



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

Sing to the Lord a new song!



“Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.”

— Ps. 98:1-5

It's the beginning of a new year and what does this mean for you? Some thoughts to once again ponder as we start another year — 2018!



Rev. Allen Anderson
District President

Most of us at some time have had a desire for something new. That new thing could be anything from clothes and shoes to a new house, a new car, a new computer or phone, a new job or even new relationships. Whether the new thing is expensive, flashy or a change in circumstances, we just want that something new. It's exciting and thrilling to get. Have you noticed, though, how soon the thrill and excitement wear off?

As you read the three verses from Psalm 98, what is the psalmist saying to us?

God offers us something new that will never grow old: a new song. It's the song that comes with God's salvation, the gift he gives us through his Son. This is the gift of eternal life with God, a life that is infinitely better than any we can achieve on our own.

It's the gift God gave us by sending his Son to live with us, to dwell among us, to bear with us and for us, to take our sins upon himself and carry them to the cross! There He died for us because we absolutely cannot pay the price for our own sins.

Then on the third day He rose from the grave and showed us that we too will rise with Him



to dwell in His home, the new heavens and the new earth, for all eternity.

This puts a new song in our mouths, the song of God's salvation. What a great way to begin a new year and to live each day singing to the Lord a new song!

Have a happy, healthy new year!

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

"Be still, and know that I am God." Ps. 46:10

1500s come to life in El Paso

On Saturday, Oct. 28, Ascension Lutheran Church, El Paso, Texas, hosted a circuit-wide Reformation Walk celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The walk included 10 stops in which significant characters and events of the Reformation were depicted by members of the circuit congregations. The event concluded with a Reformation service.

Right: One of the stations showed the birthplace of Luther in Eisleben. Luther's parents are portrayed by Phillip and Mabel Barraza.



◀ Joe Kellogg portrays Prince Frederick at Wartburg Castle, where Luther was kept safe in hiding.



▶ The Rev. Richard Schlak portrays Luther, who helped nuns escape the Roman Catholic Church in empty fish barrels.

Faith welcomes new pastor

The Rev. Robert Oeltjen was installed as pastor of Faith Lutheran in Craig, Colo., on Nov. 19. Participating in the installation service were, from left, the Revs. Mel Mertens (Western Circuit visitor), John Peterson (proclaiming minister), Oeltjen, Craig Henningfield (Concordia, Steamboat Springs) and David Fischer (district fourth vice-president).





Library display commemorates Reformation

Display cases in the entrance way of the Clovis Carver Public Library in Clovis, N.M., showcased a 500th Reformation anniversary exhibit during October. The exhibit followed the theme of the Reformation's Three Solas: *Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia and Sola Fide*.

Each of the Solas included captions and quotes from Martin Luther. Also on display were commemorative medallions designed by Scott R. Blazek since 1996.

The Clovis Christian Ministerial Alliance, with more than 16 churches, participated in a community-wide Reformation Walk on Oct. 29. Three LCMS churches, including Faith in Christ, Portals, N. M.; St. John, Lariat, Texas; and Immanuel, Clovis, N.M., hosted a 500th Reformation service that same afternoon.



March issue deadline: Jan. 15

Send news to Jan Hoener:

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

Need help sharing your faith?

Every One His Witness covers *what, why* and *how* to of evangelism

LCMS Witness and Outreach Ministry has announced a new Lutheran evangelism resource, *Every One His Witness*, now available through Concordia Publishing House (cph.org).

The Rev. Dr. Mark Wood, director of Witness and Outreach, notes, "Every single baptized believer in Jesus is called to be a witness of His love to the world" while acknowledging that Christians often feel "inadequate, unfit and unqualified" for such work.

Says Wood: "If you want to share the love of Christ with the people in your life, *Every One His Witness* is good news for you! We talk not only about the 'what' and the 'why' of witnessing but the 'how to.' We don't burden you with a bunch of scriptures and memorization and all those things that make witnessing seem daunting. Instead, we encourage you to rely on the Holy Spirit, who guides His witnesses into sharing this Good News with the very people He's put into their lives."

At the core of *Every One His Witness* is "LASSIE," an acronym for "Listen, Ask, Seek, Share, Invite and Encourage." The six parts of "LASSIE" are not steps in a process but elements of an overall approach that is geared toward helping people witness in their everyday lives. The emphasis is on reaching out to the people with whom one naturally comes into contact, putting "sound doctrine" into "practical action."

Every One His Witness also emphasizes joy: the joy, says Wood, "that Jesus intended us to have all along ... the joy that he invites us to share



Each kit includes one DVD plus materials for 12 people. The cost of the kit is \$129.99 (plus shipping). Supplemental items also are available.

in as we bring Good News to those who are lost."

For more information about the program, please visit lcms.org/witness-outreach or [facebook.com/EveryOneHisWitness](https://www.facebook.com/EveryOneHisWitness).

Please report your stats

Congregations should be on the lookout this month for a mailing from LCMS Rosters, Statistics and Research Services on reporting your 2017 statistics. The mailing provides information on how to submit online figures for such things as membership, worship attendance and contributions from members. Reports are due by Feb. 28.

OGT recognized on 'Today'

Orphan Grain Train (OGT) gained national recognition when it was featured on NBC's "Today" show after delivering 35,000 pounds of groceries to Trinity-Klein Lutheran Church, Spring, Texas, following flooding caused by Hurricane Harvey.

Along with the groceries, OGT delivered \$10,000 worth of sheet rock and \$20,000 worth of wall insulation and construction equipment.

Al Roker chose Orphan Grain Train's relief efforts for his "Lend a Hand" segment. Roker interviewed Trinity-Klein's pastor, the Rev. Chris Singer, along with other members of the church. Singer and many members of his congregation were among those who lost their homes in the flooding.

OGT thanks all who made this shipment and other relief efforts possible through their generous donations and prayers.



Volunteers from Trinity-Klein Lutheran Church, Spring, Texas, gut a home in Spring in early September following damage from Hurricane Harvey.

DISTRICT CALLS/CHANGES



Calls accepted

- ▶ **The Rev. Thomas Barton**, Grace, El Paso, Texas, to Grace/Trinity, Cheyenne Wells/Kit Carson, Colo.
- ▶ **The Rev. A. Brian Flamme**, associate pastor, Hope, Aurora, Colo., to senior pastor, Immanuel, Roswell, N.M.,
- ▶ **The Rev. Robert Oeltjen**, candidate status, Denver, to Faith, Craig, Colo.

Calls declined

- ▶ **The Rev. Victor Young**, Our Savior, Commerce City, Colo., to Mount Hope, Evergreen, Colo.

Calls extended

- ▶ Family of Faith, Colorado Springs, Colo., senior pastor, to **the Rev. Kristopher Morris**, associate pastor, Christ the King, Lake Ozark, Mo.,
- ▶ Peace With Christ, Aurora, Colo., senior

pastor, to **the Rev. James Richardson**, Crown of Life, Colleyville, Texas

- ▶ Our Savior, Vernal, Utah, to **the Rev. Adam Welton**, Zion/Trinity, Presho/Reliance, S.D.
- ▶ Redeemer, Fort Collins, Colo., to **Timothy Lindeman**, Trinity, Grand Island, Neb.

Change of status

- ▶ **The Rev. Norman Barnette Jr.**, Family of Faith, Falcon, Colo., to emeritus
- ▶ **The Rev. Francis Koessel**, Redeemer, Deming, N.M., to emeritus
- ▶ **Mary Joann Schmidt**, Emmanuel, Rifle, Colo., to candidate status

Transfers

- ▶ **The Rev. Norman Barnette Jr.**, emeritus, Rocky Mountain District to Florida-Georgia District

- ▶ **The Rev. Kevin Cramm**, Alamogordo, N.M., emeritus, Oklahoma District to Rocky Mountain District
- ▶ **The Rev. Francis Koessel**, Laramie, Wyo., emeritus, Rocky Mountain District to Wyoming District
- ▶ **Mary Joann Schmidt**, candidate status, Knoxville, Tenn., Rocky Mountain District to Mid-South District
- ▶ **The Rev. Jerome Troester**, Draper, Utah, emeritus, Nebraska District to Rocky Mountain District

Called to glory

- ▶ **Richard Aufdemberge**, emeritus, Highlands Ranch, Colo.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 21-27

National Lutheran Schools Week



MARCH

Nurturing the Faith

5 New Mexico **6** North Denver
8 South Denver **9** Utah

JUNE 14-16

Rocky Mountain District Convention, Colorado Springs