worker, etc.)."

Events begin on Friday evening with social time, snacks, coffee and a devotion. Saturday events include presentations by Rast, Bible study and a servant event — packing Mercy Meals. A financial ingathering will be received to be given to Mercy Meals. Events conclude on Sunday morning with breakfast and a closing worship service.

Registration information is available from your LWML president and at ndlwml.org/events/retreat.

You are encouraged to register and make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. Bring a friend or two. You won't want to miss this exciting weekend!

Vouchers available for church treasurers

New cash voucher books are available at the district office in Fargo. Cash vouchers are to be used by your church treasurer when they mail checks to the district office. The vouchers have accounting lines for the breakdown of the check being mailed in. Treasurers can list the breakdown of the check for mission giving, pastor conference payments, donations for the Wittenberg Lutheran Chapel at the University of North Dakota, new starts and much more.

Please call the Fargo office at 701-293-9001 if you would like a book for your treasurer.



Celebrate with St. Mark's

The members of St. Mark's, Minot, invite you to join them to celebrate the ministry and retirement of the Rev. Caryle Roth (right). The celebration will be held on Sunday, Aug. 26, with a worship service at 9:30 a.m. and a program and meal from 4 to 6 p.m.



Roth has served St. Mark's since March 1993.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church is located at 2209 4th Ave. NW. For more information, call the church office at 701-839-4663.

Auction, open house at Shepherd's Hill

Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads will hold the Quilt, Craft, and Culinary Auction and Open House at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 8.

This auction has been a major fundraiser for Shepherd's Hill for years. Quilts, craft

items and delectable baked goods have been donated from people throughout North Dakota to be auctioned.

For more information about Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads, visit Shretreat.org.

THE NORTH DAKOTA DISTRICT ANNUAL MEN'S WINTER RETREAT

will be held Jan. 11-12, 2019, at Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads, St. John.

The Rev. Daniel Suelzle (right) will be the presenter; the title of his presentation is "Misquoted: Things the Bible Doesn't Say." Suelzle is pastor of Wittenberg Lutheran Chapel at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.



INSTALLATIONS



The Rev. Larry Schmidt, left, was installed at First English, Fairmount, on June 10. The installer is the Rev. Arie Bertsch, North Dakota District president.



Brian Shane was installed as vicar of Beautiful Savior, Fargo, on Sunday, June 10. Brian is a student of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He is pictured with his wife, Dahlia, and the Rev. Chris Waldvogel, pastor of Beautiful Savior.

Correction

In the June *eNews* and June/July *Lutheran Witness* supplement, it was mentioned the vicars who will serve in the North Dakota District were “called.”

Vicars are not yet called to serve a congregation, but rather are placed into a congregation to learn more about the work of the pastor.

Apologies for the error.



The Rev. Andrew Wolfgram was ordained at his home congregation, Shepherd of the Valley, Bismarck on June 17. A recent Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, graduate, Andrew will serve at St. John, Groton, and Zion, Andover, S.D. Andrew’s father, the Rev. Lester Wolfgram, is pastor of Shepherd of the Valley.



The Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard was installed as pastor of St. Paul’s, Minot, on June 24.

Witnessing to immigrants?

THE LUTHERAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION (LHF) provides free resources for sharing the Gospel with people who don’t speak English as a first language.



LHF, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization, has translated and published hundreds of books like Luther’s *Small Catechism*, children’s Bible storybooks, devotions and more into more than 100 languages, which are available at no cost to churches, missionaries and individuals wanting to share the Good News with immigrants or on short-term mission trips.

To see what books LHF has published in a particular language, go to LHFmissions.org or call 800-554-0723.

Send submissions for the district supplement to:

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