



/ DECEMBER 2019

PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS



What do you imagine the young virgin Mary must have been like as a person? A second question might be, "What type of woman would God choose to mother His Son?"

Generally speaking, at that time girls married shortly after puberty. While Mary was likely young in physical years, we might imagine that she was advanced beyond her biological age in spiritual wisdom and maturity.

Even though Mary questioned the angel and had to feel overwhelmed, she maintained a willingness to be God's servant. She took on her new responsi-



Rev. Roger Schlechte
District President

bility seriously, considering herself to be a "servant of the Lord" (Luke 1:38).

How did Mary handle the inevitable gossip of a pregnancy outside of marriage in the small town of Nazareth? Can you imagine what other young girls in the community might have thought and said? What was it like for Mary's parents? Surely, all three of them would have been the talk of the town!

Consider Mary speaking to her cousin Elizabeth, recorded in Luke 1:46-55. We sing these words, now called the



"Magnificat," in the Order of Vespers. Mary demonstrates knowledge of the truths of God's Word. God chose a spiritually mature young woman to mother His Son!

Instead of a short trip to the hospital for delivery of her baby, she traveled with Joseph to Bethlehem, a four- or five-day journey. God, who through the prophet Micah foretold the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, orchestrated this trip through Caesar Augustus, who had declared a census (paying taxes), requiring them to go to their hometown. Mary was a strong, young woman!

Mary and Joseph took their responsibility seriously. Can you imagine how frantic they must have been 12 years later when they discovered, after a day's journey back to Nazareth after celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem, that Jesus was not with His friends? Think what it must have been like for them as they carefully searched through the streets of Jerusalem, knocking on doors and retiring at night with sound sleep eluding them. Had they failed God? It's little wonder that Mary scolds Jesus when they finally find him in the Temple, sparring with the religious leaders.

Yet, Mary "treasured up all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:51), as she did after the shepherds' visit to see the newly born Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:19).

While we do not worship Mary, she was "blessed among women" as her cousin Elizabeth exclaimed (Luke 1:43). We hold her in high regard. She's a

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District educators gather in Breckenridge

Andrew McPeak, keynote speaker for the Rocky Mountain District Professional Church Workers Conference, held in Breckenridge, Colo., in October, helped educators understand — and how to better connect with — this generation of students, known as Generation Z. Each conference attendee received a copy of the book he co-authored with Tim Elmore, *Marching Off the Map*.

After each keynote session, educators met in small groups to discuss McPeak's insights.

In addition to keynote sessions, a num-

ber of breakout sessions were offered and led by district educators. Following the opening worship service, three educators and administrators were honored for their tireless efforts in providing a quality, Christ-centered education for their students (see photos below).

Four district schools — Grace Lutheran School, Sandy, Utah; Mission Lutheran School, Las Cruces, N.M.; Trinity Lutheran School, Frankton, Colo.; and Peace with Christ Lutheran School, Aurora, Colo. — were recognized for achieving National Lutheran School Accreditation during the past year.



Andrew McPeak makes his presentation to district educators.



Shelly Davis, principal of Grace Lutheran School, Sandy, Utah, was named Administrator of the Year.



Kristin Quante, a third-grade teacher at St. John's Lutheran School, Denver, was named Educator of the Year.



Sue Walker of Holy Trinity, Riverton, Utah, was named Early Learning Center Director of the Year.



Schools that received National Lutheran School Accreditation (and the representative accepting the certificate) were, from left, Grace Lutheran School, Sandy, Utah (Shelly Davis, principal); Mission Lutheran School, Las Cruces, N.M. (Mark Angell, principal of Immanuel, Albuquerque, who received the award on Mission's behalf); Trinity Lutheran School, Frankton, Colo. (Deanna Ayers, principal); and Peace with Christ Christian School, Aurora, Colo. (David Robinson, principal).

MESSAGE

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great example for all Christians as she demonstrates responsibility, humility, conscientiousness, thoughtful reflection and a willingness to serve our Lord.

Elizabeth recognized the “blessedness of the fruit of her womb.” Through Jesus, you are blessed with the gift of God’s salvation via His life, death and resurrection. As you approach the celebration of the birth of Christ, thank God for His gift, Jesus, the greatest gift of all.

Pastor Schlechte
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Mission Grant helps children ‘foster faith in the forest’

The LWML Rocky Mountain District at its last convention awarded a \$5,000 “Fostering Faith in the Forest” Mission Grant to Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR). LVR has for many years served youth at summer camps, offering week-long experiences in nature. Some weeks are specifically reserved for children in foster care and their chaperones. They receive love and attention and learn of Jesus’ saving grace during this time. Many times, as the love of Jesus is shared, a one-on-one encounter from a loving counselor helps a child through a traumatizing period.

A week of camp for one child costs \$350 and includes food, housing, care from counselors, horse rides and basic utilities. This grant would allow 14 to 20 children from foster families with limited income to have a mountain-top experience at camp.

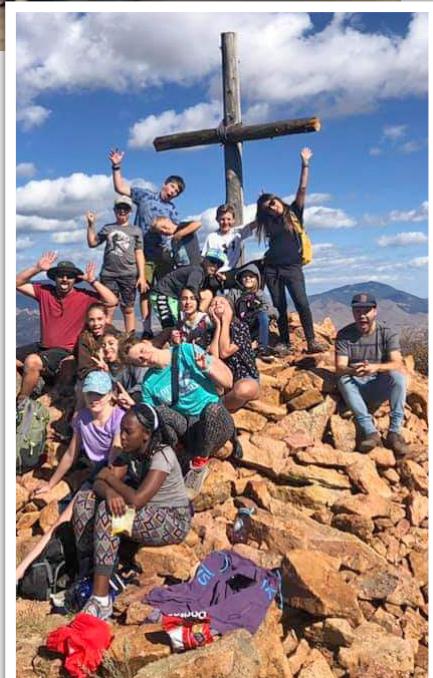
The “Fostering Faith in the Forest” grant is just one of 13 Mission Grants supported by the LWML Rocky Mountain District. Many of those grants are not fully funded. Please consider making a donation or increasing your Mite offerings as these grants must be funded by March 31, 2020. Please visit lwmlrmd.org for information about all the Mission Grants.

Enjoy the outdoors at LVR

Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) is a summer camp and retreat located in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. It offers summer camp experiences for youth that include rock climbing, rappelling, zip-lining, hiking, fishing, rafting, camp fires, crafts, rocket launching, time in God’s Word and so much more.

The week-long camp experiences are offered at a great value because LVR staff recognize the importance of every child getting a chance to attend summer camp. Camp changes lives!

LVR also offers long weekend retreats for adults and families such as the Great Rocky Mountain Campout, Men’s Retreat and Women’s Retreat. Staff would also love to host a retreat for your group! LVR has had church



groups attend for couple’s retreats, volunteer opportunities and youth gatherings. LVR provides the activities and food and you provide the programming.

Do you feel like your kids need outdoor education? LVR offers that, too!

Visit lvr.org. Make your next getaway or outdoor adventure happen at LVR!

DISTRICT NEWS



Farewell Ron!

Ron Brandhorst (pictured in center, front row), long-time member of the Denver Lutheran High School faculty, was honored by the faculty and staff of Lutheran High School in Parker, Colo., during homecoming week in October. After making the Denver area his home for the past 50 years, Ron has moved to New Mexico. In the photo, current staff who were taught by Ron, or who taught with him at Denver Lutheran High School, say a fond farewell. We wish you the best, Ron, but will miss your stopping by to say "Howdy!"

DISTRICT CALLS/CHANGES

Calls extended

- Immanuel/Immanuel, Artesia/Carlsbad, N.M., to **Rev. Karl Wright**, candidate status, Alamosa, Colo.
- Immanuel, Clovis, N.M., to **Rev. Thomas Reeder Jr.**, St. Luke, Richland Center, Wis.
- Our Savior, Pagosa Springs, Colo., to **Rev. Christopher Gerdes**, candidate status, Pagosa Springs, Colo.

Calls accepted

- **Rev. Quintin Cundiff**, Calvary, Rio Rancho, N.M., to Trinity, Amherst, Neb.



- **Rev. Theodore Groth**, Beautiful Savior, Broomfield, Colo., to Trinity, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- **Rev. Juan Hormachea**, Parker, Colo., to Cordero de Dios, Denver, Colo.
- **Rev. Andrew Ross**, Bethlehem, Lakewood, Colo., senior administrative pastor to Christ, Costa Mesa, Calif., senior pastor

Calls declined

- **Rev. John Frahm III**, Trinity, Boulder Junction, Wis., to Immanuel/Immanuel, Artesia/Carlsbad, N.M.
- **Rev. Matthew Hall**, Faith, Bay City, Mich., to Zion, Brighton, Colo., associate pastor
- **Rev. Matthew Martin**, Trinity, Reeseville, Wis., to Mount Calvary, Gunnison, Colo.

Transfers

- **Bradley Ermeling**, candidate status, Estes Park, Colo., Pacific Southwest District to Rocky Mountain District

- **Dawn Groth**, candidate status, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Rocky Mountain District to Iowa District East
- **Emilee Nieman**, candidate status, Clovis, N.M., Rocky Mountain District to Texas District
- **Kenneth Schmidt**, emeritus, Aurora, Colo., Texas District to Rocky Mountain District

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