

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT
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Augustana District of the LCMC

Spring 2016



"You Will Be My Witnesses!"

Augustana District 2016 Convention Highlights

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

This was the first year since the Augustana District began that a convention has been held outside of Hutchinson, MN. Living Word Lutheran Church in Marshall did a wonderful job hosting the convention and we thank them for all of their hard work and preparation. Another first this year was virtual participation by Life in Grace Lutheran Church in Odessa, Texas. We hope to provide more interactive opportunities like this in the future.

There were 49 voting delegates, 55 members and 22 guests in attendance at the convention as well as those attending via the web from Odessa.

Pastor Nick Hopman and Pastor Steve King did a presentation on, What is "Lutheran Discipleship?" You will find more information on this presentation inside on page 7.

Pastor Randy Freund, Service Coordinator of the Augustana District, rolled out some Long Range Plans at the convention that you can find on page 3.

If you wish to watch the recorded sessions from the convention you can find them on the Augustana District Website at: www.augustanadistrict.org under the *About Us* tab and then in the *Archives & Documents* section. On the bottom right of that page you will find *Mtg Videos*. That will take you to the video link.



Pastor Dewit, the guest speaker from Tabor, unable to attend in person but presented via DVD.



Pastor Dave Christensen and the Living Word Praise Band Leading Worship



Gaylen Lerhol, Augustana District Council Chair Leading AD Business

Falls Community Church Choir, a Sudanese Church located in Sioux Falls, SD shared a number of songs at the convention.



ARE YOU ON THE MOVE?

If you have recently made a contact change, we need your updated information!

Please send it to:
office@augustanadistrict.org

Augustana District

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“Reflections from the Chair”

Gaylen Lerohl, Chairman



The District has had a good year culminating with our annual convention on the 23rd of April at Living Word Lutheran in Marshall. We have experienced steady growth in congregations joining the District and in pastors seeking and receiving endorsement. We have seen an increase in services and resources offered not only to our District members but to congregations of the LCMC as a whole. The District is here to support congregations. *If you need some advice, resources or you are beginning a call process, contact the District Service Coordinator, Pr. Randy Freund, for assistance at 320-583-3648 or rfreund@newcreationperham.org.*

Our various boards, the volunteers at the core of our ministry, are experiencing more work as they fulfil their responsibilities. I'll touch very briefly on their activities. The Board of Christian Education makes available materials for use of congregations and individuals. The Board invites you to submit material for which you have sole rights for evaluation and possible inclusion on the website. Studies you have written, devotionals, curricula – any materials you would share should be submitted to the Board.

The Board of Congregational Missions exists to help, support and guide congregations. Several resources are posted on the website under the “Missions” tab. The Board of World Missions has had another active year administering the District’s collaboration with the Tabor Congregation in Ethiopia. Beyond this partnership, the Board solicits information on other world mission organizations, evaluates their programs and financial reports to insure the organization meets the District’s standards before recommending them for support.

The Board of Theology and Ministry provides theological and professional oversight of District pastors. It administers the District’s endorsement process for pastors and sponsors the annual Theological Conference. Resources from all these Boards are available on the District website.

The District budgets seed money to help fund educational opportunities. Staff from Faith Lutheran and Christ the King Lutheran in Hutchinson, MN collaborated on sponsoring two events: a College Campus Tour of four cities, partnering with local Augustana and LCMC congregations to introduce college students to worship opportunities in their areas; and a Youth Worker Retreat to provide staffers with encouragement, support, networking, theological guidance and hands-on tools for youth ministry.

Money is available again in the coming year to help make your ideas a reality. Grants are not limited to events – imagine it, write a proposal and submit to the Service Coordinator for consideration. The District may be able to help make your ideas reality.

With the increasing activity of the District, the demands on the Service Coordinator’s time are also increasing. Pr. Freund manages the District’s work, promotes membership, handles administrative tasks and provides services to congregations. The Council has decided that increasing the Service Coordinator position to ¾ time will benefit the District. Beginning September first this year Pastor Freund will be working ¾ time for the District.

It has been a privilege to serve as Chairman of the District Council. Interacting with such capable and dedicated members of the Council, Boards and staff has been a fulfilling experience. Ben Luense of St. John’s in Springfield is the newly elected Council Chairman. Ben has been a Council member for several years and has held several offices. We are looking forward to his capable leadership.



sacramental DISCIPLESHIP LIVING AN EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE CROSS

The Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41-42)

You know the story. When Jesus came to visit the house of two sisters, Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and listened to his teaching, while Martha kept busy with her ministry to the needs of those who had come to her. Overwhelmed by the good things she was trying to accomplish, Martha went to Jesus to admonish her sister for not helping with the work – that is, she came to complain that Mary was not more like her.

Sometimes, in trying to convince people of the importance of discipleship in the Christian life, we can start to sound a lot like Martha. It is not uncommon these days to hear discipleship coaches draw a distinction between those who are “real disciples” with those who are just “church members.” We are told that we must grow beyond the old membership model of church, where people are mere *receivers* of ministry, to a discipleship model where people are providers of ministry. This change in mindset, we are told, is what will save the church.

But when asked to provide a picture of what this “real” discipleship looks like, it is often someone like Martha who is held up as the model. Contrary to what Jesus does in Scripture, the approach of most modern discipleship gurus is to provide a list of activities and good works for people to be engaged in to show that they have advanced to the level of true disciple. In some settings, this takes the form of being busy with the work of social justice, where Christians are encouraged to move beyond elemental matters of sin and salvation, to engage in the “real” discipleship work of political advocacy. In other settings, the good works are expressed in a more religious manner, as would-be Marthas seek to prove their faith by their standing and reputation in the local congregation.

The biblical definition of faith, however, centers in the Lord himself. Jesus lifts up Mary as the model of discipleship, not because of her good and religious works, but because of what the Lord himself was accomplishing in her through his Word. Indeed, “Faith comes by hearing, and what is heard comes through the Word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). The posture of faith is not simply one of mere busy-ness and activity, but a posture of receiving.

As human beings, our tendency is to always put ourselves at the center of our focus – even when it comes to our life of faith. It is not surprising that we would want to make discipleship about what **we** do, rather than about what God does in us. But Christ himself has chosen a better portion for us. Through his Word, he has filled us with his Holy Spirit, so that we can confess in the words of Scripture, “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20) This is the good portion, which will not be taken from us.

Reprinted from www.sacramentaldiscipleship.com with permission from Pastor Steve King

For more information, contact Steve King at: sking@solapublishing.com

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New Hope Lutheran, Comfrey, MN

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Hope Lutheran, Huron, SD

Pastor Becky Hand

Life in Grace Lutheran Church, Odessa, TX

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"THE ROAD AHEAD ~ Long Range Initiatives"

Pastor Randy Freund, Service Coordinator



In his book, "Christless Christianity," Michael Horton writes, "The church in America today is so obsessed with being practical, relevant, helpful, successful, and perhaps even well-liked that it nearly mirrors the world itself." If Horton is onto something here, it is not hard to see how one might be tempted to preach Christ crucified in such a way where few are offended. God is manageable and nice and the gospel makes sense and brings only happiness. Part of the concept of districts within LCMC is to tend to the "accountable to one another" part of our commitment to each other. The Augustana District has further defined this accountability around the hard work of "Theology" as we are the "Church" called to carry out Christ's "Mission." To that end, the convention considered the following long range initiatives and possibilities.

Board for Theology and Ministry

*Plan other events and workshops that address the practical and pastoral needs of congregational life.

*Prepare theological resources or sermon preparation material.

Board of Congregational Mission

*Consider working with other congregations and organizations to plant a mission start.

Board of Christian Education

*Expand, promote and make available Bible studies, educational resources and adult forums to congregations (through the website).

*Livestream Bible Studies, sermons and adult forums.

Board of World Mission

*Further the work with the Tabor congregation.

*Coordination with new mission ventures.

*Define the relationship between AD and other mission partners.

Other Service and Support

*Prayer Ministry

*First year(s) call support/mentorship

*Conflict Resolution

*Congregational retreats/visioning

Service Coordinator

*Increase pulpit supply/presence in AD churches.

*Provide resources for congregations (retreats, visioning and educational material).

*Increase work with interns, new pastors and seminaries.

*Support boards and coordinate long range efforts.

Save the Dates

We know that 2017 may get exceptionally busy with 500 Year Reformation Celebrations at your church so we wanted to let you know NOW about some major 2017 AD dates so that you can get them on YOUR church calendar now.

Coming This Fall ~ September 17, 2016 ~ WOW Convention
at Christ the King in Hutchinson, MN

February 6-7, 2017 Augustana District Conference in Bloomington, MN

March 17-19, 2017 Augustana District Confirmation Retreat
at Luther Crest in Alexandria, MN

Watch for details coming soon for the date of the
2017 Augustana District Convention.



Watch your mail and email for more information as these events draw closer!

Six Interns Complete Service



Aaron Deutsch
(Sioux Falls Seminary)
with Pastor Greg Lenz
Resurrection Church
Mankato, MN



Brandon Foster
(Sioux Falls Seminary)
with Pastor Randy Freund
New Creation Lutheran Church
Perham, MN



Fran Hill
(Institute of Lutheran Theology)
with Pastor Fred Baltz
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
Galena, IL

Jerome Kotz
(Luther Seminary)
with Pastor DJ Lura
Lutheran Church of the Atonement
Wilkesboro, NC



Drew Nelson
(Lutheran Brethren Seminary)
with Pastor Brad Soenksen
Grace Lutheran Church
Erhard, MN



Angel Scott
(Luther Seminary)
with Pastor Mike Hanson
St. John's Lutheran Church
Starbuck, MN

Augustana District Welcomes New Leadership

Elected at the April Convention

To the District Council:

Greg Curry – member of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN
Dr. Michael Fuchs – member of Hope Lutheran Church in Huron, SD
Pastor Becky Hand – pastor at Life in Grace Lutheran Church in Odessa, TX
Chuck Pearson - member of Faith Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN

To the Board of Theology & Ministry:

Pastor Culynn Curtis - pastor at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Maple Lake, MN
Pastor Brad Jenson - pastor at New Life Lutheran Church in Duluth, MN
Pastor Paul Koch - pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Howard Lake, MN

***Thank you to Julie Ashbaugh and Pastor Julie Smith
as they have finished out their board terms.***

Welcome to New Congregations and Endorsed Clergy

Those added since the last convention

We would like to recognize and welcome the churches most recently added to the AD roster:

Reformation Lutheran, Cataula, GA ~ New Life, Duluth, MN ~ Hope Lutheran, Fosston, MN
Trinity Lutheran, Hallock, MN ~ Looney Valley Lutheran, Houston, MN ~ Vernes Lutheran, McIntosh, MN
North Immanuel Lutheran, Pelican Rapids, MN ~ Peace Lutheran, Deshler, NE ~ Falls Community, Sioux Falls, SD

We would also like to recognize and welcome the endorsed clergy most recently added to the AD roster:

Pr. Barry Fritts ~ Pr. David Hanson ~ Pr. Brad Jenson ~ Pr. Paul Koch ~ Pr. Tricia Mattson
Pr. David Norland ~ Pr. David Patterson ~ Pr. Jack Torgerson

Tabor facts from Pastor Paul Knudson

Tabor Partnership: Gifts Now Through June Vital

Funds for second half of supporting 54 evangelists need to be wired by the end of June. There is a need for approximately \$10,000 to be given in the next six weeks. Also high on the priority list is purchasing land for worship center construction. Tabor hopes to build three additional modest facilities for worship in 2016.



Board of World Mission Is Expanding

The intention is to have a significantly broader base of membership to create greater ownership of our world mission witness. Recently Pastor Matt Shields from Shepherd of the Hills in Ubertus, WI, and Dr. Mike Fuchs of Hope Lutheran Church in Huron, SD have joined the Board. More will be added soon.