



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

KNOW THE TRUTH

Last month I began a series of articles in *Peaks and Valleys* regarding the focus for this triennium in the Rocky Mountain District. The three-fold focus is:

- ▶ Know the Truth
- ▶ Understand the Culture
- ▶ Live the Faith



Rev. Roger Schlechte
District President

This article expands on the first part of the focus, to “know the truth.” The phrase comes directly from Jesus’ words in John 8:31-32. These words, heard on Reformation Sunday are:

“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

In a world filled with dubious advertising, grandiose product claims and carefully worded warranties, it’s important to know the truth of products and guarantees.

Spiritually, it’s even more important to know the truth! Why? Because our eternal future is at stake!

In an arena where there are so many claims made by spiritual people, how does one know what is true? How do we know for certain that Christianity is

truth, and that Jesus is the only way of salvation?

Consider the Scriptures themselves. The Bible is comprised of 66 books, written over a period of 16 centuries. Hundreds of prophecies spoken in the Old Testament find their fulfillment in the New Testament. That’s astounding! How can this be? The Holy Spirit, guiding the process of these human writers, points us first and foremost to the way of salvation through Jesus Christ in the Scriptures.

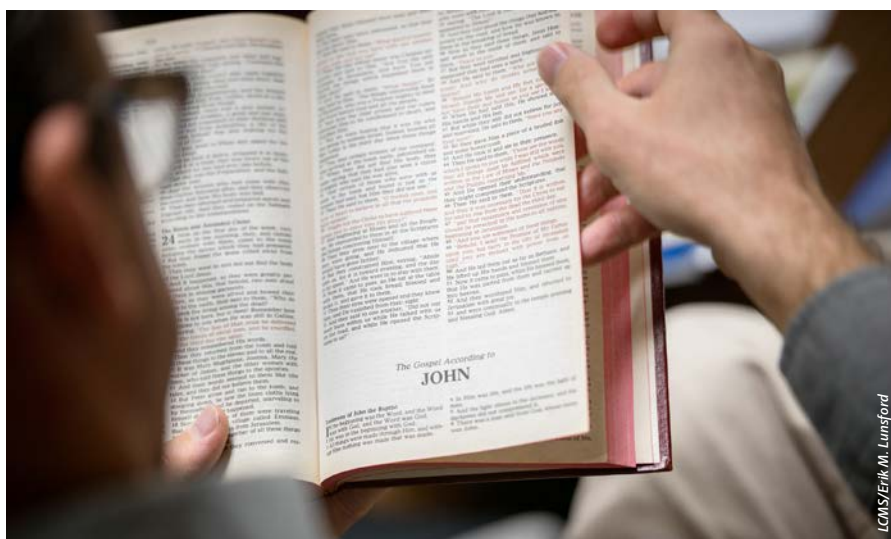
Have you ever read or heard something that seems to be too good to be true,

impossible to believe? Have you ever found Wikipedia or other websites to have inaccurate information? Have you ever questioned the validity of statements and claims made by other people?

Thomas did. He questioned his fellow disciples. He couldn’t trust that they were giving him accurate information. When he was told by those who had gathered on Sunday evening that Jesus had risen, he wouldn’t believe. He insisted on seeing Jesus’ scars with his own eyes.

A week later, Jesus obliged and showed Thomas the scars remaining from the piercing of his hands, feet and side. Thomas then confessed that Jesus was

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LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

District members support OGT



Volunteers don their hair nets to assemble Mercy Meals.

Immanuel Lutheran Church LWML, Colorado Springs, has started a Mercy Meal program. Their meals will be donated to Orphan Grain Train (OGT) for shipment to those in need. The first day of meal preparation was truly a learning experience and yielded 12 full boxes, which equals 2,592 meals!

Rev. Jonathan Kern, Immanuel pastor, began the day with a beautiful prayer and then the volunteers donned their hair nets. A big thanks to Marilyn and Duane Grasz, Karen Mann, Pastor Kern and all the participants.

On Dec. 10, volunteers at the OGT collection center in Castle Rock, Colo., loaded a container of clothes for those in need in Georgia (the former Soviet republic). This load included layette kits from LWML members, 166 boxes of beautiful quilts from the quilters of the Holy Cross and Rock of Ages congregations in Colorado Springs, and quilts from Berlinski's Ladies of Aurora, Colo. The shipment also had 58 boxes of winter scarfs and 96 boxes of linens left over from a garage-sale fundraiser.

Thank you, everyone, for your time, gifts and muscles.

Active adults to meet Feb. 9

The Rocky Mountain District Active Adult One Day Seminar will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 9, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo. (located at 2100 Wadsworth Blvd.)

Rev. Dr. Michael Eckelkamp, senior pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Denver, will be the keynote speaker. His two presentations will be on "Change Is Inevitable" and "Sharing the Never-Changing Good News."

Falling is one of the dangers that face those of an advanced age. Joan DePuy, RN, trauma outreach and injury prevention coordinator at Boulder Community Health, will present on ways to avoid falling.

The Orphan Grain Train story will be told by Dick and Sandra Eichacker. Attendees will be able to pack hygiene kits for disaster relief during the seminar. Materials for the kits will be purchased using the funds from registration fees and Thrivent Financial.

Please check with your church office for registration materials. The cost is \$20 per person.

LWML leaders get vital training in St. Louis

Four members of the LWML Rocky Mountain District attended the national Assembly of Leaders Conference held Nov. 7-10 in St. Louis. They gathered with leaders from 40 other districts under the theme "Follow the Leader." The conference is a collaborative effort to present practical leadership ideas, inspiration and hands-on activities, which will help district leaders communicate with women and men in their zones and congregations, and share the enthusiasm they have for the valuable work of the LWML.

Throughout the four days of training, Bible study, planning and fellowship, the 180 participants were reminded to look to Jesus as their leader. The group returned home with renewed enthusiasm for the LWML's work and are excited to begin sharing new ideas and resources with people throughout the district.



Attending the conference from the Rocky Mountain District were, from left, Rev. Quintin Cundiff, junior counselor; Debbie Yocky, LWML district president; Kelsey Hall, committee on Young Women chairperson; and Tanya Hall, *Tidings* editor.

News from Navajo

As a part of the Christmas celebration at Shepherd of the Valley, Navajo, N.M., youth packed and distributed boxes of gifts to elders in the community. As they passed out the gifts, they sang carols and prayed with senior citizens and their families. At a time of year when it is easy to lose sight of God's gift to us in Christ, these young people put into practice Jesus' words that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 19:35).

A group of 40 children worshiped on Christmas Eve. Some came with their parents and others came on their own. Many of them returned from activities they attended over the summer, like vacation Bible school. They witnessed a Christmas program with angels, the Wise Men and shepherds. It was a great celebration of Christ's birth, the Good News of great joy for all people.

Earlier in the fall, members of Trinity Lutheran Church, Wahaiwa, Hawaii, visited Shepherd of the Valley for



Rev. Tim Norton leads children as they participate in the Christmas Eve service at Shepherd of the Valley.

four days and led devotions and crafts with the families at church. They also shared a little bit of Hawaiian culture, with a hula and Hawaiian food. It was the second visit for the group.

In-between major events, Rev. Tim Norton's days are filled with being a part of people's everyday lives and showing them how God is present through it all. This includes being

with them as they haul wood and watching them participate in sporting events, Miss Navajo pageants and kinaalda (the coming-of-age ceremony for young women), along with maintaining the primary mission focus of worship and Bible study.

Two more people were baptized this past fall, and for that the congregation praises God.

DISTRICT CALLS/ CHANGES

Calls accepted

- ▶ **The Rev. Charles Westby**, Westminster, Colo., candidate status, to Emmanuel, Rifle, Colo.

Change of Status

- ▶ **The Rev. Craig Thomas**, Mount Hope, Evergreen, Colo., to emeritus

Calls declined

- ▶ **The Rev. Geoffrey Wagner**, Christ Our Savior, Elizabeth, Colo., from Immanuel, Clovis, N.M.



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

his Lord and God! The disciples had given Thomas true and accurate information!

The words of Jesus following that encounter are significant:

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed”

— **John 20:29**

That's us! We've not seen Jesus, yet we believe. Why? Because God's Word is truth! Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Him!

Know the truth!

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April issue deadline: Feb. 15



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38TH BIENNIAL LWML CONVENTION



Celebrating in Mobile 'the partnership in the Gospel'



Early registration is now open

IN PHOTO: Participants pose with the Martin Luther Playmobil cutout in the exhibit hall during the LWML's 36th Biennial Convention in 2015 in Des Moines, Iowa.

Early registration opened Feb. 1 for the 38th Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), the LCMS women's auxiliary also known as Lutheran Women in Mission.

The convention is set for June 20–23 at the Mobile, Ala., convention center. Its theme, "In Praise to the LORD!," is based on 1 Chron. 16:23–24a: "Sing to the Lord, all the earth! Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations."

Keynote speaker for the convention will be the Rev. Dr. Brent Smith, mission development counselor at Mission Central, which supports LCMS missionaries and mission projects worldwide from its home base in Mapleton, Iowa. Smith previously served the Synod as regional director for mission work in Eurasia, evangelistic missionary in Russia and business manager in Central Asia.

Proclaimers for the convention's two wor-



Smith

ship services will be:

► Rev. Dr. Ulmer Marshall Jr., pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Mobile, who has served the Synod for more than 45 years, including as a member of the boards of directors of the LCMS and LCMS Southern District.



Marshall

► Rev. Dr. Gregory S. Walton, president of the LCMS Florida-Georgia District from 2009 to 2018, who also served many years on the district's board of directors.



Walton

Daily Bible studies will be led by Donna Pyle, author of more than 30 Bible studies and several books, including "Without This Ring: Surviving Divorce."

Song leader will be the Rev. Dr. Dien Ashley Taylor, pastor of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in The Bronx, N.Y., and first vice-president of the LCMS Atlantic District. And performing comical skits throughout the convention will be humorist Jan Struck.

Among business items, convention delegates will adopt a new mission goal for the 2019–21 biennium, and choose mission-project grants to support with those funds.

They also will elect a new president to serve a four-year term, as well as other national leaders.

The convention also will feature six "Mites in Action" speakers who will tell how LWML mission offerings have helped their ministries, and performances by the Voices of Mobile singers and entertainer Joe Castillo.

Other activities include a golf outing, a pledge walk, servant events, a blood drive, "Special Interest Luncheons," a collection of "Gifts from the Heart" and tours.

"Camp Insta Friends" — offering care for children ages 6 months to 4 years and special programs for older children — also will be available during the convention.

"The LWML family is looking forward to celebrating the partnership in the Gospel that we have with missions and missionaries in other nations and at home as we become more of a multicultural church," said LWML President Patti Ross. "If you love missions, you will love being in Mobile when we gather 'In praise to the Lord!'"

Early registration is \$175 from Feb. 1 through March 13; regular registration is \$195 from March 14 through May 9. As of May 10, registration is \$220 through June 10.

Registration materials and more information are available in the Winter issue of *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*.

To register online, visit lwml.org/convention.