

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT
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Augustana District of the LCMC

Fall 2016



The Augustana District:
A Time of Transition
and Growth
Pastor Janine Rew-Werling

In these last 6 years, our congregations have been blessed tremendously with the gift of the Augustana District! As with any burgeoning structure, there are critical growth points that demand assessment and evaluation. The Augustana District has reached such a point.

This means we are growing, defining more and more our needs and how to respond faithfully to them. This is good news for you, our congregations and the church as a whole! In light of this, the District Council has asked if I would lead a process to help answer that “what is God calling us to now?” question. Part of the answer to this question lies with what congregations, pastors and individuals understand about the mission of the Augustana District and where we (as a district) are willing to grow. Another part of this answer inevitably means funding our work and growth.

Part of what the District Council would like me to do is to help communicate our story. The mission and ministry of our district is unique within LCMC. It is a story we need to know and own. The other part of the District Council’s request is to assess and challenge the district to grow.

These specific areas of growth have been determined

As a district, are we willing to:

- *Continue and expand mission with the Tabor Congregation of Ethiopia?
- *Expand service requests from congregations (call process, conflict, etc.)?
- *Respond to a request for a formal partnership with 100 congregations in southern India?
- *Explore the possibility of an Augustana-sponsored mission church start?
- *Work more intentionally with SOLA publishing to provide congregational resources?

In the days and months ahead, I hope that, together, we can answer these questions with specific actions. We invite you to be part of this!

The Augustana District has a great story. It is one that we should all know. And, of course, we have *THE* story to tell. Please hold the district and this process in prayer as we serve the gospel of our Lord through *Theology. Church. Mission.*



 **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



Welcome to New Endorsed Clergy

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

John Hopper ~ Angel Scott ~ Drew Nelson



335 Main St • Hutchinson MN 55350 • 320.587.2093

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From the Service Coordinator. . . .

As Service Coordinator, the conversations, calls and e-mails I receive can vary greatly. But there are some themes and challenges that most often emerge. I have put them under the categories below. You will find articles in this newsletter that highlight some of these.



WHO is answering the call to be LCMC pastors?

One of the consistent and persistent questions I hear has to do with the next generation of LCMC pastors and leaders. Are people answering the call to pastoral ministry? Are those who are called to pastoral ministry young, old or in-between? Do first-year pastors want or need to receive mentoring? The good Lord has always provided for His church. That God calls people into ministry (of all ages) is something we trust. Encouragement and prayer from all of us is also needed. Regarding the matter of mentoring and support, the Augustana District is committed to providing mentoring to pastors in their first years of ministry. A pilot program with this in mind has already begun.

HOW do small congregations find (and financially support) part-time pastors?

There are many active and viable congregations that are unable to support a full-time pastor. I often hear concern from small congregations that face this dilemma. Whenever a congregation (of any size) is in the call process, I tell them three things: Don't panic, don't settle and reassess your ministry. Creative staffing options (with neighbors), new partnerships with other congregations and bi-vocational pastors are some of the ways to address this challenge.

WHAT is the best way to coordinate worthy mission ventures?

Augustana District congregations are familiar with the unique and wonderful partnership between AD and the Tabor congregation. Intentional coordination, financial support and tireless communication have helped to make this possible. The Board of World Mission has played an active role in this partnership. Thank you Pastor Paul Knudson for your leadership! Now, the question before us is this: How can we sustain this partnership and to what other similar mission ventures may God be calling us?

WHY is theological competence so important for pastors?

The Board for Theology and Ministry will spend two days together in late September. Their agenda includes (but is not limited) to the following: ministry standards, review endorsement process, first call mentorship program, theological podcast proposal and the annual theological conference. For this time in the life of the LCMC, you can see that theological competence remains a priority for the Augustana District. Thank you to Pastor Culynn Curtis, the new chair of BTM.

WHERE can I find partners to pray about such important matters and how can I support this ministry?

With so much before, it, it should be no surprise that Augustana is beginning a prayer ministry and is embarking on a stewardship program (see articles on page 1 and 4). Thank you to Jan Kreie for heading up our new prayer ministry and to Pastor Janine Rew-Werling for leading our stewardship effort.

God has richly blessed the Augustana District. Thank you for your prayers and support!

To God be the Glory!

Pastor Randy Freund, Service Coordinator

Information for your college students

Do you have youth attending school in or near Mankato this fall! True U is a program sponsored by Resurrection Lutheran Church (LCMC) to serve and support young people during these exciting years. Besides Sunday morning worship, a Thursday evening group meets regularly for topical discussion and social interaction. Service projects are planned during the year as well. For information contact:

Greg Lenz, Pastor ~ Resurrection Lutheran Church (LCMC)
1735 East Main Street ~ Mankato, MN 56001
507-345-4455



www.resurrectionmankato.com
admin@resurrectionmankato.com

Augustana District Council

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Greg Curry

Christ the King Lutheran, Hutchinson, MN

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Hope Lutheran, Huron, SD

Pastor Becky Hand

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Gaylen Lerohl

Living Word Lutheran, Alexandria, MN

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Birth Is a Miracle, but So Is What Comes Later



In 2013 the Augustana District helped in a small but important way to give birth to Leadstar University in Ethiopia. This vision of Dr. Gemechis Buba to train men and women for leadership of a fragile country and for growing Christian churches was brought into life in part through generous gifts from the Augustana District. Our gift of \$25,000, a birthing gift, now has grown into an abundance of leaders for now and for the future.

Now the Leadstar Theological College, with the partnership of major national Christian bodies has set a goal of enrolling 3,000 students for training as pastors and evangelists. The hope is to have 10,000 graduates by 2020. The Ethiopia Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus has grown from 6 million to some 7.8 million in less than ten years while served by only 3,000 pastors so they know creative, aggressive recruitment and training of future leaders calls for a huge vision.

Pray that Leadstar Theological College will be a major force in preparing these leaders. Give thanks that we could in a small way come together by God's grace to give beginning life to this endeavor.

The Board of World Missions Covets Your Prayers for:

Pastor Dawit from Tabor to be with us next spring.

That we will know when and for what purposes a delegation will go to Ethiopia and that interested people will step forth to go when it is the right time.

For the tense political situation facing the people and churches in Ethiopia.

For expansion of our AD outreach efforts with other partners in other lands.

That other LCMC unaffiliated congregations will choose to partner with us in mission.

AD Church Teams Up with LCMS Neighbor to Celebrate 500th Anniversary of the Reformation



St. John's Lutheran Church of Howard Lake, MN and their Missouri Synod neighbor St. James Lutheran Church are planning a series of events to celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. *Everyone is invited to attend.*

The events kick off this year on October 30 at 7:00 p.m. with a hymn festival at St. John's led by David Cherwien, director of the National Lutheran Choir. On April 29, 2017, St. John's is hosting a day of lectures and workshops led by Steven Paulson, Michael Rogness, and Paul Westermeyer; Roy Harrisville will preach at the event. Other events include choir concerts and a trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts for the Luther exhibit. Next summer the two churches will square off in a softball game. The churches are looking forward to having fun together and most importantly celebrating 500 years of preaching justification by faith alone. For more information, contact St. John's at [320-543-2227](tel:320-543-2227).

Pr. Paul Koch - St. John's on left
Pr. Mark Loder - St. James on right



"Augustana District Council"



The Augustana District Council has twelve volunteer members. These individuals take time out of their busy schedules to help provide leadership and guidance to the Augustana District. They come to the council from congregations located in Huron, SD, Odessa, TX, Caroline/Split Rock, WI, and across Minnesota. The council meets as needed, but generally every two to three months. We move the meeting locations around to different congregational members within the district. We will hold our October 29 meeting at Hosanna Lutheran in Watertown, SD. Other meetings have been held in Minnesota congregations located in Marshall, Redwood Falls, Alexandria, Perham, Springfield and numerous times in Hutchinson. For those members who live in other states or whose schedule limits their travel time, they are able to attend via the internet, through a program that the district purchased called Zoom. The location where the meeting is being held has live video and sound feed to those members that are attending via the internet. The individuals attending via the video and the members in attendance at the meeting location can all be seen on the screen and all can participate in the discussion and vote.

Council members are also appointed to serve on one of the four district boards: Board of Theology and Ministry (11 members), Board of Christian Education (5 members), Board of World Missions (8 members) and Board of Congregational Missions (8 members). Overall the Augustana District has a minimum of 42 lay and clergy members serving as volunteers. They help make Augustana District what we are today.

Since the beginning of the Augustana District, Faith Lutheran Church of Hutchinson, MN has provided the district with an administrative assistant. Presently serving this position is Wendy Mayland, who also serves Faith as their administrative assistant. The district has an employment contract with Faith for eight hours per week for Ms. Mayland's services. Financial coordinator for Augustana District is Diane Pedersen. She also holds that position with Faith Lutheran. Her service to the district is provided at no charge to the district. On behalf of the district, we say thank you to all the volunteers for your time and leadership. A special thanks to Wendy and Diane, and all the support the district receives from Faith Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, MN.

While attending the annual LCMC Annual Gathering in Denver, CO, please plan to attend the district events and to stop by the Augustana District display. We welcome the opportunity to meet members from AD congregations.

Council Chairman, Ben Luense

Save the Dates

We know that 2017 may get exceptionally busy with 500th Anniversary 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 right away.

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

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

April 28 & 29, 2017 Augustana District Convention ~ Location TBD

Watch your mail, e-mail and the Augustana District website for more information as these events draw closer!





Women of the Word

The Annual Gathering of the Augustana District Women of the Word was held at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN on SEPTEMBER 17, 2016

The theme was "Be a Witness"
"Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path".
Psalms 119:105



Planning ahead, the 2017 WOW Gathering is scheduled for September 16, 2017 at Shepherd of the Hills in Richfield, Wisconsin.



There were 88 women from 18 churches that attended this year's WOW gathering. Worship was led by Pr. Mark Richardson, with special music provided by *Stoney Point*.

The \$2,196 received in offering was divided between Common Cup (a local Hutchinson area program), Heartland Girls Ranch (a MN organization for at risk teenage girls) and Tabor Lutheran in Ethiopia.



Jan Kreie spoke to us about the new Augustana District Prayer Team that is forming (see more information below). Pastor Randy Freund, Service Coordinator of Augustana District, spoke to us a bit about the district and what it is working on.



Announcing the new 2017 WOW Board : Sandy Kriefall - Coordinator ~ Stephanie Freund - Vice Coordinator
Carla Grimsrud - Secretary ~ Beverly Swenson - Treasurer ~ Marian Thorston - Member At Large
Paula Leske - Ex Officio

NEW ~ Augustana District (AD) Prayer Team



1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 "Pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."



We read in this verse that it is the desire of Christ that we know him more and strengthen our relationship with him! So if your spirit feels a nudge to get this prayer network percolating – join us!

Our vision is to gather several willing TEAM LEADERS to organize, outline, and schedule the topics. This group would coordinate communication links between the local congregations, their needs, and to offer prayers. The TEAM would be a distribution point for prayer and also a gathering point for requests. They would give voice to the ebb and flow of communal prayer for our AD.

The mission of this prayer support will include: 1) Praying for our congregations 2) Praying for our pastors, staff, and leaders 3) Praying for events, current activities, mission focuses.

If you wish to be part of the TEAM leadership, please contact Jan Kreie, 320-510-1942 (cell phone) or PrayerWarrior53@embarqmail.com, or mail: PO Box 382, Brownton, MN 55312

The PRAYER NETWORK is all who are willing to pray with us! It would include all who wish to pray with us and all who desire to join us in spirit.

Augustana District Board of World Missions News ~ Calls for Action

Our Partner, Tabor Congregation, Seeks a VAN to Reach Out to Isolated Evangelists Needing Support and Training

For the outreach effectiveness of Tabor's witness to the lost, Tabor's evangelists on the front lines need to know their congregation is there for them. Leaders of our partner congregation know that using public transportation and renting vehicles for this purpose is not working. Time and money are wasted. The witness to Jesus Christ is weakened.

Providing a Heavy Duty Van: Challenges We Can Overcome

The cost: \$38,000 for a good used sturdy van (including 200% tax) is high. Tabor congregation is committed to provide half the cost.

An Augustana District family has committed \$9,500 provided that it is matched by others in 2016.



The AD Board of World Missions Calls for Above and Beyond Giving

Congregations and individuals/families passionate about this partnership are called to lead the way. This is a call for **EVERY DISTRICT CONGREGATION** to help meet this challenge.

A Prescription for Success

Set a challenging but reachable goal inviting members' personal gifts as well as an end of the year congregational gift.

Set a date for this challenge to be met, having funds to the District by December 15.

Make clear that this sturdy van will greatly enhance the outreach of our committed partners at Tabor.

Contact Information: Return gifts to the Augustana District; 335 Main St. S.; Hutchinson, MN, 55350. Mark clearly for "Van."

Funds Sent for Tabor Outreach in 2016 Still Needed

Thank you for your generosity that continues to bless the outreach efforts through our partners in Ethiopia.

Gifts sent January-September

\$9,931 for land purchase for new worship centers.

\$18,569 for the support of 54 evangelists and coordinators for July—December.

\$4,000 to support the work of Tabor's agriculturalist's work with farmers.

\$8,000 to be designated by Tabor's elders for highest priorities.

Gifts needed before year's end

\$18,000 for the support of evangelists for first half of 2017.

Other needs presently undesignated.



Left: Old Worship Center



Right: New Worship Center