



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

Understand the culture

Two months ago, I began a series of articles regarding the focus for the Rocky Mountain District:

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

This article highlights the phrase “Understand the Culture.” When you hear the word culture, what comes to your mind? Do you



Rev. Roger Schlechte
District President

find yourself comparing the past with the present with regards to technology, morality or the influences of the world on the Church? Are you astounded at the behaviors and lifestyles which were unacceptable a few decades ago, or even a few years ago, and are now commonplace and accepted in 2019?

As we observe culture changing at an increasingly rapid pace, we wonder where it will end. We recognize and lament that the culture in our country has departed from biblical views in any number of ways.

While we often think and speak of culture in ethical terms, there are other aspects of culture to consider. Depending on where we live, we might note cross-cultural changes in our neighborhood — those who have a different shade of skin color or those who are of a different ethnic background.

Cultural differences also appear in other ways. Think about those who live in close proximity to you. Are they of the same socio-economic group? Do they consume foods that are unfamiliar to you? What type of clothing do they wear? What forms of entertainment do they enjoy? What music genre inspires them?

Reflect on those who work with you in your occupation, participate alongside you in organizations or serve with you on committees. Do they share your values? Do they have a different work ethic? What technology do they use?

It’s important to understand the culture in which we live and how it is changing in terms of ethics and values. It’s also important to know the “culture” of our next-door neighbor, co-workers, fellow students, people with whom we volunteer or participate in organizations — anyone with whom our life intersects.

I encourage you to step out of your

See **MESSAGE**, Page 4



Early Christmas gift in Rifle

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Rifle, Colo., is blessed to receive Rev. Charles W. Westby as its sole pastor. Pastor Westby was installed on Dec. 23 — an early Christmas present to the Emmanuel congregation.

Westby became an LCMS pastor through the colloquy program at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. He has been working on his Ph.D. course of study through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and is currently working on his dissertation to complete that degree.

Pastor Westby and his wife, Tawnya, were also welcomed at a reception following the installation service.



Clergy in attendance include, from left, Revs. Joshua Schmidt, Lutheran Church of Messiah, Grand Junction, Colo.; Robert Oeltjen, Faith, Craig, Colo.; Mel Mertens (officiant), circuit visitor; Westby; Joshua Vanderhyde, Faith, Carbondale, Colo.; and Kurt Van Fossan, Redeemer, Delta, Colo.



Celebrate with Immanuel, Haxtun

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Haxtun, Colo., will be celebrate its 100th anniversary on Sunday, June 23. Revs. Albert Quoss and David Loeschke, former Immanuel pastors, will be guest speakers.

The morning service begins at 9 a.m., followed by a meal from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The afternoon celebration service begins at 2 p.m.

For more information, visit the Immanuel Facebook page (type "Immanuel Lutheran Church LCMS Haxtun" in the search bar at top of page); call 970-774-6236 or send an email to Immanuel@haxtuntel.net.

Online resources support urban mission, church planting

The LCMS is offering two online resources designed to help those involved in urban and inner-city mission and church planting.

Both are available at no cost.



The first, a series of one-hour webinars from LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission, will cover topics such as the theology of the city, mental health, community development, social issues, school ministry, campus ministry, multi-ethnic ministry and more.

More information and registration instructions are available at lcms.org/urban-and-inner-city-mission.

The second resource, a series of podcasts from *Mission Field: USA*, will study various questions related to church planting within a Lutheran framework. Topics to be covered include ecclesiology and mission; the Synod's threefold emphasis of *Witness, Mercy, Life Together*®; missiology; the effect of demographic trends on the church and its mission; discipleship through catechesis and assimilation; and ethnic church planting.

Podcasts will be released on the first Wednesday of each month.

For more information, see lcms.org/church-planting.

A new year with new opportunities

We're only two months into a new year and deadlines are already looming. Registration for the 38th Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League opened Feb. 1. It is now the time to consider attending. Convention information as well as registration forms can be found in the Winter 2018 *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* and at lwml.org/2019-convention.

It is also time to renew or start a *Quarterly* subscription. A society subscription form can be found on our website (lwmlrmd.org/resources). Individuals can also subscribe to the *Quarterly* or eQuarterly online at lwml.org/subscribe-to-quarterly.

Zone presidents, many newly elected, are already planning spring workshops. They also attended the Board

of Directors meeting in February. Our zone presidents for this coming year include:

- ▶ Anita Palenschat, Four Corners
- ▶ Eileen Diepenbrock, North Central
- ▶ Joline Christensen, Northeastern
- ▶ Christie Peebles, Northern
- ▶ Barbara Wertz, Northern New Mexico
- ▶ Brittne Clark, Pecos
- ▶ Jill Clark, Rio Grande
- ▶ Lori Williams, South Central
- ▶ Karen Mann, Southern
- ▶ Donna Cochran, Western

Please remember your elected and appointed officers in your prayers.

It also is time to put on your racing shoes! The national LWML has only until March 31, the end of its two-

year cycle, to collect mites toward its biennial mission goal. There are still grants to pay and other expenses to be fulfilled. Giving toward the mission goal is a great way to support a mission when you can't do the work yourself.

How can you help? You can donate by visiting lwml.org; go to the "Missions" tab and select "Mission Grants" from the drop-down menu (where you can also find a list of the missions receiving grants). You can also donate through your local LWML group or send a check to LWML, 801 Seminary Place, Suite L010, St. Louis, MO 63105.

Something everyone can do is pray for the various missions receiving grants and for giving hearts that will help fulfill all the grants.

The new year is upon us and we look forward to hearing all about how God is using you through your work in LWML. May your year be filled with the blessings of His peace and joy.

— Submitted by Beth Weber



The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, LCMS president, greets members of the LWML executive committee and the LWML district presidents during their visit to the International Center of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in St. Louis on Jan. 24.

LCMS/Erin M. Lunsford

STUDENTS: Write essay for LFL contest



Winners receive **cash**, free **conference registration**

Students in Grades 6–8 and 9–12 are encouraged to write essays that promote the sanctity of life and submit them to the 2019 Lutherans For Life (LFL) essay contest.

The national winner in each of the two grade divisions will receive a \$250 cash prize, plus free registration to an LFL regional conference and a one-night stay at the conference hotel.

Winning students from the national contest — and from the Federation, or state, contests — may be asked to read their essays at the regional conference they attend.

“Life-affirming essays” should be based on the regional-conference theme “Did God Really Say ...?” and Bible verse: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Not incorporating the conference verse in the essay will disqualify the entry.

Essays should focus on any life-related topic, such as abortion, the handicapped, adoption, foster care, infanticide, cloning, stem-cell research, physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. All sources for references, statistics and quotes should be incorporated within the essay and then included in a bibliography at the end.

Entries may include up to 400 words for elementary school students, or 750 words for high school students, and must include the student’s name, grade, school or church, and email address.

Completed essays may be submitted to any LFL Federation or Chapter. Please check with each for contest rules and deadlines.

Visit the Lutherans For Life website at lutheransforlife.org for information about LFL Federations, Chapters and resources.

LFL’s 2019 regional conferences are planned for:

- ▶ March 23 at Living Word Lutheran Church in Grapevine, Texas
- ▶ April 27 at Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich.
- ▶ **Aug. 24 at Hope Lutheran Church, Aurora (Denver), Colo.**
- ▶ Sept. 14 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Rochester, Minn.
- ▶ Nov. 16 at West Portal Lutheran Church, San Francisco

(A sixth conference is being planned for the Northeastern United States – date and location to be announced.)



DISTRICT CALLS/ CHANGES

Change of Status

- ▶ **The Rev. Andrew Dimit**, Immanuel/Immanuel, Artesia/Carlsbad, N.M., to emeritus

Calls declined

- ▶ **The Rev. C. Bryan Wolfmuller**, Hope, Aurora, Colo., from Trinity Lutheran Church in Traverse City, Mich.

Transfers

- ▶ **Joanna Kaiser**, Pueblo West, Colo., candidate status, Michigan District to Rocky Mountain District



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

comfort zone and develop relationships with those of a different cultural background. Get to know them, learn from them and endeavor to understand them.

As you come to understand the culture of others, consider how you can represent Jesus to them. In the next article, I will address the phrase “Live the Faith,” considering how we live in the culture of this world, outside the walls of the Church. Ultimately, we want others to know the truth of Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life — and the only way of salvation!

rschlechte@rm.lcms.org

May issue deadline: March 15



Send news to Jan Hoener:

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

Rocky Mountain District Office

14334 E. Evans Avenue
Aurora, CO 80014
303-695-8001
rm.lcms.org