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Lutheran Family Matters

The Augustana District Council has appointed Pastor Scott Grorud to the position of "NALC Liaison." The purpose of this position is to provide a point of contact between the NALC and the Augustana District for purposes primarily of communication and, where feasible, cooperation. Below, Pastor Grorud explains his beliefs on the differences of NALC, LCMC and the Augustana District. Grorud is a pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Hutchinson MN.



Pastor Scott Grorud

In 1999, the ecumenical agreement *Called to Common Mission* (CCM) mandated the adoption of the historic episcopate and ordination of pastors by bishops in the ELCA. Many Lutherans, especially those in the WordAlone Network, wondered how Lutherans could accept changes that were so foreign to the Lutheran Confessions.

When Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) formed in 2000, it adopted a distinctly congregational structure. A bare minimum of central organization left nearly all authority, including accountability of pastors and churches, to its member congregations. Many Lutherans, especially those who had not opposed CCM, wondered how a Christian church could operate without the Biblical office of oversight.

In 2010, the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) formed. Many Lutherans, especially those in LCMC, wondered why yet another new Lutheran denomination was needed, especially one that included an office of bishop (albeit without the language or practice of the historic episcopate).

Also in 2010, the Augustana District of LCMC (AD) was established. It maintains the congregational structure of LCMC, but offers theological oversight and congregational services that more resemble the NALC. Lutherans on all sides have wondered what kind of hybrid AD actually is.

Why all this confusion? It arises from an old, deep, yet largely hidden divide among Lutherans over ecclesiology, the definition and understanding of the Church. To casual observers, the disagreement does not seem that significant, but Lutheran pastors and theologians have been unable to resolve it.

One way to understand the difference—admittedly too simplistic—is to consider which articles of the Augsburg Confession each group tends to emphasize in its ecclesiology. (Please note, these are *tendencies* and *emphases*. LCMC and NALC both clearly subscribe to the whole of Augsburg. The following distinction is simply one effort to illustrate a key difference between them.)

In ecclesiology, LCMC (and its ancestors) leans heavily on Articles V and VII. Article V upholds the "Office of Preaching" as the means God instituted to give saving faith through Word and Sacrament. That leads to Article VII, which defines the church as "the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is purely preached and the holy

Augustana District, LCMC
 335 Main Street South
 Hutchinson, MN 55350
 320-587-2093

www.AugustanaDistrict.org

Announcements

Congratulations to Pastor Peter and Janelle Rimmeroid on the birth of a daughter, Adelle Lynn! Peter serves as pastor of Bethesda Lutheran Church in Dresser, WI.

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QUESTION: Are people interested in chartering a bus to the LCMC convention in Denver (Oct. 7-10)? If you are interested in riding a bus from central Minnesota, please contact the service coordinator, Mark Richardson.

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Duluth Flooding. Pastor David Norland of New Life Lutheran Church in Duluth MN, following the flooding, shares this: "We have four families connected with the church who we are helping out. A group of men and teens just gutted one of the basements this morning. There will be water heater, furnace expenses that you could assist with for all four homes, if possible. Your thoughtfulness and your prayers are most appreciated!" If anyone would like to send assistance to these LCMC friends, please contact either Pastor Norland at nlduluth@yahoo.com or service coordinator Mark Richardson at mjrichardson@AugustanaDistrict.org

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LCMC Regional Gathering will be held in Redwood Falls on Sat., July 28, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. \$10 registration fee. Hosted by the Epiphany District.

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Women of the Word – Augustana District will have their third annual gathering under the theme "Share the Word" on Sept. 22 at Faith Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN. Registration forms, due Sept. 12, are available at www.AugustanaDistrict.org (click on "Women of the Word", then "latest newsletter"). Registration fee is \$15.

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District Dinner - If you are going to the LCMC convention in Denver, please plan on joining us on Monday night for "District Dinners." There is an extra charge of \$20 for this dinner, and you simply indicate this on your LCMC convention registration form.

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The Third Annual Forde Fest will be held at Holy Nativity Lutheran Church on Mon., Aug. 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There is a \$10 fee for handouts and lunch. This is an excellent opportunity to explore Forde and other great Lutheran scholars being called "wrong" on the third use of the law. Sponsored by the CrossAlone District, find more information at www.CrossAlone.us or email mhmadson@comcast.net.

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sacraments are administered according to the gospel."

On this basis, LCMC sees the congregation as the defining unit of the Church and the place where churchly authority resides. It is concerned that any hierarchical structure—especially involving the ancient, but sometimes problematic title of bishop—moves churchly authority away from that local assembly where God does his saving work.

NALC (and its ancestors) does not disagree, but is quick to add Articles XIV and XXVIII to the discussion. Article XIV declares that "no one should publicly teach, preach or administer the sacraments without a proper call," so NALC sees the office of ministry (not the person of the pastor) as an essential conduit for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments.

Article XXVIII lays out an evangelical understanding of the office of oversight (*episkopos*=bishop). For the NALC, such oversight is necessary for the Church to operate effectively and faithfully. Though devoted to serving the local congregation, the offices of ministry and bishop exist beyond it and serve the whole Church. Likewise, all denominations are part of the wider Christian Church, which makes church-to-church relations vitally important.

Where does the Augustana District of LCMC fit in all of this? Theologically, its ecclesiology is rooted in Articles V and VII of the Augsburg Confession. It holds that the Church is defined by God at work through Word and sacrament in the assembly of believers. Christ has direct authority over this work and no human authority can be placed between them. This does not denigrate the public office of ministry, but sees it as a function of good order in the church, rather than an office with its own ontology.

Practically, however, the AD recognizes that churches do not exist as islands, any more than individual believers do. Again for the sake of good order, it is vital for them intentionally to share resources, consult with one another, work together in missions and provide pastors for churches.

Thus, the AD has boards for world and domestic missions, ministry and theological education, and congregational services. It offers a theological endorsement of pastors and assists local churches with the call process. Yet, it does so in the conviction that the Church—the body of Christ—is located solely in those assemblies of believers where sinners hear the Word and receive the sacraments.

We in the Augustana District hold no illusions that the ecclesiological divide among Lutherans will be resolved any time soon. We do hope, however, that the AD might serve as a bridge between LCMC and NALC, representing the ecclesiology of one and the practical structure of the other. To that end, the Augustana District has asked this writer to serve as a liaison to the NALC. This role will represent AD *only*, not LCMC as a whole, and the goal is simply to have one contact point between these close Lutheran cousins.

Above all, we hope that the real differences among us, ecclesiological or otherwise, might not be a barrier to mutual understanding and common mission—especially global mission—as we seek to serve faithfully in today's changed Lutheran landscape.

Q & A with Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran in Detroit Lakes, MN

1. Tell us about your congregation.

Where and when do you worship? How have you been providing pastoral coverage?

Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church, LCMC, has been worshipping together since July of 2011. We worshiped on Wednesday evenings until we started Sunday worship on 9/11/11. We officially became a member of LCMC in November of 2011. We have been holding services at the Holiday Inn with coffee fellowship at 10 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m. in Detroit Lakes, MN, for a little over a year now. Our worship services are led by lay members and the message and communion are presented through pulpit supply from an area LCMC pastor. We also pay him to visit the sick and lead us in Bible Study.

2. What have been the joys and blessings of starting Shepherd of the Lakes?

Some of the greatest joys and blessing of starting Shepherd of the Lakes have been meeting new people who share a common vision. One of our mottos we have printed on banners, billboards and flyers has been, "God's unchanging word, changes lives!"

3. What are the challenges you face as a mission start-up congregation?

Some of the challenges we face as a mission start up congregation is to bring this common vision together. We often ask the question, "Who is Shepherd of the Lakes and how do we want to be seen in our community?" Whenever you bring people together you have a variety of opinions on how to reach our vision. We continue to look at how we move forward with a unified mission. We are always looking for ways to reach out that are not the same as how we used to do it. We look for resources that will help us through this journey.

4. Tell us about the "visioning process" with the Augustana District.

Pastor Randy Freund initially met with our Board of Directors to set the stage

as to some of the ways that the Augustana District could be involved in our mission start up. He offered an awesome vision for us! After that, Pastor Mark Richardson met with us three times to work on our "Visioning Process." Each time we invited those who have felt that Shepherd of the Lakes is their church home. Pastor Mark lead us in the first session to give us an overview of a 6-8 hour retreat that he has used to help congregations in this process. We had about 20 people who attended this gathering and the excitement grew from there. Pastor Mark returned a second time and lead our Sunday worship followed by a 4-hour retreat with a picnic dinner. He lead us in Bible Study and opened our eyes to what we felt could be the future for Shepherd of the Lakes. Pastor Mark offered a great presence of a positive nature. Having a third party come in helped us tremendously to open up and share with one another. His knowledge of church issues and organization was a great help. On his third visit of about 2 hours, he helped us narrow down our goals as a church. From here we continue to meet once a month as a group called "Navigators" to share ideas and to work on our goals.

5. What, if any, were the concrete "outcomes" of the visioning process?

The specific outcomes from the visioning process were the goals Pastor Mark helped us set. We came up with four main objectives. We now need to work on the details of carrying out these objectives. He also helped us create a Mission Statement. We will continue to call on Pastor Mark for his leadership and expertise. We need Augustana District to continue to provide leadership to us as a start up mission congregation.

6. Is this something you would recommend to others?

We would absolutely recommend this

process to new congregations. We would encourage new congregations to begin this process early in the formation of their congregation. However, it will be helpful to them anytime along the way!

7. Where do you see Shepherd of the Lakes in a year? In three?

Only God knows where Shepherd of the Lakes will be in one, two or three years. We hope to continue to grow in size, but more importantly to grow together as a body of believers. We trust God has a great work for Shepherd of the Lakes to do and continue to pray for his continual leadership in our vision.

8. Anything else you want to add?

Augustana District has a very important role to play in the organization and structure of LCMC. Augustana District sees the need for organization and order in the LCMC. We pray that Augustana District continues to offer the kind of leadership that will be essential to the growth and future of LCMC.

We found Pastor Randy and Pastor Mark to be a tremendous resource. Both are wonderful servants of God with a compassion and deep commitment for helping others.

Duane B. Shane, President
Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church

For more information about the Augustana District, please feel free to contact either of the following:

Pr Mark Richardson
mjr Richardson@AugustanaDistrict.org
715-417-1317

Pr Randy Freund
rfreund@hutchtel.net
320-234-8411

or visit:

www.AugustanaDistrict.org
for more information, including a Roster of Augustana District Churches.

death but it's much preferable to no one caring about anything. The Holy Spirit certainly has stirred us from placidness. Thanks be to God! Many of our members come at 8:30 a.m. and don't leave till 12 p.m. We have members volunteer for everything under the sun who you never heard from before. Some would come twice a year before and have now barely missed a service.

When we chose a name for our church we had 18 submissions. Many of them contained "Word" in them: Word of God, Living Word, Word of Life, etc. We joked that we should just be Word of Mouth Lutheran Church since that's how we started. In the end we chose Christ's Victory Lutheran. It seemed so appropriate since it was around Easter. Someone even said, "Hey look: There are three T's that look like crosses in our name!" We created a logo to fit this theme.

Not having our own pastor means a lot of extra work in preparation for the weekly services such as worship, music, and just all around theological guidance. We currently are working off of a pulpit supply list from Augustana District plus of few other neighboring pastors. Also we just formed a call committee to begin the process of identifying who we want and what we can afford. The support from all the LCMC churches in our area and beyond has been tremendous and humbling.

We chose LCMC because the Statement of Beliefs is in lock step with how we have been forever. Even the ELCA has a nearly word for word Statement of Beliefs as LCMC, they just don't follow it in our opinion. Also LCMC flat structure and commitment to making disciples is what we believe in as Lutherans and Christians.

We chose Augustana District for its comprehensive scope of being able to assist congregations if they ask for it. We were getting help from Augustana District long before we even formed Christ's Victory.

Our experience of starting a new church has been almost indescribable. Sometimes we have to pinch ourselves and remember we just started five months ago. On the other hand, when you stand up for God's word I believe he blesses that effort.

To Him be the glory!
Mike Petersen
Provisional President and sinner

Ordination

Congratulations and blessings to Brian Nehring upon his ordination on June 3 at New Hope Lutheran Church in Comfrey, MN.



Pictured (left to right) are Pastor Craig Nehring, Wayne Redman (president of New Hope), Brian Nehring, Pastor Randy Freund, Pastor Harvey Pederson, and Dr. Steven Paulson.

New to the Augustana District

Welcome to the following churches who were recently admitted into the Augustana District:

- Heritage Lutheran Church, Brandon, SD
- Hosanna Lutheran Church, Watertown, SD
- Christ's Victory Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, MN

Finances

We appreciate the generous and ongoing support from both churches and individuals. Especially in these summer months, we encourage regular and generous support as we strive to meet our budget.

District Calls

The District Council has adopted a policy providing for the Augustana District to issue pastoral calls to people in specialized ministries. Such calls should eventually be assumed by congregations, but for practical reasons this policy allows for expediency and collective collaboration in certain situations. The Board of Theology and Ministry acts as the district "call committee," interviewing the candidate, and then recommending him or her to the District Council, who then votes to issue the call.

LCMC / Augustana District in College and University Settings

Do you have a son or daughter going off to college? A number of LCMC/Augustana churches are located in college and university towns and cities – and their doors and arms are open to college students. You and your son or daughter are invited to contact these churches for further information, or simply to join them for worship! Here are some in the upper Midwest:

Minnesota State University - Mankato

Resurrection Lutheran Church

1735 E. Main Street, Mankato, MN 56001

507-345-4455

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.; Fellowship 10:00 a.m.; Education 10:30 a.m.

Pastor Greg Lenz gregoryplenz@msn.com

St. Cloud State University – St. Cloud

Abounding Joy Lutheran Church

Services held each week at:

The Boy Scout Headquarters, 1191 Scout Drive, Sartell, MN 56377

Located 1/2 mile north of Gold's Gym, across Pine Cone Road from Super

Coborn's. 7 miles (13 min) from campus

Office: 320-217-8784

Pastor Tom Wright: 320-291-2287 teedub8588@gmail.com

(Summer Schedule) Sunday Worship 9:30 am; Fellowship 10:30 am;

Education 8:30 am

Website: www.aboundingjoylcmc.org

Southwest Minnesota State University – Marshall

Living Word Lutheran Church

408 E. Main St., Bldg. 2 Suite 8, Marshall MN 56258

Office: 507-337-9673

Pastor Dave Christensen: 507-583-3647

Pastor Kelly Wasberg: 507-828-3434

<http://livingwordmarshall.org/>

University of Minnesota – Morris

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

20490 480th Ave (1 mile north of McDonald's on C-Rd 5)

Morris, MN

320-287-3218

Sunday Worship 9:00 AM; Bible Study 10:30 A.M.

Pastor Michael Hanson pastormikehanson@gmail.com

University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

Faith Lutheran Mission Church

1704 Hogeboom St., Eau Claire WI 54701

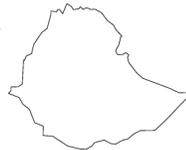
9 a.m. worship, with food and fellowship following

Dean Kallenbach, Mission Committee Chair, 715-214-8498

deankallenbach@aol.com www.faithlutheranmc.org

Ethiopia Connection

At its meeting in June, the Augustana District Council adopted a resolution to engage in a mutual



relationship with the Central Synod of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). With 750,000 members, the Central Synod is the largest synod of EECMY, and is home to one of the regional seminaries. Particular ways of relating and partnering together will be an exciting and ongoing venture, but we anticipate exchanges between the churches will be part of this.

In his conversations and communication with Bishop Asfaw Terfassa of the Central Synod, Pastor Paul Knudson (Chair of the district's Board of World Missions) has learned of an immediate need: **to assist with seminary tuition for four students attending the EECMY regional seminary.** We hope to raise \$2,000 by the middle of August for fall expenses, and then to raise another \$2,000 by the end of the year for the spring semester. The District Council is establishing a special "EECMY Fund" which will disperse 100% of all contributions directly to the Central Synod office. The "general fund" of the Augustana District will pay administrative costs for transferring the contributions. Please make checks out to "Augustana District" and designate them for the "EECMY Fund." This exciting but small effort of generosity kindles what we all anticipate will be a mutually-rewarding and faith-deepening relationship between the Central Synod and the Augustana District!

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT
335 MAIN STREET SOUTH
HUTCHINSON, MINNESOTA 55350

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The Story of Christ's Victory

Christ's Victory Lutheran Church is located at 210 So. Mill St. in Redwood Falls, MN. We began as a congregation two weeks after losing the vote at our ELCA church to disaffiliate and join another Lutheran denomination or association. We probably were crazy to attempt to leave the ELCA because

neither of our pastors would lead an effort to leave. In-fact they clearly stated they would not leave the ELCA even if the church did. Our church council president was a strong ELCA backer and the Bishop slept in his house when he was in town. Redwood Falls is also the seat for the South West Minnesota

Synod. We went down in flames with a vote of 55-223. But, beauty from ashes. As it turns out 55 is a pretty good number to start a new church.

As with many new start-ups there is a tremendous amount of work and details involved. Provisional councils, committees, bulletins, pulpit supply etc... The fun thing is everyone was motivated to succeed and still are. One of our former pastors once told me that new starts seldom work because they're made up of all radicals. For us it's more like very passionate about scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Are there strong opinions about many of the aspects of the church? You bet there are! We end up talking some issues to



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