



# DISTRICT NEWS

## NORTH DAKOTA



Getty Images

We do draw a line between these two kingdoms. A Christian does participate in the kingdom of the world. There is also the eternal kingdom, which gives us guidance in what is right and what is wrong.

Christians are supposed to love their neighbor. That is what Jesus summed up in second table of the Law: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Loving your neighbor is what this earthly life is about. Because of Jesus and what He has done, we are set right with God. We do not need to worry about doing anything more to please God. But God has put us in this world to serve our neighbor by showing real love to them. This does not just mean talking about Jesus with them, but doing the earthly things too, like taking care of their person and property. This means that we help them in times of need, and we are there for them when the reality of the fallen world sends its suffering on them.

During an election season, it is very common for us to weigh out the issues and candidates and then vote for who would best line our pockets. But is that all a Christian should consider in a candidate? Certainly not, because a Christian lives this life to serve his or her neighbor. That goes for voting as well. Which candidate has the best policy toward helping my neighbor? That has more importance for Christians than our own personal pocket-lining. All of this may cause you to ask, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer is everyone, from the unborn

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# On politics and our BAPTISMAL CALLING



**Rev. Arie Bertsch**  
District President

If you are like me, you are tired of hearing about the upcoming presidential election. It's in the newspapers, mail, TV and radio commercials, social media and talk among us; and now I am also going to write about voting. Sorry; kind of!

Because it is time for a presidential election, it is only right and salutary for a Christian to consider God's Word. Let's start with Matt. 22:21:

"Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Here we have the basis for understanding the two kingdoms. It's mentioned as the kingdom of the left and the kingdom of the right, or the physical kingdom (left) and the spiritual kingdom (right). The physical kingdom is the world in which we live, and the spiritual kingdom is our eternity now and into all eternity.





## Time for a S'more!

The congregation of St. John's, Underwood, has been holding Wednesday night bonfires. Rev. Nathan Schieber, St. John's pastor, is shown here preparing to roast marshmallows for his S'more. The congregation has enjoyed the fellowship.

## Archive news

In our vault were two drawers of pastor conference reports. As I organized them by years, it was interesting to see some of the report titles. The oldest report went back to 1937 and was titled "The Movie and Radio — A Hindrance in our School Work (especially in Religion)." I don't know who wrote it, but I wonder what their thoughts would be on television and the internet!

Another interesting title written in 1952 was "Mixed Marriages (marriages between Catholic and LCMS Lutherans)." Imagine what that pastor would think about the world today!

I've also found board minutes going back to 1932, when North Dakota and Montana were one district. The problems plaguing our church in 1932 are familiar to us — such as people not attending, membership dropping and giving going down.

Keep the district in mind if you come across old records, pictorial directories and church history books.

**Vicki Peihl • District Office Manager**



## MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

to the elderly. From womb to tomb, these people are our neighbors. How can I vote in order to best serve these neighbors?

The economy has always been an important issue for all of us. We can look at policies and promises made by the candidates and judge which one is going to best serve us, but what about our neighbor?

You see, an issue at hand is that of human life, which begins in the womb at conception. That is biblical truth, which medical science supports. This means that in voting, we need to consider these unborn children as our neighbors. If I were to vote for a candidate who does not seek to protect the children in the womb or soon after its birth, but rather seeks to kill them, I would be doing evil to my neighbor. Actively seeking or even allowing death for the neighbor is not love. That goes also for those at the other end of life. Christians vote out of love for their neighbor.

For life is the first need that we have. Without life we cannot really have any other needs. We would not have to be concerned about the economy if we didn't first have life. We wouldn't have to worry about wars if we didn't first have life. Not to minimize other issues that certainly have importance for our neighbors, but every other issue builds upon this first need — the need for life. Without life and the chance to be born, nothing else matters. That makes human life issues the most important in loving our neighbor, and in making choices for elections.

As we consider who to vote for in local, state and national

elections, let us look to the needs of our neighbor. Their first need is life, and we must seek to guarantee that for all. After that first need has been met, we can look at the economy, national security, energy policy and other issues.

Remember, you are in the kingdom of God because God has brought you in, and you are in the earthly kingdom because God has put you there as a Christian to do His will.

That brings us to Jesus' words, "Render to God the things that are God's." What are the things of God? Dear Christians, you are the things of God. He has created you. He has, by Christ Jesus' sin-atoning death and victorious resurrection, provided an accomplished salvation in which He desires you to be His own once again. By His grace, mercy and love, you bear the image and inscription of God. The inscription of His cross was placed upon your forehead and heart at your Baptism. And while we are not yet standing in paradise, we stand here in anticipation of that joyful eternity. What a blessed truth that is for which our thanks and praises are given to God! Truly, as one of His own, "you are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

What you need to do is vote. God has placed a government over us to protect us in this earthly realm (Rom. 13:4). Without government, nobody or nothing you own would be safe. Thank God that in this country we have the privilege and right to elect those who will govern us. Christians should be voting in a God-pleasing way and not just according to their pocket books or what they want God to be. It is good Christian stewardship to vote.

# Congregations to share assistant pastor

Rev. Justin Woodside was ordained and installed as assistant pastor of Bethel and Shepherd of the Valley, Bismarck, on Aug. 2. Pictured are, from left, (front row) Revs. Arie Bertsch, Irvin Bruenjes, Jonathan Walla, Justin Woodside, Les Wolfgram, Dr. Gifford Grobrien; (back row) Matthew Thompson, Zelwyn Heide, Daryl Rothchild and Dennis Voss.



## Middle school gathering is Oct. 22-24

The North Dakota District Middle School Gathering, “God > Me,” will be held Oct. 22-24 at Ramada Inn in Bismarck. The event is for students in grades 6-8.

The weekend gathering will be filled with Bible studies, four presentations by Brian Young of the Creation Instruction Association, morning and evening devotions, music, interest sessions including packing 10,000 Mercy Meals, a variety show, recreation, closing worship service and more.

Students in grades 9-12 are encouraged

to serve as teen counselors and mentor the younger students. Adults are needed to serve as counselors (one adult per seven students).



Boys and Girls Ranch.

For more information, contact Pat Sebastian, Gathering coordinator, at [patsebbis@aol.com](mailto:patsebbis@aol.com) or 701-471-3289.

To learn more about Brian Young and his work, visit [creationinstruction.org](http://creationinstruction.org).

The Bible study leader will be Rev. Rick Jones, chaplain and vice-president for Spiritual Life at Dakota



**Oct. 5-7**

- Pastor Conference—Bismarck

**Oct. 10**

- Men's Breakfast—Immanuel, Fargo
- Fall Confirmation Retreat—SHCR

**Oct. 11**

- Fall Mission Festival—Zion, New Salem

**Oct. 22-24**

- District Middle School Gathering—Ramada Inn, Bismarck

**Oct. 30-31**

- Cleanup Weekend—SHCR

**Jan. 15-16**

- Men's Retreat—SHCR

**Jan. 24-27**

- District Convention—Fargo

**March 5-6**

- District Lutheran Youth Fellowship Retreat—Carrington

**March 26-27**

- Higher Things Retreats—St. Paul's, Minot, and Immanuel, Wahpeton

(SHCR—Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads)



## Backpacks, school supplies needed

Orphan Grain Train (OGT), Jamestown, is in need of school supplies and backpacks to be sent to McLaughlin and Liberia. Used crayons and other school supplies will be sufficient for children in Liberia. Consider picking up a few extra supplies while you are out and bring or send them to Jamestown and help get the shipment ready at the OGT warehouse. For contact info, visit [ogt.org/branches/north-dakota](http://ogt.org/branches/north-dakota).

# Retreat to focus on forgiveness

The 31st Annual North Dakota District Men's Retreat will be held Jan. 15-16, 2021, at Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads.

The Bible has many images for forgiveness and six of those images are the essence of the book "Flowing From the Cross: Six Facets of God's Forgiveness," written by Rev. Dr. Daniel Paavola, retreat presenter and professor and chair of theology at Concordia University Wisconsin. Dr. Paavola will cover three pairs of contrasting pictures of forgiveness:



Daniel Paavola

"Clean and Covered," "Fixed and Far" and "Many and One."

The event begins with a meal at 6 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 15, and ends at 2 p.m. the following day.

The cost is \$100, which includes three meals, snacks and lodging. Bring a Bible, bed roll, personal items, warm clothing and friends. Father-son groups are welcome.

To RSVP, send an email to [corey.isaak@gracefargo.org](mailto:corey.isaak@gracefargo.org) or call 701-281-0240

# EncourageMENT is Oct. 10

A men's breakfast will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 10, at Immanuel, Fargo (1258 N. Broadway).

The guest speaker will be Paul Finstad of Unseen, a non-profit organization that vets, selects and invests in other non-profits focused on fighting human trafficking and its root causes.

For more information send an email to [corey.isaak@gracefargo.org](mailto:corey.isaak@gracefargo.org) or call 701-281-0240.

# Coming soon!

## Two Higher Things Youth Retreats: What is Church?

Both retreats will be held March 26-27 at St. Paul's, Minot, and Immanuel, Wahpeton.

Is church just a building? Is it where people come to pray? Does a church have to have stained glass windows and a steeple? Is church better if there are more people and loud singing?

What is the purpose of the church and why should we even go? Do we go to church to give God our best, or do we go to receive God's best in Christ via the Word and Sacraments?

For more information or to register, contact Rev. Dr. Matt Richard (for the St. Paul's retreat) at [pastor@anchoredminot.com](mailto:pastor@anchoredminot.com), or Rev. Matthew Tooman (for the Wahpeton retreat) at [looktoxp@reagan.com](mailto:looktoxp@reagan.com).

Send submissions for the district supplement to Marie Johnson at [news@nodaklcms.org](mailto:news@nodaklcms.org)



## 2020 MAIL-IN ELECTION RESULTS

- DISTRICT PRESIDENT:** LaurieAnn Totenhagen
- TREASURER:** Tami Ulland
- VP OF MISSION GRANTS:** Sue Corwin
- VP OF HUMAN CARE:** Carla Trittin Isom
- VP OF COMMUNICATION:** Ali Arndt
- JUNIOR COUNSELOR:** Rev. Christopher Waldvogel
- NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Chariman - Kim Kuhlman (SW)  
Corrine Reber (Eastern)  
Kathy Rubbert (NW)  
Kathie Hay (Central)

[Note: There are currently no committee members from NE or SE Zones]

## 2020-2022 MISSION GRANTS

- ND FULL-TIME CHURCH WORKER SCHOLARSHIP:** \$35,000  
(BY STANDING RULE, THIS GRANT IS IN FIRST PLACE)
- ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN, JAMESTOWN, ND:** \$7,500
- MERCY MEALS OF NORTH DAKOTA:** \$5,000
- YOUTH MINISTRY IN THE ND DISTRICT:** \$5,000
- LOG BUNK BEDS FOR HAWKEYE LOFT AT SHEPHERD'S HILL AT THE CROSSROADS, ST. JOHN, ND:** \$5,000
- SPIRITUAL CARE FOR PASTORS, ND DISTRICT:** \$8,000
- FORT WAYNE FOOD BANK, CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, FT. WAYNE, IN:** \$2,500
- CHRIST THE WAY RADIO MINISTRY, JAMESTOWN, ND:** \$5,000
- MARTIN LUTHER SCHOOL TUITION ASSISTANCE, BISMARCK, ND (PARTIAL FUNDING):** \$4,000
- 2020-2022 BIENNIUM MISSION GRANT TOTAL:** \$77,000