



GROWTH AND TRANSITIONS

“What are the benefits of joining the Augustana District?” That is a question that is often heard. The best way to answer such a question is with another one. Does your congregation wish to partner with other congregations to serve the gospel at a critical time in church history? If the answer to this question is “yes,” Augustana may be just what your congregation is looking for.

GROWTH

In this newsletter you will see how the Augustana District is seeking to partner with congregations to address the Gospel Commission in creative and intentional ways. At our April Convention we passed some long range goals and strategies. You can read about how some of these are being addressed and implemented on page 3. The Augustana District is also seeking to be clear about the three key areas that define our purpose: *THEOLOGY. CHURCH. MISSION.* You will see activities related to each area in the newsletter. Plans for the Annual Theological Conference are in motion see the article on page 4. In an effort to provide resources for congregations to sustain health or receive assistance in conflict, we are hosting a conference at the end of October (see brochure). While Augustana District congregations promote and are involved in many mission ventures, our mission partners in Ethiopia continue to capture our energy and imagination, see article on page 5.

TRANSITIONS

As you can see, while the Augustana District is going through some exciting growth pains, we are also facing some hard transitions with the resignation of Pastor Mark Richardson. Our thoughts and prayers go with Mark as he continues his call at Christ the King Lutheran in Hutchinson, MN. When the District Council received notification regarding Mark’s resignation, we met to discuss the next moves. Knowing that my current part-time calling as Interim Sr. Pastor at Atonement Lutheran in Fargo would soon end and that my call to New Creation Lutheran in Perham would remain part-time, the Council asked if I would serve as Interim Service Coordinator. With this request on the table, I resigned my position on the Council as Chair. Gaylen Lerohl was elected the new Chair of the District Council and Pastor Becky Hand (Odessa, Texas) was appointed to fill the vacancy. Our long-time Administrative Assistant from Faith Lutheran (Julie Guggemos) took a new position. When Faith Lutheran hired Wendy Mayland to fill that position, she became our new Administrative Assistant. Welcome Wendy! *Continued. . .*

Augustana District, LCMC

335 Main Street South

Hutchinson, MN 55350

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www.AugustanaDistrict.org



Augustana District

Learn about the Augustana District
Long Range Plans on p. 3.
See more information about our
Ethiopian Partnership on p. 5.

A personal note of thanks...

I wish to publically thank Pastor Mark Richardson for his dedicated service to the Augustana District. The Augustana District started a new venture and Mark stepped out in faith to lead it. He has logged many miles and worked tirelessly in service to the needs and requests of congregations of the Augustana District, in particular and congregations of LCMC, in general. His vision and dedication has put the Augustana District in a good position for the future. Leaders are in place and equipped to move the mission of the district forward. Thank you Mark!

It is clear that God has blessed the work of the Augustana District and we look forward to serving within LCMC in whatever way God calls us to. I go back to the original question. If you are asked "what are the benefits of joining the Augustana District?" I hope the answer is clear. It is the joy and benefit of working alongside other congregations in intentional ways in order to carry out the Great Commission – The Gospel Commission – of our Lord.



Pastor Randy Freund

Welcome, Wendy Mayland!

Welcome to the new Administrative Assistant for the Augustana District, Wendy Mayland! As has been done previously, Wendy will split her jobs between Faith Lutheran Church, Hutchinson MN, and the Augustana District. Always grateful for the many ways Faith Lutheran has supported the Augustana District, we are delighted to have Wendy on board with us! Welcome, Wendy! She can be contacted at wendym@faithlc.com or 320-587-2093



From the Service Coordinator

It has been my great joy to serve as the Service Coordinator of the Augustana District. For personal reasons, I am stepping down, effective September 30. I am delighted that Pastor Randy Freund will replace me as the Interim Service Coordinator. I will continue to serve as an associate pastor at a very amazing place that is filled with very amazing, faithful Christians: Christ the King Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN.

I was honored to help start a district that carries on a classic Lutheran witness to the world. In a context wherein much of Protestantism chases after the whims of a culture bent on revising orthodox faith, the Augustana District holds firm. In an ecclesial context where either hierarchies of bishops rally for control and power, or where generic American individualism creates religions of personal decision and choice, the Augustana District bears witness to the invasion of the cross into a broken and fallen world, and into broken and fallen lives.

While the center of the church is the local congregation (the place where God's people are gathered by the Holy Spirit to hear the Word and receive the sacraments), individual and isolated congregations are not the whole Church, the whole Body of Christ. We are bound to one another by the Word and by our common confession of faith. By intentionally banding together we strengthen one another's ministries, and we accomplish a mission to the world which exceeds what we can do alone. Truly, the Augustana District is "*Theology. Church. Mission.*"

I want to thank all the people who have come together to help form and give shape to our District: pastors, congregations, those who've served on boards, the District Council, and so many, many others. Let's keep us the good work, and let us do so with humble gratitude to a God who is filled with nothing but grace and mercy for those who least deserve it. Blessings to all.



Pastor Mark J. Richardson

Long Range Plans

By: **Gaylen Lerohl**



The April 2014 Augustana District Convention authorized the District Council to pursue a long range plan to advance the District's purposes: Theology, Church, Mission. The plan is the result of two plus year's effort to define the District's focus and to devise strategy to accomplish the goals.

The District Council recently hosted a retreat with representatives from the Council and pastors from areas where there are clusters of LCMC congregations. The long range plan was reviewed and participants were tasked with defining specific ways the District could provide services to benefit the congregations in their respective areas and to further the mission of the District.

- Promote the services presently offered – call process assistance, confirmation retreats, conflict resolution, mission opportunities, mutual accountability
- Develop programming for 18 – 35 year olds
- Assist in coordinating creative staffing arrangements for small congregations
- Take the winter Theological Conference on the road to enable participation in various areas of the country

While the District is “non-geographical”, as a practical matter, the District needs a physical presence in areas where there are groups of LCMC congregations to coordinate services and promote the growth of the District. Pr. Tom Christiansen is a regional service coordinator in South Dakota. His is a volunteer position with funding to cover expenses. The District will expand this successful model to serve more communities, likely beginning in two areas of Wisconsin and in Texas where there are clusters of LCMC congregations.

Several District initiatives are in progress.

Truthing in Love Seminar, Conflict Resolution Before the Conflict

October 31 – November 1, Calvary Lutheran Church, Golden Valley

Theological Conference,

February 3-4, 2015, Best Western, Bloomington, MN

Augustana District Convention,

April 25, 2015

The Council encourages congregations and pastors to take advantage of these opportunities for growth. The “Truthing in Love” seminar will provide congregation leaders and members a model to understand the causes of dysfunction and to apply biblical concepts to deal with congregational issues. The District is subsidizing the cost of the seminar to encourage congregations to learn how to deal with inevitable conflict.

The District expects its pastors to participate in continuing educational opportunities and encourages lay people to expand their theological understanding. The annual Theological Conference is the District's contribution to this objective. It provides not only educational opportunities, but is an important venue for collegiality and mutual encouragement.

As the District's services attract more congregations to become members, the Council recognizes the need to expand the size and geographical representation on the Council. We encourage congregations and members to support candidates for the Council at the April 2015 annual convention. The Council has enabled participation from around the country via Skype at the last few Council meetings. We're getting pretty good at it! It is not necessary to be physically present.

We welcome Pastor Rebecca Hand of Life in Grace Lutheran Church, Odessa, Texas to the District Council. Pr. Hand has been appointed to fill a vacancy on the Council. Welcome Becky. We're looking forward to your participation.



Pr. Rebecca Hand
Life in Grace Lutheran Church
Odessa, TX

TRUTHING IN LOVE SEMINAR

October 31-November 1

Calvary Lutheran, Golden Valley, MN

Since 1994, Metanoia Ministries has provided a dynamic way for the church to see truthfully, to think biblically and to act redemptively (see brochure).

Whether your congregation is currently experiencing good health and vitality (and wish to keep it that way) or your congregation is facing conflict (and wish to address it), this conference is for you! Providing resources like this is one of the ways the Augustana Districts hopes to equip congregational leaders. We encourage congregations to send delegations in order to maximize the experience.

Sign up soon! Space is limited!

Save the Dates!

2015 Augustana District Annual Theological Conference

Feb 1-3, 2015

(Sunday evening until Tuesday noon)

Speaker: Dr. Steven Paulson

Best Western Plus Hotel

1901 Killebrew Dr.

Bloomington, MN 55425

(800) 780-7234

2nd Annual Confirmation Retreat

February 13-15, 2015

Luther Crest Bible Camp

Alexandria, MN

Watch for more info to follow on both events!

**For more information about the Augustana District,
please contact:**

Pr Randy Freund

Interim Service Coordinator

320-583-3648

rfreund@newcreationperham.org

Gaylen Lerohl

District Council Chair

gaylenlerohl@gmail.com

**Visit www.AugustanaDistrict.org for more information,
including a roster of Augustana District Churches.**

Interim Service Coordinator

Pr Randy Freund

New Creation Lutheran, Perham, MN

SD Service Coordinator

Pr Tom Christenson

Hope Lutheran Church, Huron, SD

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Wendy Mayland

Faith Lutheran, Hutchinson, MN

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Ethiopian Partnership

39 Evangelists Supported, An Amazing Partnership Invites You to Participate

Outreach is central to the Tabor Congregation of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus in the city of Hawassa. The Augustana District is in a long term covenant partnership with this Spirit led congregation to multiply their outreach. Evangelists sent out into challenging Muslim communities and throughout the country of Ethiopia are at the heart of their outreach.

Rev. Birihanu Abebe



Dhabi Bariso



Here is depicted two of the 39 evangelists the Augustana District is presently supporting at half of their need in this partnership.

We began with 22 and in July added 17 more. Our gifts to date have covered our commitment for 2014.

Now we look forward to another year. We are looking to congregations, groups, and individuals to commit to sponsor all of these 39 evangelists for 2015. We invite sponsorships of one or multiple evangelists. The commitment per evangelist is \$600. We are hoping to send half of this commitment in late December of this year for the first six months. We welcome commitments even if payment needs to be delayed. Contact Pastor Paul Knudson at paulk@faithlc.com with any questions or concerns.

How Have We Come This Far in Tabor Partnership? What's Next?

- * 20 congregations have given over \$22,000
- * 15 individuals/families have given over \$8,500
- * A family has given a challenge gift of \$28,500
 - * Four groups have given over \$1,500

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We have some 50 congregations in our District. Imagine what will happen when many more capture the vision and join in to multiply the efforts of a congregation in Ethiopia which commits half of its offerings to outreach.

We have representatives in MN, SD, and WI who would welcome an invitation to your congregation or an area cluster of congregations to tell the story of this Spirit led partnership.

Direct requests to Pastor Paul at paulk@faithlc.com.

DVDs of the partnership are also available.

Woman of the Word Augustana District Alexandria, MN ~ 5th Annual Gathering

The Fifth Annual Gathering of Women of the Word –Augustana District was held at Living Word Lutheran Church, Alexandria, MN on 20th of September, 2014. The theme was “YOU ARE CALLED” from the verse in Isaiah 43:1

It was a beautiful day and the excitement and laughter of over 100 women could be felt as you entered the doors. Getting to know our Augustana sisters is fun! The Alexienne Chorus of Alexandria began our day. The worship service with communion was led by Pr. A.J. Kluver of Living Word Lutheran Church in Alexandria, MN and the sermon was given by Pr. Julie Smith of St. John’s Lutheran in Springfield.

Presenter Pr. Tom Christenson gave an overview of changes leading to the inception of LCMC and churches’ leaving their previous affiliations due to biblical and theological differences. The Augustana District is about theology, church and mission. It was formed to be a resource that congregations could call on for assistance and guidance.

The afternoon was filled with presentations on Time Management given by Pr Julie Smith. “We cannot manage time but we can manage activity.” The Ethiopian mission presentation was given by Helen Hoft-iezer, Mary Fuchs, and Pr. Tom Christenson. These presenters were members of the Augustana District delegation to the Tabor congregations. They witnessed the excitement that the Ethiopian ministers, evangelists and people had in spreading the Gospel! They also noted the risks these people faced in this effort. These congregations are poor but faithful in their mission.

Next year’s Gathering will be held at Living Word Lutheran Church in Millbank, SD.



WOW Officers are:

June Kallhoff - Coordinator, Paula Leske - Vice Coordinator, Sherri Brindle - Education Secretary (not pictured)
Carla Lindeman - Treasurer, Carolyn Fiskness - At Large, Beverly Tellefsen - At Large,
Judy Lalim - Missions/Stewardship Secretary, Cindy Lerohl - Secretary, Marian Thorston - Advisor



Living Word Milbank Dedication

Living Word Lutheran Church of Milbank SD formed in August, 2010, after two votes at American Lutheran Church to leave the ELCA fell just short of the required 2/3 majority. Several people from the Ortonville , MN area were also part of the founding membership. The congregation met on Sundays in the Community Room of the Milbank Visitor’s Center, and occasionally in the Milbank High School Theater for three months before renting retail space, including the former Dollar Store, at the Whetstone strip mall on HWY 12. Living Word was the “strip mall church” for over three years, and we were reminded that the church is not the building, but is God’s people gathered around the Word and Sacraments. Planning began in 2011 to build a church on land donated by a member of the congregation on the north-west side of town. The congregation voted in March of 2013 to approve the building plan and building loan, and the groundbreaking ceremony was in May. The congregation of about 340 members moved in to the new building on 20 March 2014, and over 200 people attended the dedication service on 27 July led by Pastor N. Craig Werling and Congregation President David Kruger. God has richly blessed Living Word and led the congregation through challenging and exciting times as we continue, with faltering steps, to follow our crucified and risen Savior.

Living Word Lutheran Church Marshall, MN

On Sunday, Sep. 14th, 2014 Living Word Lutheran Church dedicated their new addition, a sanctuary, to the glory of God. More than 400 people gathered for a festival worship service where the assembly was invited to re-dedicate their lives to Christ. A program at 2pm that day include individual dedications of the pulpit, altar and baptismal font. The program began with a processional of a cross made by Mike and Diane Cirks of Marshall, a Bible published in 1895, president of the congregation, Jim Marshall and the American and Christian flags. Living Word Lutheran continues to be a spirit-filled gathering of believers holding firm to the truth and power of



the unchanged gospel of Jesus Christ in a changing world.

**Congratulations to
Hazel Run Church in
Hazel Run, MN
On the pending
Installation of
Pr. Ronald Hughes**



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The Augustana District is a non-geographic district in Lutheran Congregations in Missions for Christ (LCMC) emphasizing classic Lutheran theology and providing services to congregations and pastors. We are bound together by a Statement of Faith which rigorously binds us to the Holy Scriptures, the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, and the other writings of the Book of Concord. We invite you to learn about us and join us!