



DISTRICT NEWS

NORTH DAKOTA

LSSND as an RSO

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



Rev. Arie Bertsch
District President

If you are like me, you do not care for acronyms. And here this article's title is filled with acronyms. Please forgive me; and allow me to explain!

LSSND stands for Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota. RSO stands for a Recognized Service Organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Our Synod has this description of an RSO:

“To extend its mission outreach, education and social ministry, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod works with independent Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) that agree to ensure their programs are in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the LCMS.”

And:

“Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) are 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations that are independent of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, but they operate ministry programs that foster the mission and ministry of the church. RSO organizations reach out in mercy

and love to meet the needs of those who are suffering, poor, sick or lonely. They address human, social, economic, educational, and spiritual needs.”

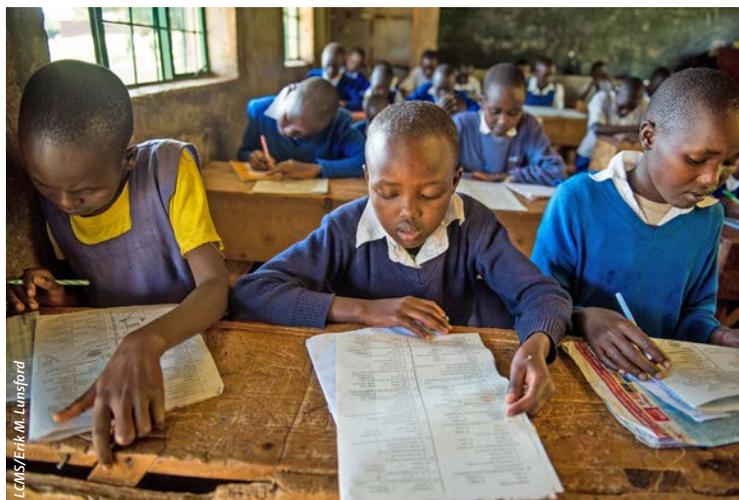
Now to the point of this article: The North Dakota District of the LCMS *has been* (notice the past tense; more about this later) working in conjunction with Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota for decades. In previous years, this partnership was so strong that a former district president was once the chairman of the LSSND Board of Directors; a former district business manager and a district pastor were also quite involved with the housing area of LSSND.

The LSSND Board of Directors (BOD) is comprised of eight people: the bishop

and two members from the Eastern North Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); the bishop and two members of the Western North Dakota Synod of the ELCA; and the district president (or his appointment) and one member of the LCMS North Dakota District.

Now for the *has been*: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's RSO requirements mandate that we have equal voice on an RSO board of directors. Therefore, LSSND was being asked to add another LCMS member to its board. That was causing some strife to the LSSND board because of the lack of financial support from the LCMS members and congregations. The ELCA churches and its members contributed \$510,546 in 2016-17 and the LCMS in the same year contributed \$7,082. What I saw was that even with strong participation on the

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Christ's Care for Kenya is a mission supported by the North Dakota District; and a way for us to support our neighbors in need.

Bismarck student is LCEF scholarship winner

Allison Guthmiller, a member of Bethel Lutheran Church, Bismarck, is the recipient of a \$1,000 Lutheran Church Extension Fund North Dakota District scholarship, one of 19 2018 LCEF district awards. A 2018 graduate of Legacy High School, Bismarck, Allison is currently attending the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. Her parents are Bryan and Tanya Guthmiller.



Allison Guthmiller

know-it-all way. She realized early that academics are crucial to being the most competent nurse anesthetist she can be to best serve patients.

“She excels in music and athletics and has been chosen for leadership roles as drum major, student council, Bismarck Public School Foundation Advisory Committee and volleyball team captain. Allison is a leader who others want to follow! I can hardly wait

to see what God has in store for Allison beyond high school.”

In her scholarship essay, Allison wrote,

“I have seen firsthand what blessings LCEF can help bring. I have grown up in the same Missouri Synod—Lutheran Church my whole life and since I was baptized, the church has consistently

grown. Unfortunately, several years before our church reached a standstill because we no longer had the room for our growing population. That was until LCEF stepped in and helped us with a loan to expand our education wing.

“Our church (since the addition) has grown exponentially and the mission to spread God’s word remains relentless. I (have been) a Sunday school teacher in that very education wing, teaching the precious gift of God’s Word that was made possible by the generosity of the LCEF loan our church was granted.”

LCEF is blessed to provide annual district scholarships for active, faith-filled Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod students just like Allison. The 2019 scholarship application is now available at lcefcentral.org/scholarships. The deadline to apply is Jan. 31.



Learn how you can become a partner in ministry via LCEF investments, loans and ministry support at lcef.org.

Mercy always



Saturday,
Oct. 27

9:15 a.m. -
4:30 p.m.

Dakota Boys and
Girls Ranch
7151 15th St. S.
Fargo

The Faith in Action Mercy Conference will equip and energize compassionate Christians for mercy care. The event brings Lutherans together to re-imagine the work of mercy as part of our church’s mission, helping to make caring ministries of mercy possible in new ways.

Registration is limited. Go to dakotaranch.org/mercy for the registration form and more information.

Featured speakers include the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, LCMS president and former executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care; and Rob Stadler, scientist and author of “The Scientific Approach to Evolution.” Stadler’s presentation is titled “Resolving the Conflict between Faith and Science.”

Breakout sessions include:

▶ “Orphan Grain Train and Mercy Meals” (Andrea Eckstein, Mercy Meals of North Dakota)

- ▶ “LCC K-9 Comfort Dog Ministries” (Don “Moe” Moeller, Lutheran Church Charities)
- ▶ “Transforming Public Schools with God’s Love and Truth” (Richard Amundson, Tentmakers)
- ▶ “Presence in Learning: Trauma-Sensitive Schools” (Marcia Bartok, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch)
- ▶ “Mercy and the Glory of God” (the Rev. Bernie Seter, LCMS Board for International Mission chairman)
- ▶ “A Merciful Response to Childhood Trauma” (Christina Hemmer, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch)
- ▶ “Understanding Recognized Service Organizations” (Deaconess Dorothy Krans, director of LCMS Recognized Service Organizations)
- ▶ “What is Deaconess Ministry?” (Deaconess Kelly Jacob, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch)
- ▶ “Children with No One” (the Rev. Mike Giddings and Bob Wurl, Project 24/Christ’s Care for Children, Kenya)

ANNUAL MEN'S WINTER RETREAT

How **not** to read the Bible

Jan. 25-26 | Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads

The Bible is God's loving, self-revelation to the world; and the center of the whole thing is Christ, crucified and risen for the forgiveness of all people.

However, this simple and wonderful good news is often left behind as teachers, preachers and popular Christian authors **twist, distort and manipulate verses** in order to make the text say things it simply does not say.

At this year's men's retreat, the Rev. Dan Suelzle will present "Misquoted: Things the Bible Doesn't Say" and discuss how we read the Bible on its own terms, **looking for Christ on every**



Dan Suelzle

page, so that we will have the true comfort that God gives there. We'll also look at a few examples of how the Bible is often misquoted and provide a better way of understanding those texts. Suelzle, a native of Hazen, is the campus pastor of Wittenberg Lutheran Chapel, which serves the students of the University of North Dakota. Before accepting the call to Wittenberg, he served for six years at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Eugene, Ore. Suelzle is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He and his wife, Mary, have four children.

The retreat begins with supper at 6 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25, and ends at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 26. The cost is \$80, which includes three meals, snacks and games.

To register, contact **Corey Isaak at 701-281-0240 or corey.isaak@gracefargo.org.**



SHEPHERD'S HILL AT THE CROSSROADS

Thank you

We appreciate your support for our annual golf outing, held on Aug. 4 — the donations, sponsorships and all those who joined us at the Rolla Country Club!

Our annual Quilt, Craft and Culinary Arts Auction and Open House was held at the retreat on Sept. 8. Thank you to everyone who donated and joined us.

We are accepting donations through PayPal! You can set the amount and how often you want to help with making camp a great place to be. Don't forget about your opportunities to give through AmazonSmile and your Thrivent Choice dollars as well.

Are you looking for a place to stay while hunting in the Turtle Mountains? Are you looking for a place to hold a church or work retreat? We have weekends available to host your hunting party or event. Call to schedule your time of fun here at Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads!

Watch our Facebook page and website for more announcements and pictures from the summer.

Rev. Jon Bonine, executive director
director@shretreat.org
shretreat.org | Facebook.com/shretreat

DOXOLOGY CONFERENCE

Stewardship: thinking biblically and 'Lutheranly'

"More Than Giving" a conference on stewardship, will be held Nov. 30-Dec. 1 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, St. Cloud, Minn. The conference is sponsored by the LCMS Office of National Mission and DOXOLOGY: The Lutheran Center for Spiritual Care and Counsel.

The conference is for pastors, church administrators, stewardship board members, church leaders and interested laity.



Heath Curtis



Nathan Meador

The presenters are the Rev. Heath Curtis, coordinator for LCMS Stewardship, and the Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador, assistant coordinator. They are also parish pastors who love to preach the Good News of God's generosity toward us in Christ. They will provide a sound biblical and theological foundation while offering practical solutions for churches large and small. This conference will equip you to develop healthy stewardship lifestyles among your member households and in your congregation as a whole.

For more information and to register, go to thelc.ms/doxology-minnesota-2018.

Pastor retires after four decades in ministry

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Minot, held a celebration of ministry and retirement for Rev. Carlyle Roth on Aug. 26.

Roth had served in the pastoral ministry for 43 years, including the previous 30 as pastor of St. Mark's. He was ordained on April 6, 1975 in Pierre, S.D., where he was born in 1947. His first call was to serve the dual parish of St. Paul's, Sykeston, and Grace, Carrington, where he served until receiving the call to St. Mark's in 1988.

While a pastor in North Dakota, he has also served the district on the Board of Directors, as a first and second vice-president and as a circuit counselor.

Pastor Roth married Geneal Hall on July 21, 1984, at Grace, Carrington.

In his leisure time (and he should have lots of that now), he enjoys fishing, tinkering with his Corvette and touring on his motorcycle.

Godspeed to Carlyle and Geneal as they start this new chapter in their lives.



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

LSSND board by influential members of the North Dakota District over the years, our financial support was low, which tells me that our congregations, members and pastors were not in support of this organization and that it wasn't fair to LSSND for us to expect more board participation.

Next, dealing with some theological issues: LSSND has stated that they support our Synod's stance on life and traditional marriage, and do not encourage abortion or same-sex adoption. However, LSSND accepts government funding and thus has to offer these options.

Also, there has been discussion within the organization to leave open the concept of embracing the ELCA's full communion partners, defined as "those denominations the ELCA develops a relationship with based on a common confessing of the Christian faith and a mutual recognition of Baptism and sharing of the Lord's Supper to work together on projects of mutual interest and concern." (Full communion partners of the ELCA include the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); the Reformed Church in America (RCA); the United Church of Christ (UCC); the Episcopal Church; the Moravian Church and the United Methodist Church (UMC)

For these reasons, the North Dakota District has decided to part ways with LSSND, and LSSND has declined to



continue as an RSO of the LCMS.

This does not mean that we do not continue to reach out in mercy and love to meet the needs of those who are suffering, poor, sick or lonely. We may all continue to do this by supporting LCMS World Relief and Human Care and LCMS Disaster Response; reaching out individually to our neighbors in need; and supporting our district missions (University of North Dakota and North Dakota State University campus ministries, Watford City church start, Christ Care for Children: Kenya and mission work in Chile) that deliver God's Word and Sacraments.

I leave you with God's Word:

"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**

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." — **Gal. 6:10**

Celebrate with Bethlehem

Join the members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Upham, at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 4th for the dedication of their parish hall.

Rev. Arie Bertsch, North Dakota District president, will be a speaker.

Bethlehem is located at 10 miles west of Upham.

Hymn sing in Cavalier

A Reformation Hymn Sing will be held at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 28 at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 508 Division Ave. North in Cavalier.

The hymn sing includes a organ and brass ensemble, and the hymns "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "Abide with Me," "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and more. Bars and coffee will follow.

Send submissions for the district supplement to:

Marie Johnson • news@nodaklcms.org