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"What King?

John 8:33 reads: [Those who had believed him said to Jesus] "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

Jesus had many different people who came to sample his wisdom 2000 years ago. This meant doing a walkabout, as Jesus "went about" teaching God. Some of these folks wandered with him, assessing what he had to say as long as they could. There were tormenters and hecklers, trying to break his message. There were zealous followers that hung on his words and stood by him as adherents. As worshipers who tap out after communion before the benediction, there were also truants.

And there were the surprised. Jesus always tells the truth, and asks pointed questions so others demand truth. Some of the spectators would have claimed, "Yes, I am a true follower of Jesus." Of these, there would be some who truly meant it, at least as far as they could understand it. There would be those who suddenly found Jesus was pointedly asking them about faith. Caught off guard, they would counter with defensive questions, like this one about freedom. These days we would perhaps phrase their challenge this way: "We Americans have never been under anyone's thumb. What freedom can you give us?"

The promise of God to the world has always had a barrier to it. "Ain't havin' it!" is not a new taunt to Jesus, though we may find it a new challenge to our faith. Jesus did not dress down the people who challenged him about bondage or their family ties. He got right to the point and said, "You are slaves to sin. I can set you free from that." This is a statement of fact, a promise he delivered on then, and has delivered on since. He rules our nether realms that our superheroes of legends past and movies present dwell in. Your anxious night terrors about your health, your children, your lover, your job... he calms! Your torments of failed opportunities, ruined relationships, splintered families... he forgives! No quitter, this Jesus... he's been at this FOREVER!

The "modern resistance" to faith, as this Bible passage demonstrates, is not modern at all. Family members mocking your prayers have faith that something else can deliver them from death. Folks who stare at you as you pray for your meal have



confidence in another salve or potion. This world is full of "remedies", all of which are temporary and fall mute in the face of death. Such medicines give temporary relief from ailments generated by guilt, shame and doom. They cannot give what's needed for complete deliverance; they're unable to free you from sin. Jesus does this, and Jesus only. There is no other person or power with this function and this promise: Your sins are forgiven. Praise the Lord and live as HIS!

We all need this King Jesus that cares and cures completely; always has, always will.

Peace, Pastor Nate Hanson



MISSION MINUTE

"I am Seikh Azhar Uddin. I come from a poor Muslim family. I have a friend named Mohammed Asif, who, like me, also comes from a poor Muslim family. Both of us wanted to earn money as we live alone. So we decided to sell omelets and boiled eggs as vendors in 2013. Our income was not much, but was enough to cover our expenses. One day, when we were closing and returning to our home, a man came

"The next day he came again, and this time he began

to us and asked for some boiled eggs. From the way he talked, we thought that the man was Muslim, but it turned out that he was a Christian. He was Bro. Anish who told us that he used to be a Muslim, but after knowing and understanding the truth, he became a Christian and has been following Jesus. Then he shared his testimony with us. We were surprised to hear his testimony. After telling his testimony, he went back and told us that he will come again tomorrow.





to tell us about Jesus and shared some stories from the Bible. The stories were definitely fascinating, and we felt really good after listening to him. He visited us like this for the entire month, and after one month, he asked us if we wanted to know more. We definitely wanted to know more. So, he gave us a Bible to read and told us that we should read it, and he will visit us 3-4 times a week to clear all our doubts. So, we read the Bible for the next 6-7 months. We were able to complete the New Testament and Bro. Anish also cleared our doubts.

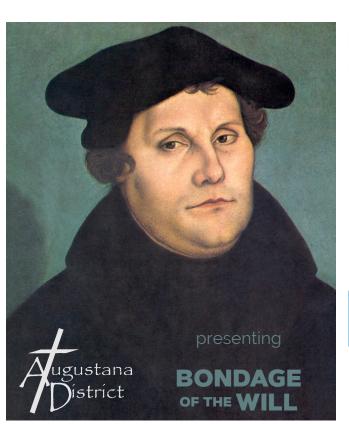
"We started believing in Jesus. So, Bro. Anish invited us to his Worship fellowship on Sunday. We joined his fellowship and instantly felt peaceful in our hearts. We understood that all that we have learned and felt were not false teachings but are the right teachings. So, we both opened our hearts completely to the Lord and accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord by December 2017. Even though we accepted Christ, we felt that our faith was still not strong enough, so we decided to read the Bible

and learn as much as we can. We read the Bible every day and also attended many seminars. The Bible verse which we love the most is Acts 4:12- *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.* Our faith grew more and more ultimately and we both decided to take baptism. We took baptism on 26th October 2019 and started our new life. Please pray for our new faith in the Lord and living testimony for our Lord among our Muslim friends and relatives."





Zion Lutheran Church from Skanee, MI





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/



A District of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)

Augustana District Service Coordinators Report

"You Know the Time"

"Besides this, you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." (Romans 13:11-12) denomination should understand it exists chiefly to be proclaimers of the gospel. To tend to this, LCMC has focused primarily on congregations. As an LCMC district, the Augustana District has a particular theme and focus: *Theology, Church, Mission.*

We do not get some "other time" to be proclaimers of the gospel. This is our time. The question is what do we "know" about "this time (verse 11)?"

The questions for all believers, however, are timeless. This is "our time" to address such timeless questions as:

Annual reports are all about "time." We look back and we look forward. This Augustana District Report is no different. However, I would like to frame this report in a different way. It would be easy to look back on the year and highlight what has been accomplished. It would also be easy to look forward and provide some vision for what comes next. Instead, I offer a reflection on this line that jumps out from Romans 13: "You know the time."

 Who will God raise up as the next generation of pastors and leaders?

What does it mean to answer the call of the

What is the nature of discipleship?

Great Commission?

- How do we address culture wars of our time?
- What does it mean to live in a time of apathy or hostility towards Christianity?

What is the time? What do we know about this time?

These questions have been present in every generation. The only thing "new" about them is that they are now our questions. For LCMC, how does the "L" (Lutheran) speak to and shape each of these questions, as well as many others? Perhaps, this is the time when the Augustana District is well-positioned to help answer that question.

I am a big fan of districts in LCMC (one in particular, of course). It is becoming clearer to me that districts and fellowships will pave the way for LCMC's future. The Augustana District is well positioned to lead and assist should this prove to be "the time" for this. I say this <u>not</u> as some hope for, or fear about, the future of an association called LCMC. Any association or

In Christ,
Pastor Randy Freund
Service Coordinator
Augustana District



Prayers Around The World

- Pray that financial support will be committed for four pastors (of the almost 100) preaching to Muslims in northern India (\$125/month for AIMJ)
- Pray for our brothers and sisters who have fled South Sudan to escape war. About four million souls are displaced.
- Pray that Tartu Academy, Estonia is able to maintain its new building and continually meet that financial obligation.

Prayer of the Month:

Father, as we begin a new year we remember that your mercies are new every morning. Guide us through 2020, that we may serve your will, walk in your paths and bring honor to the precious name of Jesus Christ. Bless our mission partners with protection and growth in the Holy Spirit. Bless us with generous hearts, giving out of the abundance you graciously provide. To Him who was, who is, and who is to come we pray. Amen.



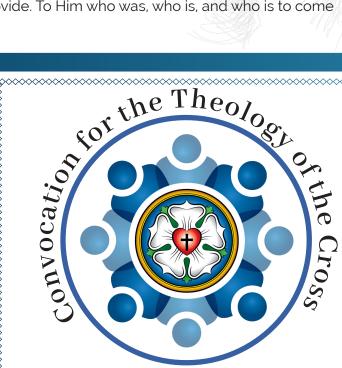
SAVE THE DATE Registration opening soon!

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 Killibrew Dr.

Bloomington MN 55425

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



AUGUSTANA DISTRICT 335 Main Street S.
Hutchinson MN 55350
Address Service Requested

District Convention

Anniversary Banquet Friday, May 1 Christ the King, Hutchinson MN

Convention

Saturday, May 2 Faith Lutheran, Hutchinson, MN

Convocation for the Theology of the Cross February 3 - 4, 2020 Best Western Plus

1901 Killibrew Dr. Bloomington MN 55425

Confirmation Retreat

March 6-8 Luther Crest Alexandria, MN