



/ AUGUST 2019

PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

Missions far and near



Rev. Duane Meissner, LCMS missionary to Belize, greets students before lunch at St. Alphonsus school in 2016, in Seine Bight, Belize.

By Rev. Roger Schlechte

District President

This year we celebrate 125 years of international mission work in the LCMS! It was in 1894 that Rev. Theodore Naether was called to India as the Synod's first missionary. His work began with preaching God's Word, establishing Lutheran schools and writing tracts in Tamil, which he had studied in Germany. The 40 tracts written in five years presented opportunities for dialogue with the people.

Missionary work seems "glamorous" to some. Yet that's far from the truth!



Rather, it's often sacrificial.

Pastor Naether was faithful in preaching the truths of God's Word, both Law and Gospel. However, his work was cut short when bubonic plague struck in 1904. Selflessly, he ministered to people who had the plague. When he realized that he was dying, he dressed himself in his white suit in preparation for burial. His pregnant wife remained with him to the end.



Other missionaries and their families have made sacrifices, including experiencing the death of children. Families endure hardships, sometimes threats. Sons and daughters grow up minus the benefits of some of the material things that young people enjoy in the United States. Grandparents and grandchildren forgo years of close contact and the formation of special bonds because they live on different continents. Yet complaints remain minimal.

The purpose of international mission work has always been to share the precious truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our desire is that those of other world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism or animism will come to know Jesus, that it is only through faith in Him that anyone can be saved.

God has greatly blessed these efforts! Since 1894, international mission work through our church body has grown to 90 nations. In 2019, about 130 missionaries and 200 accompanying family members serve in the international mission field. Missionary work sometimes becomes inter-generational. Missionaries' sons and daughters, who spent their formative years on foreign soil, become missionaries themselves.

Theological education has become a significant part of international mission work. Seminaries and training programs have been developed to train pastors, deaconesses and evangelists in other countries. Short-term mission teams have become increasingly popular; more than 300 individuals

See **MESSAGE**, Page 2



Connect college students with campus ministries

Campus ministry plays a crucial role in a young adult's life as he or she is transitioning between home and college. Resources exist for students, parents (or other relatives) and pastors who want to ensure that the fellowship of LCMS members is available to those attending colleges and universities both inside and outside the Rocky Mountain District.

To find out if a college or university in the Rocky Mountain District has a campus ministry or is served by a local LCMS congregation, visit rm.lcms.org/ministries/campus-ministry.

To know if one or more LCMS congregations exist in the city where a college student is headed, use the LCMS locator link, found in the upper right-hand corner at lcms.org. Listings provide the web address and contact information for the pastor or church office, worship service times and more.

The University Lutheran Chapel (ULC) in Boulder, Colo., has been ministering to University of Colorado students for more than 50 years. Its pastor, Rev. Joshua Hayes, can offer advice to those seeking to keep a student engaged with a church community during this very vulnerable time of transition. He can be contacted at 303-443-8720 or pastor@universitylutheranchapel.com.

For additional resources and to learn more about LCMS Campus Ministry visit lcms.org/campusministry.

Continuing education course offered at Trinity, Denver

Is Lutheran theology — as Martin Luther himself developed it — still relevant today? In a post-modern world that challenges the very existence of truth, can Lutherans still make use of Luther? Explore this topic with Rev. Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie, chairman of Historical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., Aug. 19-23 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Denver.

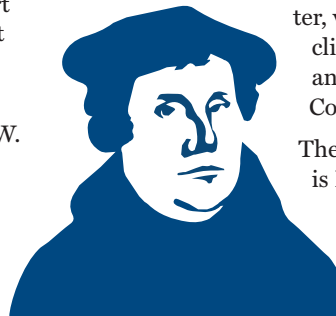
Trinity is located at 4225 W. Yale Ave.

MacKenzie also serves as the Forest E. and Frances H. Ellis Professor of Historical Theology.

After reading some of Luther's most significant writings and recalling their context in Luther's life and career, students will explore the reformer's insights that are still important and discuss ways in which Lutherans today demonstrate their relevance to contemporary society.

For more information and to register, visit ctsfiw.edu/ctsfiw-events, click "Continuing Education" and scroll to the "Denver, Colorado" link.

The coordinator for the course is Rev. Adrian Sherrill, who can be reached at pastorsherrill@gototrinity.com or 303-548-1495.



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

participated in these trips during the past year!

The Rocky Mountain District is directly involved in international work in Belize. Rev. Duane Meissner, LCMS missionary to Belize, spoke to the 2018 Rocky Mountain District Convention regarding the work there. Ysleta Lutheran Mission, El Paso, Texas, brings the Gospel across the border into Mexico. Last year, Rev. Stephen Heimer conducted over 20 baptisms in one day in Anapra!

At the Synod convention in July, delegates and attendees heard presentations from the four regions in which the LCMS conducts international mission work: Eurasia, Asia, Latin America

and the Caribbean, and Africa. It's incredible how international work has expanded over the past 125 years! All praise and thanks be to God who has done great things!

The international mission field has moved to American soil. As a result of immigration and foreign students studying in the United States, people of other religions inhabit our colleges, workplaces and neighborhoods.

In a sense, you may have the possibility of being an international missionary! You might be able to develop relationships with those of another culture. As you do, live the Christian faith, love your neighbor and use the opportunities that arise to speak of Jesus!

Pastor Schlechte
rschlechte@rm.lcms.org

October issue deadline: Aug. 15

Send news to Jan Hoener: > communications@rm.lcms.org
> 5446 Knoll Place,
Highlands Ranch, CO 80130



Lutheran Church of Messiah welcomes you to October conference

By Rev. Josh Schmidt

Associate Pastor, Lutheran Church of Messiah, Grand Junction, Colo.

“Welcome to Colorful Colorado.” The sign stood out to me as I made my way to my new home. After accepting my first call out of seminary in 2018 to Lutheran Church and School of Messiah in Grand Junction, I really did not know what to expect. I had traveled in the West before — even lived in Utah and California — but, now at my first call, this was bound to be my new home.

With my parents living a 24-hour drive away, it would have been easy to feel a little isolated or stranded out here in the high desert. But this location offers a place to “get away” in a good sense. No matter how far or distant it may seem from the Midwest — separated by mileage and culture — here at Messiah, we offer an outpost for strengthening the faith and Christian community; a place to refresh one another.

Not too long after my move here, I was glad to welcome Rev. Dr. Timothy Sales-

ka, my professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL). In a workshop he presented, he walked us through Psalm 23, making this song we all know and love come alive again. He reminded us that the psalms are prayers that we can pray too; that when we are found “wanting,” our Lord Jesus Christ becomes all that we could ever need.

This summer, Rev. Dr. Leopoldo Sanchez, another professor at Concordia Seminary, made the trip out. He offered a summer camp encouraging us to live in the Holy Ghost. It was a time we all needed to learn how to live and rest, to be renewed and defended by our God who dwells in us.

These seminary workshops have allowed our church to become a bridge between the heartland of Missouri Synod Lutheranism and its outskirts. Being the sole LCMS congregation in the area, we need the strength and the support. Our pastors are encouraged, our lay people are taught and we even have a few prospective seminary students who

get first-hand experience learning from professors. But besides providing for our own benefit, we see the need to give you a mountaintop to come to and be refreshed, renewed and strengthened. Whether you’re from the area or from elsewhere (we have had visitors from Arizona, Illinois and Kentucky for these workshops), this is a place you can come.

As we continue to grow in our ability to be there for you, we will also have a conference focused on the Reformation this October! Rev. Dr. Bob Rosin, CSL professor emeritus of Historical Theology, has graciously offered to fly out here with his wife to have this fellowship with us and bask in the freedom to witness the colors of Colorado. **Mark your calendars and join us Oct. 24-26!**

Pastors, wives, lay people — all are invited to look at the renewal of grace found in the Reformation with one of its foremost scholars! Stay tuned and like our Facebook page (Lutheran Church and School of Messiah) for more information on registration, pricing and other events. Our senior pastor, Rev. Mike Redeker, the congregation and I would love to make you feel at home here as you prepare to share the Gospel we all so desperately need and love.

PALMCON III is Oct. 16-18

The Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute (LHMI) is holding its third Partners in Latino Ministry Conference (PALMCON) Oct. 16-18, in El Paso, Texas. PALMCON III will focus on “The Latino Family—Our First Mission Challenge.” PALMCON I and PALMCON II, which were held respectively in 2013 and 2016, were well received by participants that included Hispanic ministry workers, missionaries and congregation leaders interested in Latino outreach. The format, which combines presentations from excellent speakers followed by table discussions of related issues, allows participants to gain a wide range of perspectives, insights and resources



Mark Kempff of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, will be a PALMCON III speaker.

to enhance their ministry efforts. It also provides opportunities for connections to be established between workers who are often isolated from their peers.

The primary speaker is Dr. David Hormachea, missionary, author, pastor and radio personality. He is the founding president of *Regreso al Hogar* (Coming Home), a ministry that focuses on family issues. Additional speakers include Mark

Kempff, a Latin American missionary for 33 years who now serves as assistant director of the Center for Hispanic Studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. After each speaker’s presentation, there will be an opportunity for participants to discuss issues raised by or other issues corollary to the presentation. The primary presentation will be in Spanish with translation devices available for English speakers.

Scholarship funds are available to off-set registration fees if local sources are not able to completely cover this professional development opportunity. Registration forms may be found at missionaryinstitute.org or by contacting Richard Schlak, LHMI director, at 915-790-2300. Those interested in scholarships would be advised to register early. The registration fee increases after Sept. 1.

DISTRICT CALLS/CHANGES

Calls extended

- Christ, Breckenridge, Colo., to **Rev. Larry McGurer**, Peace, Arvada, Colo., missionary-at-large
- Immanuel, Albuquerque, N.M., to **Emily Geisler**, candidate status, Fort Collins, Colo.
- St. Paul's, Prior Lake, Minn., to **Rev. Dr. Brad Stoltzenow**, Shepherd of the Hills, Centennial, Colo., senior pastor
- Zion, Brighton, Colo., to **Anna Polson**, candidate status, Commerce City, Colo.

Calls accepted

- **Rev. Thaine Kister**, Trinity/Grace/Trinity, Bellingham/Correll/Odessa, Minn., to Christ the King/Hope, Los Lunas/Socorro, N.M.
- **Rev. Larry McGurer**, Peace, Arvada, Colo., missionary-at-large, to Christ, Breckenridge, Colo.
- **Dr. George Naeem**, Biblical Orthodox Lutheran Mission, Littleton, Colo., to Christ Our Redeemer, Bennett, Colo.
- **Brenda Olsen**, Lutheran School Association, Decatur, Ill., to Redeemer, Salt Lake City, Utah
- **Betsy Schroeder**, candidate status, Hankinson, N.D. to Redeemer, Salt Lake City, Utah

Calls declined

- **Pamela Arguto**, Pueblo, Colo., candidate status, to Immanuel, Albuquerque, N.M.
- **The Rev. Eric Eichinger**, Bethel, Clearwater, Fla., to Zion, Brighton, Colo.
- **Brett Hardecopf**, St. John, Elk River, Minn., to Immanuel, Albuquerque, N.M.
- **The Rev. Ronnie Koch**, St. Paul, Fredericksburg, Iowa, to Immanuel/Immanuel, Artesia/Carlsbad, N.M.
- **Dean Scheele**, First, Glencoe, Minn., to Immanuel, Albuquerque, N.M.

Transfers

- **The Rev. Kraig Gilkey**, emeritus, Sterling, Colo., Northwest District to Rocky Mountain District

- **Kathryn Keogh**, emeritus, Prior Lake, Minn., Rocky Mountain District to Minnesota South District
- **Jane Withee**, candidate status, Rapid City, S.D., Rocky Mountain District to South Dakota District

Called to glory

- **The Rev. Robert Schrank**, emeritus, Salt Lake City, Utah



Life conference to be held Aug. 24

Join fellow Lutherans in learning more about standing up for life at the regional conference of Lutherans For Life, to be held at Hope Lutheran Church, Aurora, Colo., on Saturday, Aug. 24.

Guest presenters include:

- **Rev. Jonathan G. Lange**, pastor of Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Evanston, Wyo., and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Kemmerer, Wyo., who will speak on “Confessing Life with Boldness and Joy.”
- **Rev. Michael Salemink**, executive director of Lutherans For Life, who will share how “A Sixty-Seven-Cent Check Saved my Life.”
- **Mona Fuerstenau**, director of Ministry Partnerships for Bethesda Lutheran Communities, whose talk is titled “Did God Really Say Indispensable?”
- **Rev. Roger Wohletz**, who will speak on “Responding to Assisted Suicide.”

For more information about the speakers and their topics, and to register for the conference, please visit lutheransforlife.org/conference.

Considering pastoral, deaconess ministry?

The **Prayerfully Consider Visit** invites men and women of all ages to explore the pastoral and diaconal training happening at **Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Ind.**, and gives a time for contemplation on the vocations of pastor and deaconess. The event will be held Oct. 10-12.

The Prayerfully Consider Visit (PCV) offers prospective students an occasion to explore the campus, engage the students and faculty, experience the rich fellowship and worship, and consider the vocation of pastor or deaconess.

During this three-day visit, prospective students gather as a group to gain a richer and fuller picture of life as a seminary student and to investigate the options available to them at CTSFW.

For more information and to register, visit ctsfiw.edu/ctsfiw-events/prayerfully-consider-visit.

Contemplate is an event for college-age or older potential students, providing an opportunity to learn more about life in the **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis**, and the preparation that leads to service as a pastor, missionary, chaplain or deaconess in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Contemplate encompasses time focused on discerning a vocation, attending classes and interacting with current students. A campus tour takes place on Thursday afternoon followed by a welcome reception and dinner with current students and student leadership. Participants are paired with a student mentor who can discuss and answer questions from a student's perspective.

For more information and to register, visit csl.edu/admissions/visit/contemplate.