

December 2019

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Devotional
- Mission Minute
- From the Board of World Missions
- Welcome
- Pause • Play • Refresh
- Prayer Call
- Save the Date
- Theological Conference

CONTACT US:

Email Wendy Magruder,
Office Manager
office@augustanadistrict.org

Email Pr. Randy Freund,
Service Coordinator
director@augustanadistrict.org

Email Pr. Becky Hand,
Program Coordinator
b.hand@augustanadistrict.org

AD Office Phone: 320.234.8403

Mailing Address:
335 Main St. S
Hutchinson, MN 55350

d e v o t i o n a l

“Braking” News?

“Nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor anything known that shall not be made known and come to light.” Luke 8:17

Snow came early this year... again.

Such precipitation seems to encroach as a threat whenever we are longing for more sun. We have already had over 5 inches of the white, sticky stuff, and Halloween is weeks away. Are we doomed to yet another winter like last year's?

The weatherman has hard data from last year. This year the snow came “almost exactly” one year from last year's first snowfall. In places, it was very much the same depth and duration. Not that we believe that, though. Even if he's right, we recall other memories from our own experience of the same event. Though the meteorologist may have empirical evidence, we have seen for ourselves. We know the truth of our anecdotal evidence.

This is rather like the evidence of God in our lives. One hymn lyric says, “I love to tell the story...”, but the reaction of our hearers is to doubt it. You find yourself relating experiences, perhaps with results and times that others don't accept. “If you can't repeat the process; your data is dubious,” they claim. It's unscientific, unsubstantiated; doom and gloom abound as God evades our brain trust.

These days are curious days. People who don't know what they are talking about are proclaiming misinformation. They shout right out loud, on television and radio, on social media and computer terminals. Never mind that their promises don't add up, that the numbers are twisted and skewed. The results are expected to be “reconciled” after the election. Flash and volume, however, are hardly reliable measures of truth.

What difference lies between the witness of faith in Jesus and our experience of reality? What expression can we give that will “sell” those who hear us on the validity of Jesus' claims? Do we need more lights, a better sound board, a piano tuner or larger video screens? Perhaps more letters after our names, so people can be impressed with our learned claims?

Let me share with you the words Jesus gives His followers: “A sower went out to sow...” You are equipped to share the good news of Jesus as a farmer is equipped to plant seed. Everything begins with the seed, which is the Word of God, and it lands as God wills. That seed will sprout and grow as God brings it to fruit and favor: forgiveness of sins FOR YOU. Our faith rests on those things the world refuses to hear, but can come to know as true. Rather like tiny snowflakes that form into deep drifts, the evidence piles up so anyone can see.

Peace,
Pastor Nathan Hanson

MISSION MINUTE

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

When Advent begins, the lectionary readings will switch over to the Gospel of Matthew. Many Christians know that the "Great Commission" from Jesus to "go... and make disciples of all nations" is found in Matthew 28, but often do not realize that Matthew 1 and 2 are already laying the groundwork! In the genealogy of Jesus, Matthew shows that God has already been grafting outsiders into His Kingdom in the Old Testament (Rahab and Ruth in Matt. 1:5). Then, in Matthew 2, a group of Magi from the east comes to worship this newborn king. We celebrate this every year on Epiphany, but do not often make the connection to the Great Commission! In other words, Matthew shows us that "going and making disciples of all the nations" is not something tacked on to the end of Jesus' time on earth, but is central to the mission of Jesus and the life of the church.

The Augustana District has made the missionary call to "the nations" a central part of its purpose as a district through the work of the Board of World Missions and, specifically, its partnership with the Tabor Lutheran Church in Ethiopia. It has also highlighted strong mission agencies that uphold Lutheran traditions in their mission work throughout the world.

Last year, Augustana District also gave "seed money" to help in the development of a mission internship program for young adults (ages 19-25) in the LCMC through their Multiply to Magnify campaign. Over the last year, I have been working with Bill Moberly and Awakening Lives to World Missions to develop and grow that program. This past July, I visited a future site in South Africa where young adults will be able to live, learn and serve from June to August to gain a broader understanding of what life is like as a missionary, and experience the joys and challenges of cross-cultural ministry. Eventually, we will offer a year-long opportunity, as well. We hope that this program for young adults will strengthen their faith and help them discern God's call in their lives. As former missionary M. David Sills writes, "Developing international friendships and traveling the world are often the beginning points of the missionary call."

Thank you for your support of the Augustana District so that it can continue to support projects like this. The Multiply to Magnify "seed money" from the AD was a key reason the Young Adult Missionary Internship was able to get off the ground. Your continued support of the District means that many ministry efforts can grow and thrive.

If you know of any young people who have been thinking about pursuing a call in missions or in any avenue of ministry, please share this opportunity with them. You can find out more info on the program website: <http://www.alwm.org/young-adult-missionary-internship>. Or contact me at: pastormatt@alwm.org.

In Christ,
Rev. Matt Shields
Pastor of St. John's Lutheran, Flanagan, IL
Director of YAMI





FROM THE BOARD OF WORLD MISSIONS

How might we foster partners in the Tabor congregation in being witnesses "to the ends of the earth"?

We in the AD began our partnership with the Tabor Congregation with two driving principles:

- ✠ We will partner with it to multiply its outreach witness and not to create dependency.
- ✠ We will partner with this congregation driven by the Great Commission that seeks to live into the audacious goal of reaching the "ends of the earth" with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Tabor's outreach has multiplied over the past six years from sending out 25 evangelists to now 65 to 70. We are working with leadership to address keeping this a vibrant partnership while not creating dependency.

We also want to explore with them and others in Ethiopia if their outreach may be moving to what they see for them at this time to be "the ends of the earth." One of their goals has been to bring the Good News of our Lord to the people of South Sudan. At present, 700,000 people from South Sudan have been driven by violence into UN refugee camps in Ethiopia. The leaders of the Lutheran Church of South Sudan are crying out, "Come and help us train witnesses to these refugees." This is happening, and we may be able to multiply these efforts.

Thanks for your ongoing support. Help us end the year strong.



Financial Snapshot

At the end of October, \$61,951.77 has been given to the Augustana District General Fund, which supports the day to day operations including the mission and ministry of the district. This represents just 47.7% of our annual goal of \$130,000. We are counting on an outpouring of year-end giving to meet all of our annual commitments.

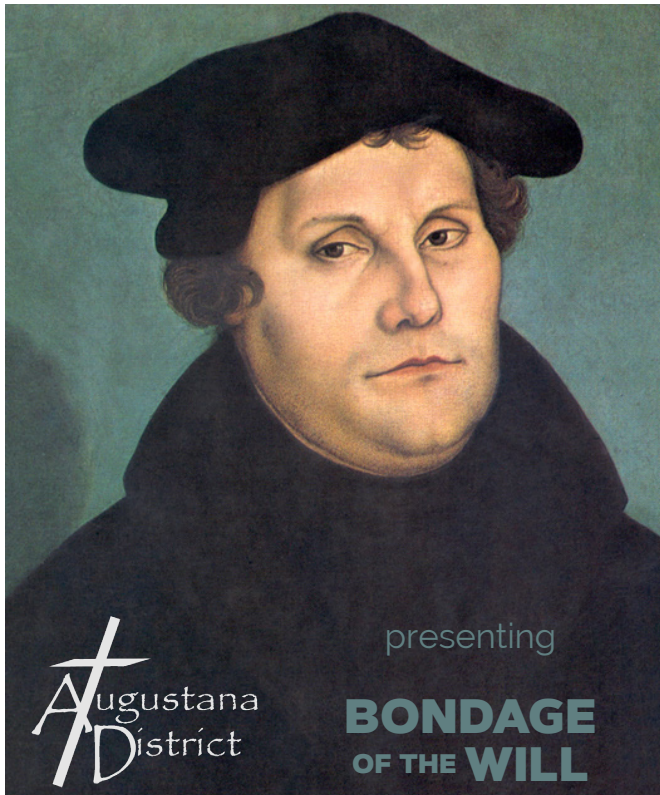
We hope and pray for your continued investment in the work that God is doing in and through the District. Please consider donating today.





WELCOME to the Augustana District

St. John's Lutheran in Hecla, SD
Bethany Lutheran in Covington, MI



 Pause  Play  Refresh

2020 Confirmation Retreat

Registration is now open. Please make sure to register early as space is limited.

The brochure and the emergency contact form is also available at the site.

Learn More

See full details and registration at
augustanadistrict.org/2020-confirmation-retreat/

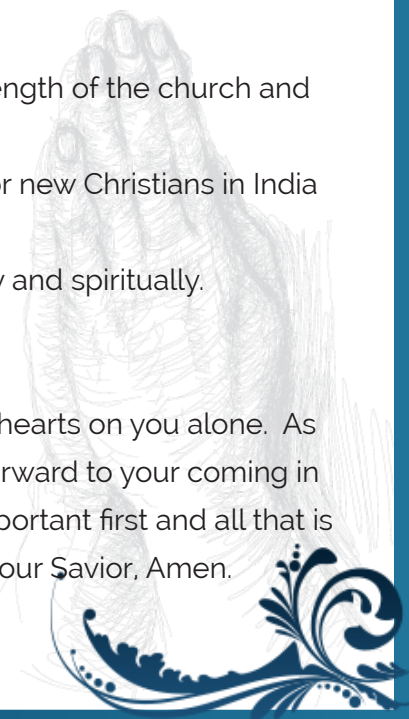


Prayers Around The World

- ✠ The Lutheran Church in Ethiopia, for Christians being persecuted, for strength of the church and the continual spread of the Gospel.
- ✠ The pastors in Northern India working to share Christ with Muslims and for new Christians in India for protection and spiritual growth.
- ✠ Victims of mass shootings in this country, for those still healing physically and spiritually.

Prayer of the Month:

Holy Lord, as we enter the season of anticipation, the Season of Advent, set our hearts on you alone. As we look back to your birth as a human being, though still God; and as we look forward to your coming in the cloud, you are our source of hope and salvation. Help us to keep what is important first and all that is temporary second. You are our Lord! All praise and thanksgiving to you! All for our Savior, Amen.



SAVE THE DATE

Registration opening soon!

10th Annual District Convention
Anniversary Banquet
Friday, May 1
Christ the King, Hutchinson MN

District Convention
Saturday, May 2
Faith Lutheran, Hutchinson, MN



Theological Conference

February 3 - 4, 2020

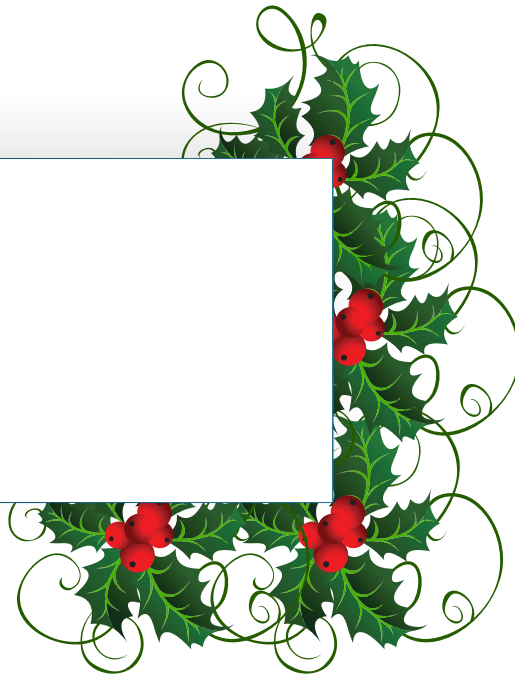
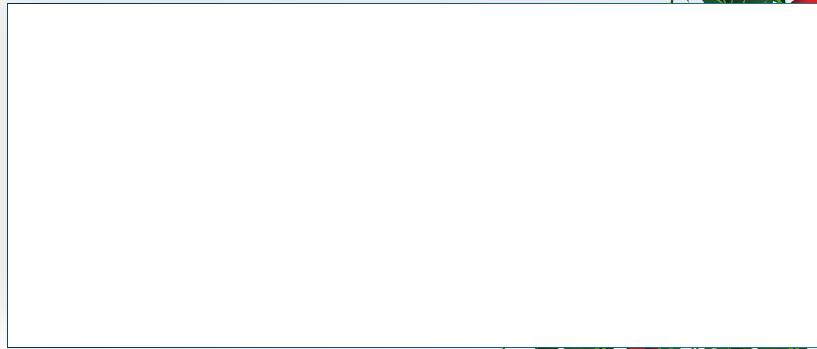
Best Western Plus

1901 Killbrev Dr.

Bloomington MN 55425

See full details and registration at
augustanadistrict.org/annual-theological-conference/

Register by January 1, 2020
for the early bird discount!



Address Service Requested

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT
335 Main Street S.
Hutchinson MN 55350



**Theological
Conference**

February 3-4
Best Western
Bloomington, MN

**Confirmation
Retreat**

March 6-8
Luther Crest
Alexandria, MN

**District
Convention**

Anniversary Banquet

Friday, May 1 at Christ the King,
Hutchinson MN

District Convention

Saturday, May 2
Faith Lutheran,
Hutchinson MN

“The angel answered, ‘The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.’” ~Luke 1:35

