



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS



Jesus’s commission to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19) had been driven home. Peter proclaimed Christ to Gentiles.

Before Jesus ascended, he said:

“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” — Acts 1:8

Yes, even the despised Samaritans. There is no partiality.

We claim impartiality. That’s what we believe and teach. Yet, might partiality be observed in our attitudes — how we look upon others, how we label, how we stereotype, how we speak unkindly, how we avoid others? Where and how would God point out our partiality? Where would he call us to repentance?

Peter speaks of the One who was hanged on a tree, who died for all sins, including those that lurk within the inner recesses of our hearts. Thankfully, Jesus showed no partiality. He took the sins of the whole world, from the most pious to the worst sinner of all time. God freely forgives the repentant.

Likewise in heaven, there’s no partiality. Revelation 7 pictures a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, all who have washed their robes and made them

white in the blood of the Lamb.

As we serve Jesus here on earth, we take our cue from Him.

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NO PARTIALITY



Rev. Roger Schlechte
District President

Do you have a favorite relative? Do you have a fondness for one of your children or grandchildren over the others? At extended family gatherings, with whom do you regularly spend the most time? Do you gravitate to the same people at church Sunday after Sunday? Careful reflection helps identify preferences.

The Apostle Peter had a challenge with favorites (Acts 10). One day while waiting for lunch, he went to the rooftop to pray. As he drifted off, he experienced a trance three times in which God expanded Peter’s thinking.

Later, the Holy Spirit prompted Peter to accompany three men to the house of Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Cohort of the Roman army at Caesarea. Peter’s words to Cornelius and those present demonstrate his expanded thinking:

“Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” — Acts 10:34-35





Pastor Escue celebrates milestone

It is with gratitude and joy that we remember and give thanks for the ministry of our faithful pastor, Rev. Douglas K. Escue, who 30 years ago was installed as parish pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Santa Fe, N.M. The Escue family arrived in Santa Fe on April 16, 1991, and Pastor Escue was installed as the eighth pastor of Immanuel on April 21, 1991. Immanuel was founded in 1838.

Prior to his acceptance of the Divine Call to Immanuel, Pastor Escue served for five years as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Leigh, Neb. He is a 1986 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and was ordained into the pastoral ministry on July 13, 1986.

The celebration of a lengthy pastorate is always a noteworthy event in the life of a congregation. It provides the members, as well as the pastor and his family, an opportunity to celebrate God's gracious gift of the Office of the Pastoral Ministry and His promise to strengthen faith through the preaching and

teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We invite you to join us in celebrating this important milestone in the life of Immanuel Lutheran Church and Pastor Douglas and Laura Escue with the following prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, You promised to send Your servants the Holy Spirit and to give them power from on high. Today, we give thanks that through Your Word, You called Pastor Escue and entrusted him with the Office of the Holy Ministry at Immanuel Lutheran Church. We praise You for our pastor's faithful service and for sustaining, supporting and blessing his ministry among us. Thank you for his family, especially Laura, who has also been a blessing to our congregation and community. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

—Submitted by Larry Stoerner, Immanuel Lutheran Church Board of Elders chairman

'Distinguished'

Palmreuter chosen for educator award

Dr. Kenneth Palmreuter, who has served in Lutheran education for 56 years, has been selected to receive the Lutheran Education Association's (LEA) Distinguished Retired Lutheran Educator EncourAGING Award.

Dr. Palmreuter and his wife, Martha, live in Rapid City, S.D., where they are members of Zion Lutheran Church. He officially retired in 2002, having most recently served as executive director/principal for the Colorado Lutheran High School Association. Since that time, he has served as an interim principal in various locations in Colorado and South Dakota. For the last several years, he has been the interim administrator at Bethesda Lutheran School,



Martha and Dr. Kenneth Palmreuter

Hot Springs, S.D., which has earned National Lutheran School Accreditation with his help. He also helped open a before- and after-school program.

Dr. Palmreuter graduated with a bachelor's degree in education from Concordia University Chicago and a masters in elementary school administration

and supervision from the University of Michigan. He was previously honored with a Doctor of Laws from Concordia University Nebraska and named Administrator of the Year in the Rocky Mountain District.

One of Ken's colleagues sums up the case for his selection: "He is a true leader and a man who is always looking for ways to support the mission of our Lord and improve the work being done in the church. Ken is a faithful and loving man of God who continues to teach and encourage in Bible study and in worship. He is a Christian man of the highest quality and is a blessing to the church of Jesus Christ in his faithfulness, capabilities, love and zeal."

LEA award recipients are nominated by their colleagues for being active in their local/Lutheran community, demonstrating a commitment to serve Christ, and showing excellence in meeting the social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive needs of children, youth, adults and/or families. Congratulations to Dr. Palmreuter for a well-deserved honor.

SOAR gathers again



Rev. Dr. Fungchatou Lo speaks to attendees at the recent SOAR Seminar.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the February SOAR Seminar at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Lakewood, Colo., was canceled. April 10 was then selected as the date to hold the event, with the hope and prayer that people would be willing to attend.

What a surprise! Over 96 registered, even though they had to wear masks and meet in the sanctuary rather than in the fellowship hall in order to maintain six-foot distancing.

Leading off the program was Rev. Dan Gilbert, who recently retired after serving 12 years as president of the Northern Illinois District (2006-18). In great detail, Pastor Gilbert told about his experiences as a student at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, including the walkout in 1974. He pointed out the different views about the Bible at that time and stated that our personal beliefs about the Bible deeply shape our lives. He affirmed that the Bible is God's inspired Word, and in that Word, we come to know Jesus our Savior.

When the planning committee learned that Rev. Dr. Fungchatou Lo would be in the area in April, it quickly added him to the program. Dr. Lo is

a missionary to the Hmong people, which includes those from Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. Currently, Dr. Lo is using modern technology to engage in mission work with the Hmong people. His presentation emphasized the need today to make use of technologies, especially the internet, to be effective in mission outreach.

Shelby Potter is a registered dietitian and nutritionist working with patients in cardiopulmonary rehabilitation at St. Anthony Hospital in Lakewood. She is a lifestyle coach for the Diabetes Prevention Program and talked about several causes of diabetes, including being overweight and not getting enough exercise.

A very moving and emotional presentation was given by Nga Vuong-Sandoval. She and her family barely escaped from their homeland in Vietnam, where they were dispersed to a refugee camp. She told of her horrific experiences in a vastly overcrowded boat. Making good use of her experiences, she is now the Refugee Congress Delegate for Colorado, a speaker for the Colorado Refugee Speakers Bureau, and the first refugee elected to the Lutheran Family Services

Rocky Mountains Board of Directors. She spoke passionately about her concern in welcoming refugees — who have had to flee from repressive countries — as she was welcomed in America.

John Voehl is a nationally recognized Lincoln historian and presenter. He has made nearly 1,500 presentations about Abraham Lincoln in 45 states. He has read 400 books on Lincoln's life and the Civil War. In his talk he also gave historical details on the first 16 presidents of the United States.

An exciting program is already being established for the two-day SOAR Gathering to be held Sept. 20-21. The keynote speaker will be Rev. Dr. Michael Ziegler, speaker of "The Lutheran Hour." Also on the program will be Dr. Mike Rodewald and Rev. Dr. Tilahum Mendeldo of Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT).

The SOAR committee has been working with LBT to create more enthusiasm for the SOAR ministry, especially among Boomers.

— Submitted by Rev. Dr. Norbert Kleidon



Rev. Dr. Michael Ziegler, speaker of "The Lutheran Hour," will be the keynote speaker for the SOAR Gathering Sept. 20-21.



LOTS HAPPENING AT LVR!

It's June and summer camps at Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) are in full swing. Campers are enjoying making new friends, ziplining, rock climbing, rappelling, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, crafts, worship and so much more.

"Unfailing" is the 2021 theme, based on Ps. 13:5: "But I trust in your unfailing love; my

heart rejoices in your salvation."

There are still openings available for summer 2021, and camp staff would love to have your kid(s) join them. The weather's great, staff is pumped and God is moving at LVR.

Register or find out more about LVR and the camps it offers by visiting lvr.org.

DISTRICT CALLS/ CHANGES



Calls extended

- ▶ Christ, Lincoln, Neb., to **Rev. Dr. Michael Eckelkamp**, St. John, Denver, Colo.
- ▶ Our Savior/Bethany, Pueblo/Pueblo West, Colo., to **Rev. B. Scott McQuiggin**, Immanuel, Clifton, Texas
- ▶ Trinity, Great Falls, Mont., to **Rev. Jonathan Schultz**, Mount Calvary, Estes Park, Colo.
- ▶ Zion, Snohomish, Wash., to **Rev. Donald Stults**, St. Peter's, Monte Vista, Colo.

Calls accepted

- ▶ **Rev. D. Andrew Becker**, Faith, Buena Vista, Colo., from Shepherd of the Hills, Georgetown, Ind.
- ▶ **Yvette Kampschnieder**, Bethlehem Lutheran School, Lakewood, Colo. (teacher) from Bethlehem (principal)
- ▶ **Karen Mead**, Messiah Lutheran School, Grand Junction, Colo., from Messiah (principal/teacher)
- ▶ **Rev. Weslie Odom**, Beautiful Savior, Arlington, Texas, from Our Savior, Pagosa Springs, Colo. (associate pastor/headmaster)

- ▶ **Rev. Jeffrey Patterson**, Zion, Willshire, Ohio, from Shepherd of the Springs, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- ▶ **Letha Wallace**, Lutheran Church Messiah, Grand Junction, Colo., from Trinity, Fremont, Neb.

Transfers

- ▶ **Rev. Douglas Barnett**, Albuquerque, N.M., emeritus, Pacific Southwest District to Rocky Mountain District
- ▶ **Rev. Bryan Cary**, Texas, emeritus, Texas District to Rocky Mountain District

Change of status

- ▶ **Rev. Steve Bauer**, Aurora, Colo., candidate to emeritus
- ▶ **Susan Hart**, Bethesda Lutheran Communities, Littleton, Colo., to candidate
- ▶ **Rev. Melvin Mertens**, Delta, Colo., candidate to emeritus

Disbanded

- ▶ Redeemer, Denver,



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

His compassion encompasses all people, from the self-righteous Pharisees and religious leaders to the demon possessed, the tax collectors and sinners with whom he dined.

Our impartiality, compassion and Gospel witness extend to all, regardless of who they are — the incarcerated, serial killers, drug dealers, substance abusers, welfare-system abusers, cranky neighbors, antagonists in congregations, falsely pious ... everyone!

We see every human being as someone knit together in his or her mother's womb by God and the object of God's grace. There's no partiality! It's God's desire, and our desire, that the courts of heaven are open to all through Christ.

Share your news with us!

We are always in need of more submissions for *Peaks and Valleys*. Why should you send them in? It helps remind us of what God is doing around the Rocky Mountain District. It is also a way to share ideas for nurturing those God has already gathered into His church and for reaching those still outside of the flock with the Good News about Jesus. It finally reminds each of us that Christ's Church is much larger than just our particular congregation.

Please send submissions to Jan Hoener at communications@rm.lcms.org. You may also mail your submissions to Jan at 5446 Knoll Place, Highlands Ranch, CO 80130.

The deadline for the August 2021 issue is June 15. The deadline for the September 2021 issue is July 15. Thank you!