

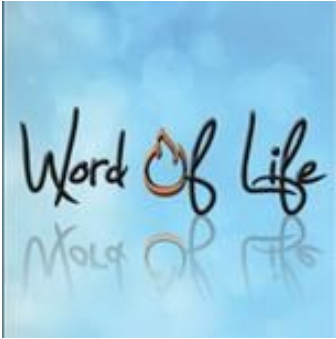


Augustana District

office@augustanadistrict.org

www.augustanadistrict.org

July 2017



"These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff. Matthew 10:5-10

Going On a Mission Trip....or...Staying On a Mission Trip?

Having gone on many youth mission trips, I am an advocate for their value. However, as you see in our text and in this month's "Creative Calling," there are other ways to think of a mission trip. Jesus sends some folks on a mission trip in Matthew 10. There are some important things to note. Remember that faith in Christ Jesus is at stake both then and now. Watch what Jesus does in the face of this crisis. It is the oddest thing.

First, he picks 12 people. That's it. He doesn't pick 100 people, but only 12. He picks 12 people who are unlearned, unqualified and as unlike each other as you could imagine. Let's see, you have some fishermen, a hated tax collector and a betrayer. If that weren't bad enough, they get no training and they are to take nothing with them – no money, no bag, no clothes and no sandals. What's their first assignment? "Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out demons." And if this weren't enough, here's the real kicker. They are told to "go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of Samaritans, but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Let me see if I have this right. There is a faith crisis of major proportions. Faith in the most important person in all the world – the only true God - is at stake. What every living, breathing person needs for life and faith, for future and eternal destiny is needed. So what is Jesus' solution? He picks 12 unqualified men to go out without training, without a program and with nothing on them or with them. He calls them to do an impossible-sounding thing: "Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out demons." And one more thing, they are not supposed to go to OUTSIDERS. Go only to INSIDERS. Do I have this right? Is this NOT what the text says? How do we make sense of this? Well, there are at least two things we can conclude.

- 1) Whether we THINK or FEEL we are qualified to be a witness for Christ is immaterial. He is in charge of life, faith and witness from beginning to end.
- 2) As far as the "beginning at home" part, that is clearly not the end game, but a place to start. Perhaps the point is that we can't really proclaim what we do not know.

There is one more conclusion. Wherever Christ's mission takes us, we have the same assurance those first disciples did. That promise comes right before the call of Chapter 10. "When he saw the crowds, *he had compassion for them*, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." That is grace sufficient.

In Christ,
Pastor Randy Freund
Augustana District Service Coordinator





Theology, Church, Mission



There is a pretty good chance that your church has helped to support a youth mission trip. Youth mission trips have a wonderful place in the life of the church and play a particularly important role in the faith lives of our young people. There are various ministries that provide meaningful experiences of service and reflection. While I was serving as a youth director, I enjoyed seeing the transformation provided, but I was always concerned about the experience. Three concerns continued to confront me every time I planned and attended these trips:

- The cost of sending one student usually ranged from \$300-425, which usually meant that some of our most active youth group participants couldn't afford it, even if they only had to pay a portion of the trip.
- While the idea of service-focused was appealing to the parents, they did not want to keep the students in the local setting for them to see the needs in the community. More often than not, the mission trip was supplanted by tourism on either side of the week-long mission trip (because, let's face it, you have to have something fun to do, or no kids will want to participate).
- Our kids worked hard and served well, but there was a huge disconnect between how the service projects were connected to their faith. When given opportunities for such reflection, it was not often that a Lutheran voice was heard. Rather than seeing our gifts and service at work as a result of our faith, it was often spoke of as payment on some debt that we owed to God for the death of His Son.

With these concerns in mind, two churches were dreaming up a plan, and had no idea that they were both thinking about similar things until an e-mail was sent just before Christmas.

This summer, Christus Lutheran Church, Clintonville, WI, and Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Maple Lake, MN, are participating in a service exchange. During July 9-13, students from Christus are traveling to Maple Lake, a community just outside the Twin Cities. While they are there, they will help with several projects in the community, at the church, and in the homes of some of Holy Cross' members. They will also head to Minneapolis to participate in a food-packing event at Feed My Starving Children, a poverty simulation through Minneapolis Council of Churches, and attend a Saint Paul Saints game. The pastors from both places will lead students in worship and guide students in times of reflection based in our Lutheran witness. Unfortunately, the students from Holy Cross were not able to head out to Clintonville, but it may be worked out in the future.

This youth service exchange is yet another example of how solid biblical and Lutheran **theology** shape the ministry of the local **church** (or two churches who are part of the Augustana District) and sends them out in **mission** for Christ.

Submitted by Pastor Culynn Curtis, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Maple Lake, MN

Do you know of a church that has implemented a Creative Calling? Please let us know about it so that we can share your ideas by contacting Randy Freund at director@augustanadistrict.org.



Theology, Church, Mission

Save the Date

LCMC 17th ANNUAL GATHERING *"We Confess Our Faith"*

October 8-11, 2017

Hilton Minneapolis, 1001 S. Marquette Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403

For more information and to register please go to lcmc.net/annual-gathering

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT WOW (Women of the Word) ANNUAL GATHERING *"Endurance"*

Saturday, September 16, 2017

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Richfield, WI

Registration information is now on the Augustana District Website at augustanadistrict.org

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

Monday, February 5 - Tuesday, February 6, 2018

The event will be held at the Sioux Falls Seminary in Sioux Falls, SD.

Hotel information to follow soon.

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT CONVENTION 2018 ~ Saturday, April 28, 2018 Location TBD

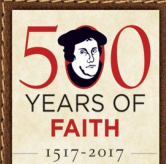
Go to the Augustana District Website or Facebook page for registration information on these events. You can sign-up for regular e-mails from AD by emailing office@augustanadistrict.org and requesting to be included in e-mails.



Multiply x 2

Magnify

Acts 12:24 *"The Word of the Lord continued to grow and be multiplied"*



Standing
firm in the
faith for
500 years!

