



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

Don't forget your spiritual diet

Happy New Year! 2017 is here, bringing opportunities with it. Many people take the opportunity to start healthy habits. Many decide to start exercising and go on a diet to lose weight. The problem is that it's



Rev. Allen Anderson
District President

easier said than done! This devotion encourages us to take the opportunity to start another healthy habit. Let us begin a spiritual diet that we can continue to use every day. This is spiritual eating and gaining rather than losing!

St. Paul writes:

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.”

Col. 2:6

Paul is encouraging us to continue to follow Jesus. We should start each day in prayer, keeping in touch with our Lord. As we meditate on His Word, we see the light for our life:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Matt. 5:14-16

The early Christians, who continued to live for Jesus after His ascension, faced all kinds of opposition. On many occa-

sions they even won their enemies over to the cause of Christ's kingdom.

We sometimes do not realize that many people see the love of Jesus in us. Even unbelievers have remarked that Christians do love one another: “Notice how they care for one another and for others!” The mercy we give to others is a reflection of the mercy Jesus gives to us. Love has always been a hallmark of the Christian faith:

“So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” **1 Cor. 13:13**

Our role model is Jesus!

In this New Year, let us “walk in Him!” Start or continue the habit of taking the servant role. Jesus showed His followers how to become the light and salt of the world. Jesus’ mission was to go to the



cross to suffer and die. He paid the price for our sins. Yes, on the third day He rose from death to life. In overcoming death, He won the victory over sin, death and the power of the devil. His victory is ours by faith as we, too, walk in Him and grow in faith as well as in humble service. Let us each take the opportunity to do so every day, especially as we start a New Year! The Lord grant you a blessed 2017.

In Christ's love and service,
The Rev. Allen Anderson

“Be still, and know that I am God.” **Ps. 46:10**

Active adults to celebrate ‘Our Reformation Heritage’

SOAR, the Rocky Mountain District active adult one-day seminar, will be held Feb. 11 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo. The theme is “Our Reformation Heritage,” marking the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The cost is only \$15 per person, which covers lunch and coffee along with four presentations and entertainment.

The speakers include the Rev. David Ahlman, pastor, Peace, Arvada, Colo., who will talk about the Reformation anniversary. Dr. John Burke, an oncologist, will talk about cancer, the causes and cures.

The Rev. Larry McGurer, associate pastor, Peace, will present a program to help grandparents be an influence in bringing grandchildren back to church. And Mary Boyle will, as Katie Luther, make some bold comments as the wife of Martin Luther.

For entertainment, 4GIVEN, a musical quartet, will sing a number of songs related to the Reformation.

Program materials and registration forms should be available in church offices. For more information, call Harriet Oehlkers at 303-666-9218

A time for healing, growing

Last October, Navajo Mission hosted some very special visitors from South Central Foundation in Anchorage, Alaska, and Lutheran Indian Ministries (LIM).

Clair Kee, a Navajo Christian and staff member of the South Central Foundation, and LIM staff members Rick McCafferty and the Rev. David Sternbeck shared their stories of childhood trauma and how God healed them. They worked to create a safe place for people in the church to share their own stories and start down the road of healing. It was in incredibly positive and meaningful time.

There were beautiful moments of families who shed tears and forgave each other, elders who encouraged youth and young people who shared their gifts as the joy of the Lord was shared by all. Plans are being made for a return visit to Navajo in 2017.

In the fall, Navajo Mission also started its first youth confirmation class. There are currently five students, with an occasional sixth when this extended family member is in town visiting.



Youth attending the confirmation retreat had a great time growing in their relationships with each other and with the Lord.

The group enjoyed a weekend retreat in Mancos, Colo., where the Wagner family from Bloomington, Minn., joined them. The Wagners are members of St. Michael's, Bloomington, a congregation that has supported Navajo Mission for years.

During the retreat, the participants were able to get through what would have taken three weeks in a normal

class setting. They also took part in affirmation and trust-building activities, so the youth not only listened, but participated in practical application of concepts being learned.

Please pray for these confirmation students and for the individuals and families impacted by the visit from Kee, McCafferty and Sternbeck. May they continue to grow in faith and healing.

SEMINAR: 'Making Abortion Unthinkable'

Lutherans For Life Denver invites you to a special DVD-facilitated seminar on Saturday, Feb. 11. Titled "Making Abortion Unthinkable: The Art of ProLife Persuasion," this seminar will be an interactive group-study experience.



The seminar will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Ascension Lutheran Church, Littleton, Colo. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. The cost for lunch is \$5, and a free-will offering will be taken.

Attendees are asked to reserve books and lunch by contacting Jude Donovan at heyjude264@aol.com or Carol Shepherd at 303-552-7485 between Jan. 1 and Feb. 4.

Considering pastoral or deaconess ministry?

The Prayerfully Consider Visit (PCV) invites men and women of all ages to explore pastoral and diakonal training at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. It also gives time for contemplation on the vocations of pastor and deaconess, offering an occasion for prospective students to envision themselves stepping into the formation happening at Concordia Theological Seminary.

The PCV is scheduled for March 30 to April 1. PCV is a free event and visitors stay in the campus dorms. Meals are provided. Participants are responsible for their own transportation.

For more information, contact



the Admissions Office by phone at or Admission@ctsfw.edu. To register, go to ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events and scroll down to "Campus Visits."

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism



This is a precious year to all Lutherans — the 500th birthday of the beginning of Luther’s blessed discovery of the Gospel and his rebellion related to the beliefs and celebrations of the Roman Catholic Church. This article is the first of a monthly series covering topics and historical events leading up to Oct. 31, 1517, the date of the posting of the 95 Theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Germany.

The Event

On Nov. 11, 1483, the day after his birth, Martin Luther was baptized in the Roman Catholic Church of St. Peter and Paul in Eisleben, Germany, on the feast day of St. Martin of Tours — hence his name, Martin.

Why was he baptized the day after birth? At the time, the infant mortality rate was 60 percent. In addition, the question still lingered ... what happens to a baby who dies before being baptized? It was the belief in Luther’s days that a dead infant, not baptized, might forfeit heaven.

What Luther Says

Luther proclaimed that Holy Baptism, one of seven present day Roman Catholic sacraments, was only one of two truly Holy Sacraments instituted by Christ, the second one being Holy Communion. The others, he professed, were only rituals and good works,



void of the path to grace and salvation.

Luther: “It is decreed by God that whatever is not faith avails nothing...baptism is not our work but God’s.”

Augustine: “When the Word is joined to the element (water) it becomes a sacrament.”

Luther’s introduction to the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in the *Small Catechism* states: “Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended (included, or together with) in God’s command and connected (combined) with God’s word.”

He goes on to say: “If I am baptized, I have the promise that I shall be saved and have eternal life both in soul and body...baptism is a treasure which God gives us and faith grasps...a treasure comprehended (included) and offered to us in the Word and received by faith.” “A person can believe although he is not

baptized. But if one were not able to be baptized he is nonetheless not damned provided that he believes the Gospel. Baptism is useless without faith” (the gift of eternal life, resulting from Baptism, is not a gift that God gives those who do not profess faith in Him, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ).

The LCMS’ Doctrinal Position

The LCMS, you and I, are Lutherans because we accept the illustrations, explanations and writings of Dr. Martin Luther, not as substitute teachings for the biblical Word of God, but for their basis in the Word of God.

We in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod believe that baptism works forgiveness of sins, rescues us from death and the devil and gives eternal salvation to all those who believe this as the words and promises of God declared. As Christ our Lord says:

“Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

Mark 16:16

The doctrinal statements published by Synod regarding the baptizing of infants who die before being baptized include, in part, the following:

- (1) There is some basis for the hope that God has a method, not revealed to us, by which He works faith in the children of Christians dying without Baptism; the same is not true of children of non-Christians.
- (2) Baptizing stillborn children is not sanctioned. Baptism is for the living only.

The LCMS does not believe that Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation. Mark 16:16 implies that it is not the absence of Baptism that condemns a person but the absence of faith. Baptism dare not be despised or willfully neglected; it is commanded by God. It is not considered a ritual but a powerful and miraculous means of grace by which God grants faith and the forgiveness of sins. We believe that infants and adults should be baptized and not denied baptism because of infancy, youth or age.

Next month’s topic is “Education and the Catechisms.”

DISTRICT CALLS/CHANGES

Calls accepted

- ▶ **The Rev. Brian Earl**, candidate status, St. Louis, to Lutheran Church of Chai V' Shalom, St. Louis
- ▶ **The Rev. Thomas Thierfelder**, Faith, Carbondale, Colo., to St. John's, Ellinwood, Kan.

Calls declined

- ▶ **The Rev. Douglas Escue**, Immanuel, Santa Fe, N.M., from Immanuel, Albuquerque, N.M.
- ▶ **The Rev. Pedro Lopez**, Iglesia Luterana, Springfield, Va., from Trinity, Sterling, Colo.

Calls extended

- ▶ Beautiful Savior, Anchorage, Alaska, to **the Rev. Jacob Dickerhoff**, candidate status, Erie, Colo.



- ▶ Faith, Buena Vista, Colo., to **the Rev. Todd Frusti**, Trinity, Davison, Mich.
- ▶ Messiah, Longmont, Colo., to **the Rev. Joel Haak**, Trinity, Rochester, Minn.

Transfers

- ▶ **Marilyn Heintz**, emeritus, Colorado Springs, Colo., Northern Illinois District to Rocky Mountain District
- ▶ **Dawn Kohn**, commissioned minister, candidate status, Michigan District to Rocky Mountain District

Removed from roster

- ▶ **Tammy Schoenhals**, Mount Olive, Aurora, Colo.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

22-28

National Lutheran Schools Week
"Upon This Rock," Is. 26:4

MARCH

Nurturing the Faith 2018

6 New Mexico 7 North Denver

9 South Denver 10 Utah

March issue deadline: Jan. 16



Send news to Jan Hoener:

- ▶ communications@rm.lcms.org
- ▶ 5446 Knoll Place, Highlands Ranch, CO 80130

LHM offers ONLINE MISSION TRIP

Over the past five years, Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) has been blessed to take school children in North America to four continents to see how people live and the Gospel is shared in different cultures. Students "travel" to these locations through dynamic videos and online interactive opportunities.



In 2017, LHM is excited to take students to Madagascar, a land filled with fascinating people and cultures as well as amazing opportunities to share the Good News!

The 2017 Online Mission Trip to Madagascar will be held during Lutheran Schools Week, Jan. 23-27. For more information about the trip, including registration for your school, visit lhm.org/onlinemissiontrips.

'Contemplate' Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Contemplate is an event for college-age or older potential students. It provides an opportunity to learn more about life in the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, community and the preparation that leads to service as a pastor, missionary, chaplain or deaconess in the LCMS.

The next Contemplate events are scheduled for March 9-11 and Oct. 5-7. Campus tours take place on Thursday afternoon. The welcome reception and dinner Thursday evening allows visitors to meet seminary faculty in a casual setting. Participants are paired with a student ambassador who can discuss and answer questions from a student's perspective. Sessions designed to give an overview of the formation for ministry take place after dinner.

Additional sessions on Friday focus on the spiritual and personal aspects of the decision-making process, as well as provide opportunities to choose from presentations on the academic program, resident field education, vicarage

or internship year, financial aid and housing. Friday afternoon offers an opportunity to sit in on seminary classes. A student panel discussion takes place later that evening.

The event concludes on Saturday morning with presentations on the admissions process, tours of married and single student housing and time to schedule individual appointments with admissions counselors and/or the life transitions coordinator.

Registration, housing and all meals are provided at no cost to participants. Participants are responsible for their own transportation. If arriving by air, bus or train, please provide your full itinerary as the seminary offers complimentary shuttles.

The registration deadline is two weeks before each event. For more information and to register, go to csl.edu/admissions/visit-us/contemplate, or contact the seminary at 800-822-9545 or admissions@csl.edu