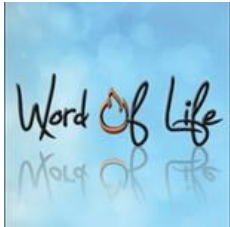




February 2017



“The gifts he gave were...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ....” (Ephesians 4:11-16)

As a parish pastor I think of these verses as Paul’s encouragement to answer our various (individual) callings. Whether our primary calling has to do with ministry in church setting or our daily vocations that occur outside of formal ministry, the point is the same: use the *gifts* God has given you to answer the *call* God has given you, and do so both for the sake of the neighbor and for the sake of the Gospel. Of course, answering the call of God is first driven and shaped by the Word of Christ. Confusion and distraction comes when we are “tossed to and fro, and blown about by every wind of doctrine.” (v. 14)

Lately, in my role as Service Coordinator, I find myself thinking more about how this text from Ephesians 4 extends beyond a “building up” that happens within a congregation. What might Paul’s words mean for congregations “building up” other congregations? How can we use the gifts of our congregation for the sake of neighbors in Christ?

One key LCMC commitment is to be “accountable to one another.” This includes *theological* accountability so that we aren’t “tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine.” It also involves *congregational* accountability. Congregations have various callings, gifts and abilities. We are called to use these for the sake of the other “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” This, in fact, is part of the reason for the monthly feature below called “*Creative Callings*.” It is my hope and prayer that congregations of the Augustana District will think deeply, creatively and intentionally about the gifts we have been given for the sake of the other and for the work of ministry.

In Christ,
Pastor Randy Freund,
AD Service Coordinator





Theology, Church, Mission



Creative Callings

Faith Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, MN

As a large congregation within the Augustana District, Faith Lutheran Church of Hutchinson, MN has found creative ways to use its gifts and resources for ministry beyond its own ministry. Currently, three full-time and one part-time staff member also serve organizations beyond Faith Lutheran. Some are compensated for this additional work and some are not, but all of them have a commitment and understanding that sees ministry beyond the congregation as part of their job description. This has been a long-standing practice at Faith that goes back to the WordAlone days, when the church called Pastor Mark Chavez and then deployed him to work for the WordAlone Network.

Currently, Wendy Magruder serves in the key role of Administrative Assistant for both Faith Lutheran and the Augustana District. Diane Pedersen manages all the accounting for Faith, but also for the Augustana District and the New Hope Mission Society. Marsha Schmit primarily serves as Director of Pastoral Care and Evangelism at Faith Lutheran, but is also on staff for the Institute of Lutheran Theology. Pastor Paul Knudson's job description includes a key leadership expectation to oversee the work of Augustana's Board of World Mission, which is arguably Augustana's most active board.

In order for new organizations to begin and continue, resources and assistance is required. Faith is one of those large congregations that creatively answers the call to serve in this way. As a district, we give thanks to God for their leadership and service!

SAVE THE DATES!

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT CONFIRMATION RETREAT
March 10-12, 2017 ~ Luther Crest, Alexandria, MN

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT ANNUAL CONVENTION
April 28, 2017 ~ Christ the King Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, MN
Plan to stay overnight after the Convention and drive to St. John's in Howard Lake, MN on April 29 for a special event celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

EDUCATIONAL FESTIVAL
June 9-10 ~ Abounding Joy Lutheran Church, St. Cloud, MN
Sponsored by SOLA Publishing

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT WOW (Women of the Word) ANNUAL GATHERING
Saturday, September 16, 2017
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in New Richland, WI

Go to the Augustana District Website or Facebook page for registration information on these events. You can also sign-up for regular emails from AD by emailing office@augustanadistrict.org and requesting to be included in AD Emails.

