

This devotion is an excerpt from a Bible study as reported by Pr. Asad Masih from All India Masihi Jamat (AIMJ) titled "The Power Above All Powers." In this study, he addresses the Power of Me, the Power of We and the Power of He.

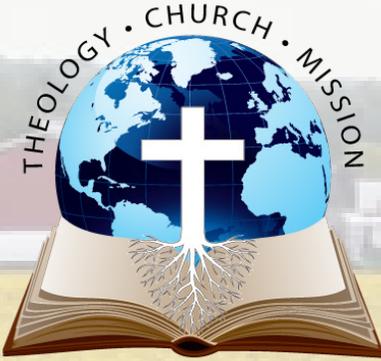
The Power of He (God)

There are different kinds of powers like physical, political, economical and electrical. Somehow, we don't talk much about God's power. In 2 King 6: 1-7, we see God's power in the form of a miracle when the ax head falls in the water. God always uses His power to help us and not destroy us. Jesus uses His power to help the people and His disciples, like when he feeds 5,000 hungry people.

Our God is not only the God of infinite power, but also the God of infinite compassion and tenderness. He is deeply touched by human needs. Now I want to remind you that God's power can turn impossible to possible. If he has the power to make the ax head float, then He also has the power to give you peace and victory over what you are going through right now. Are you in trouble because you do not have job, no business, no income and you are thinking about different ways of taking care of your family? I ask you, what is the problem that you have today? Always remember that our God is a miracle-working God. If we believe, we will see the glory of God. We will see the intervention of God. One Sunday, some school children said that "a miracle is something that you cannot do, but Jesus can." I highlight the miracle to remind us that He is God because He is good. So you can believe in God. God has also done miracles in my life. God's power is greater than the power of I, we or any other power in the world.



We welcome Pastor Richard Little to the Augustana District. Pastor Little is serving at Bethany Lutheran Church in Covington, MI and Zion Lutheran Church in Skanee, MI



**AUGUSTANA
WITNESS**
newsletter

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Mission Minute



Seekers Meeting



Women's Meeting



Zoom Youth Gathering



Children's Gathering

All India Masihi Jamat (AIMJ) praises God that they have been able to organize meetings and “camps” during the shutdown. On June 6, Baptism camps were held and 36 people were baptized. Six “seekers” meetings were held in which 73 people listened to God stories and sang songs. Five women’s meetings were organized and 68 women gathered to hear God’s word, worship and pray. Fifty-nine youth in total met across five youth gatherings, some via Zoom. They listened to Bible studies and worshiped.

Two children’s programs were held, and 28 children learned Bible stories and songs (pictured above).

Your contributions to Augustana District for AIMJ pay the salaries of four of the pastors involved in this work. These pastors earn \$125/month. God is making big waves in a nation of people of Hindu and Muslim faiths. We deeply appreciate your continued support for this ministry in India.



IS YOUR CONGREGATION INTERESTED IN HOSTING THE 2021 CONVENTION?

If so please contact the office at 320-234-8403 or by emailing us at office@augustanadistrict.org



Prayer of the Month

Holy Lord, we are daily reminded of our own weakness and inability to control or fix the things around us. As we continue to walk through the difficulties of the pandemic, and economic, social, and political issues, give us your wisdom. Strengthen us to do the things you want us to do: to speak your words into the depths of pain, to offer aid to those in despair, and to walk in patience and love. You alone, O Lord, are all-powerful and all-knowing. Your will be done. We ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, Amen.

Worshiping On-line: The Connects and Disconnects

God's peace be with you.

The Augustana District Ambassadors have been meeting twice a month to mull over issues the shutdown has created for the church, specifically worship. The last meeting addressed the pros and cons of on-line worship. Worship may be live-streamed or pre-recorded, recorded with live people in house or only a preacher and a camera. The options vary but the concerns are similar across the board. We decided to share this conversation with you. We'll begin with the downside of on-line worship.

A major concern revolves around engagement in worship by the hearer. We know that God's Word is action and does what it says. Though minds wander during a service in the sanctuary, distractions at home seem to be endless. Sitting at home, do we truly become wrapped up in God's word and his promise or are we distracted with the string hanging from our pajama sleeve and the fact that our coffee has gotten cold? Can families sit quietly with children and stay mentally tuned-in to worship time? Do people even attempt to sit quietly to hear God speak and to worship him, or are we multi-tasking? What happens when the on-line connection is faulty?

If we worship on-line, do we mail in an offering? What happens to Sunday school attendance? Will the convenience of staying home be a temptation not to go physically go into God's house to worship the Almighty? Much controversy has swirled around digital communion and baptism — to administer the sacraments or not to administer them.

Other concerns circle around the process itself. In many cases, pastors have been tasked with the technical issues of recording, editing, uploading, etc. This has become an unexpected addition to

the calling of shepherding the flock. There is a call to upgrade video equipment and video quality. If up-loaded worship services are too professional, will anyone come to the church? Several pastors said the plan is to phase out live-streaming of worship. In addition, tracking "views" doesn't necessarily reflect people actively being attentive to worshipping God.

There are, however, positives to such worship options. Many churches have experienced large numbers of on-line attendees, some from afar and some who have decided to give offerings. So the "reach" of the church has expanded. Bible studies and text studies have gained a larger audience.

On-line worship is still a viable option for people who don't wish to risk close contact as disease numbers increase. Funerals and memorial services can be shared with distant family and friends who wouldn't otherwise be able to attend.

Like most things, there is an up-side and a down-side to on-line worship services. The concerns are real and revealing. Pastors are mindful about the hearts of the hearers, and the spiritual well-being of the church, the people of God. Extending the reach of the church is celebrated, but the lack of opportunity to quiet ourselves before the Lord and give time dedicated only to him can be detrimental to our over-all well-being. The gray area seems large and the line in the sand ever shifting. As you lift your pastor and church leadership in prayer, ask God's wise guidance surrounding these issues.

Peace to you whether you're reading this on-line or on paper.

Pr. Becky Hand

AUGUSTANA DISTRICT COUNCIL

DID YOU KNOW?

- Council members are elected at the Annual Convention of the Augustana District.
- Their responsibilities include ensuring and verifying that the District operates according to its constitution, bylaws, and Statement of Faith.
- To this end, the District Council oversees the Boards and District staff.
- The District Council functions as the Board of Trustees and is responsible to the District Convention for all fiscal matters, including the District budget, revenues, and expenditures.

JULY 28, 2020 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS...

- Because of the generosity of our AD congregations and individual members, the Augustana District can continue our normal activities – working to achieve our mission! THANK YOU!!
- The council welcomed our new member, Debbie Flatau, Perham MN. Deb was appointed to serve on the council to fill a vacancy. She will

be nominated to continue her service on the council at our Annual Gathering in September.

- Long Range Planning Retreat: The AD Staff, District Council and the AD Board Chairs will be meeting on Friday, September 25th to discuss and prepare a proposal regarding an AD Initiative. We will be sharing this proposal with all of you at the Annual Convention!
- The council accepted the Board of Theology's recommendation to add Pastor Richard Little, Michigan, to the "AD Endorsed Pastor Roster". Congratulations to Pastor Little!
- The Board of Christian Education announced that they have an applicant for the Seminary Scholarship. This is a new program and our hope is to spread the word so more seminarians can receive the financial support often needed by our seminary students.
- Planning for the Augustana District Annual Convention continues!

SEE YOU ALL IN SEPTEMBER!



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Please send all contributions for the Augustana District, Tabor or AIMJ to:

Augustana District
335 Main St. S.
Hutchinson, MN 55350

Save the 2021 Dates

- ★ Theological Conference February 8-9 in Bloomington, MN
- ★ Confirmation Retreat March 5-6 in Alexandria, MN

2020 WoW Gathering Postponed

September 18, 2021

Will still be hosted by Crossroads Lutheran Congregation

Location: 2948 180th St. Dawson, MN 56232

Theme: "We walk by faith and not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:7





10th Annual District Convention

Saturday, Sept. 26

Faith Lutheran, Hutchinson, MN

Featured Guest Speaker
Minnesota Supreme Court Justice

The Honorable
G. Barry Anderson

speaking on



“Religious Liberty: What It Is and Why We Need It”

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, we have altered the original convention plans. There will be NO Anniversary Banquet on Friday night. The Convention will be a one-day, shortened event that is offered in a variety of ways for those not comfortable attending in person.

You may attend in the following ways:

- 1.) In-person at one of three satellite meetings (\$40 per person):
 - Hutchinson (Primary Location – Limited to the first 75 registrants)
 - St. John's in Springfield, MN (Limited to the first 50 registrants)
 - Living Word in Alexandria, MN (Limited to the first 45 registrants)
- 2.) Remotely via Zoom from a location of your choice (\$25 per location)

Every AD church is allowed and strongly encouraged to have two delegates participate. For the business portion of the event, it is essential that a quorum is present to vote on all business agenda items so please decide on your delegates and register them ASAP.

CDC/MHD Guidelines request the following for our gathering:

If you or anyone you have been in contact with is not feeling well or has been tested for COVID-19 we ask that you join the convention via Zoom. (Please e-mail office@augustanadistrict.org BEFORE 7 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 26 if you need to change your registration to Zoom)

Masks will be requested at all three locations

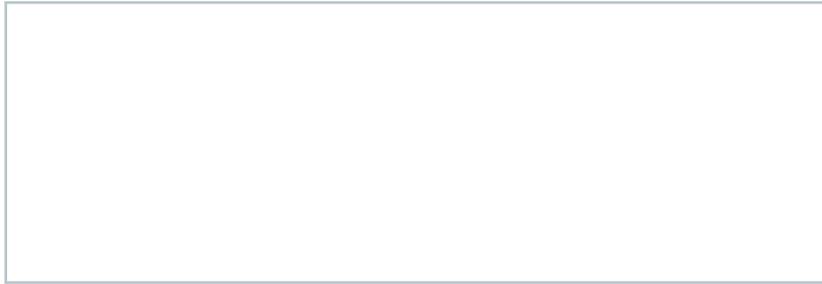
Social distancing will be observed at all three locations

Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the buildings (Regular sanitizing and hand washing is encouraged throughout the day)

Food served at each location will be done following best practice requirements at this time

Because of the additional COVID requirement planning that must take place to make this event happen we are asking (begging) you, to send in your registrations sooner rather than later.

To register, or for more information, please visit
augustanadistrict.org/2020-district-convention




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



10th Annual District
 Convention
 Saturday, Sept. 26
 Faith Lutheran, Hutchinson, MN
 Featured Guest Speaker
 Minnesota Supreme Court Justice
 The Honorable
 G. Barry Anderson
 speaking on



“Religious Liberty: What It Is and Why We Need It”

NOTE

Churches, please invite your councils to listen in to this timely topic. You can join via Zoom for just \$25/location and invite as many people as you would like to listen to as much or as little of the convention as you want.