

DEVOTIONAL

It is the Gift of God, So That No One May Boast

*"...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling..."**~ Phillipians 2:12*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Devotional.....	1 & 2
Convention Recap.....	2
Virtual Message.....	3
Welcome.....	3
Convocation of the Cross.....	4
Financial Report.....	4
Prayer Request.....	5
Prayer of the Month.....	5
Ambassador Highlights.....	5
Transition Ministry.....	6
LCMC Recap.....	6
2020 Initiative.....	7
Convention Videos.....	7

CONTACT US:

E-mail Wendy Magruder,
Office Manager
 @ office@augustanadistrict.org

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

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

AD Office:
 ☎ 320-234-8403

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

The moment we hear these words of Paul from the 2nd chapter of his letter to the Philippians, the sinner in us leaps up and begins looking for anything and everything he/she can do to work out his/her salvation; generally becoming little more than an annoying busy-body and a nuisance, regardless of how many nice things he/she does for others. Certainly there is some benefit to neighbor in all those nice things, but the neighbor is not the primary focus in these works: the primary focus is the sinner who is trying to work out his/her salvation, and the neighbor is merely used as a means to that end. To the unsavory idea of “using” a neighbor, add the self-righteousness that results from apparent progress towards working out one’s own salvation, and top it off with a strong dose of diminishing (or dismissing altogether) the all-sufficient work of God in Christ for salvation, and you’ve got a putrid pile of filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).

The solution, as is so often the case, is to read more of the Word for a fuller understanding of salvation and righteousness. In the case of Paul’s letter to the Philippians, you needn’t go far at all. Go back 9 verses in that 2nd chapter, and you will find this: “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility, count others more significant than yourselves.” To approach one’s neighbor in this way – as more important than yourself – will help you to serve them as an end in themselves, not as a mere means to some other, selfish end. But there is more and greater help for a proper understanding in the conclusion of the sentence in which Paul tells us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; “...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” This short sentence fragment is of great importance for our understanding of righteousness and salvation, for in it, we hear that even the will (desire) to do good is God’s doing, not ours. “It is God who works in you,” Paul writes, even “to will...”. This is the death-knell to human pride, self-righteousness, and the supposed “free” will, which (it is claimed) can choose the good and the right. Whenever we feel we have chosen, desired, or willed to do what is righteous, it has not been our doing at all, but as Paul says, “It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

"To God alone be the glory" is a phrase born out of this truth – that righteousness and salvation belong to God alone, and therefore, so does the glory. While the proud see this as an affront, the humble see it for what it is – a glorious, gracious, free gift that God gives to sinners because He loves them. May God grant you this gift anew each morning, setting you free to live in His love and to carry that love

freely into the world to serve the neighbor, until (as that beautiful prayer from the Compline service in the LBW puts it) "...the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done."

Rev. Brian Crocker

Christus Lutheran Church, Clintonville, WI

2020 CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

As a non-geographic district, we were excited to see how many online participants we had this year. There were 60 participants via zoom, 20 of those were delegates. There were 40 attendees in person and of those, 19 were delegates.

For those of you that missed the convention or would like to see Justice Anderson's speech again you can find the recordings of the day on our website at augustanadistrict.org/video-channel/

Also recorded were the Bible studies by Pastor Julie Smith and Pastor Nathan Hanson and the Business meeting portion of the convention.



G. Barry Anderson receiving the Augustana District Distinguished Service Award presented by the District Chair, Mike Fuchs. Also pictured are Barry's wife, Louise and his son, Nolan.

Two scholarships were awarded to Pastor Thomas Thorstad and Pastor Greg Pavsek by the Board of Christian Education.

Lunch time allowed for folks to connect and socialize over a boxed lunch. This is a time that many look forward to at these events.



Supreme Court Justice the Honorable G. Barry Anderson spoke to attendees on "Religious Liberty: What It Is and Why We Need It"





Message Through Virtual Meeting

By the grace of God, AIMJ had conducted 3 virtual meetings. Meetings for pastors and evangelist attended from seven states of India. It was organized in a systematic way and details are given below.

The first virtual meeting was held on the 5th of August, 2020 with Moullanas from Bardhaman, Malda and Birbhum, West Bengal. There were 20 Moullanas attending the virtual meeting. The attendees are encouraged by the Word of God and special prayer was offered for each Moullanas and their strong faith in Jesus our Lord. The meeting lasted two and a half hours.

“Have you received the grace of God?”

Grace is the most important word in the Bible. The word Grace is used over 170 times in the new testament alone. According to the dictionary, Grace is unmerited favor of God to us all. The Bible emphasizes that the grace of God touches the lives of unworthy people. The apostle Paul tells us that we are not saved by our own effort but by the Grace of God. That way the book of Ephesians 2:8-9 ***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.”***

The grace of God is definitely in the Bible and can

best be understood by own experience. Therefore, we say that you are graced by God. We all know John Newton whose life was transformed by God and he wrote Amazing Grace. He wrote *“How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now I am found, was blind, but now I see.”*

I am what I am. A forgiven child of God

Now, I want to share from the book of John 8:1-11. This woman was caught in the act of adultery. This woman was caught 2000 years ago but we see how Jesus gave His grace to this woman. From this passage, I want to share 3 things about God's grace-

- 1.) GOD'S GRACE IS ABOUT CONVICTION AND NOT CONDEMNATION
- 2.) GOD'S GRACE IS ABOUT FORGIVING AND NOT PUNISHING
- 3.) GOD'S GRACE IS ABOUT TRANSFORMATION NOT TRIAL

JESUS WANTS US TO BE 'GRACE RECEIVERS AND BECOME GRACE GIVERS'. So my dear brothers and sisters, do not put people on trial but take them to the throne of Grace as God's Grace is all about transformation. We should never forget that when we receive Grace we also have to give Grace to others.



Endorsed Clergy:

★ Pastor John Hoyum at Denny Park Lutheran Church, Seattle, WA

★ Pastor Isaiah Bai at Living Faith Church, Fergus Falls, MN

February 7-9, 2021 in Bloomington, MN



Ken Jones, professor of Theology and Philosophy at Grand View University in Des Moines, IA will be the featured speaker.

Thanks to Luther's biblical discoveries and his prolific writing, the 16th century Church was rattled by shifting doctrine and practice. The Augsburg Confession (1530) provided a framework to understand God, self, church, and world. These timeless truths not only solidified the teaching of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, but also helped this fledgling movement to understand itself within a changing world. This year's theological conference will be an exciting exploration of the Augsburg Confession which provides a toolkit for navigating our changing world and continues to share the good news of Jesus Christ in clear and articulate ways.



FINANCIAL UPDATE

THE AUGUSTANA DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORT

At the recent Augustana District (AD) Convention the AD Budget and the latest financial reports were presented. As many of you are aware, the fiscal year for AD ran from April, 2019 through March, 2020. We ended on a good note with income exceeding expenses by over \$5,000. The contributions by you, the members of AD, increased almost 4% compared to the previous year. Thank you for your generous giving! When it came to planning a budget, the AD Board decided to freeze the budget at \$125,688 for the 2020/2021 fiscal year as we found ourselves in the middle of the pandemic. We were anticipating a sizable drop in donations to AD given the struggles many churches were experiencing. But fortunately, praise the Lord, that drop in revenue never happened! In fact, the giving this year is actually up over \$1,600 when compared to last year. This good news has enabled our staff and leaders to continue to march forward and accomplish our mission. We thank you for your prayers and your continued support.



Eric Knutson, AD Treasurer

PRAYER REQUEST

- ✠ On 14 August 2020 at 7 P.M at Muraroi, North Bengal, Tabliki Jamat Muslim group attacked Maulana Seikh Samshul Hoque in his house.
- ✠ On 16th August 2020, 2 believers of Abdul Majeed were forcefully taken from their house in Raisen Road, Bhopal Madhya Pradesh, and were beaten brutally.



PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Holy Lord, we come to you with grateful hearts. Thank you for loving us and making us your own. We ask you to guide us as individuals, as congregations, as a district and as an association. Show us where we are wrong, and strengthen us where we align with your will, and bless us as ambassadors of your love. In the mighty name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Ambassador Highlights

The District Ambassadors continue to meet via zoom, every other week to discuss various topics of relevance. This has proven to be quite helpful and encouraging. All pastors are invited to attend. Let your ambassador know that you're interested and they'll send you the link; or you can let our Program Coordinator know at becky@augustanadistrict.org and she'll email the zoom link to you.

November
Newsletter

JUST A QUICK NOTE TO LET
YOU KNOW THERE WILL NOT
BE A NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER
PUBLICATION.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



LOOKING FOR LEADERS

TRANSITION MINISTRY

A four - six week program offered by the Augustana District



Once your pastor leaves and before the congregation starts the search for pulpit supply, Interim, or begins the call process, your congregation may benefit from a pastor or pastoral team to serve for a 4-6 week time of transition.



For more information or to become a Transition Ministry team member, contact the Augustana District Service Coordinator, Pastor Randy Freund, by phone 320-583-3648 or by email director@augustanadistrict.org.



Augustana District will once again participate in Giving Tuesday on December 1, 2020. Please watch our Facebook page for details on how you can support the district through this annual event.



Follow us on Facebook at [augustanadistrict](https://www.facebook.com/augustanadistrict).

THE LCMC HELD THEIR 20TH ANNUAL GATHERING AND CONVENTION ON OCTOBER 5.



The Augustana District would like to welcome Mike Bradley who was installed as the new LCMC Service Coordinator. You can congratulate Mike at mike@lcmc.net.

The district would also like to thank Mark Vander Tuig for his years of dedication and service.



AD 2020 INITIATIVE PLAN

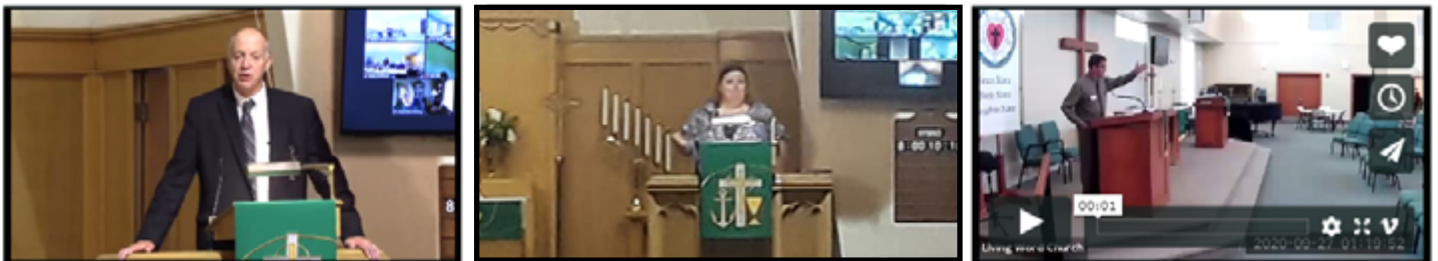
AD Board Chairs (Pr. Culynn Curtis, Pr. Julie Smith, Pr. Tom Christenson, Pr. Nate Hanson), Council Chair Dr. Mike Fuchs, Pr. Randy Freund and Pr. Becky Hand met to create the AD 2020 Initiative to link our interest of identifying youth for ministry to Bible camps and campus ministry. We discussed the possibility of Zoom camps and 'in-person' camps with college students as leaders.

We mapped out a plan as follows:

- 1.) At the Theological Conference we plug the Sr. High Youth Event at the 2021 AD Convention and share the need for Pastor's to identify youth who may be candidates for ministry work. When considering a convention theme, we want to consider topics that will also be of interest to high schoolers.
- 2.) We publicize and host a Youth Event in conjunction with the 2021 AD Convention. This may be a modification of the previously planned Sr. High Event.
- 3.) From this group and from Pastor's suggestions we develop a Youth Task Force.
- 4.) This, hopefully, extends into some summer intern/creative staffing situations.
- 5.) As this Youth Task Force enters college, we follow them to campuses to begin campus ministry sites. We meet with current campus ministers to learn what is successful for them.
- 6.) Hopefully this develops into to summer camp ministries as well.
- 7.) In addition there is a desire to help form a Mission Start close to Minneapolis, MN.

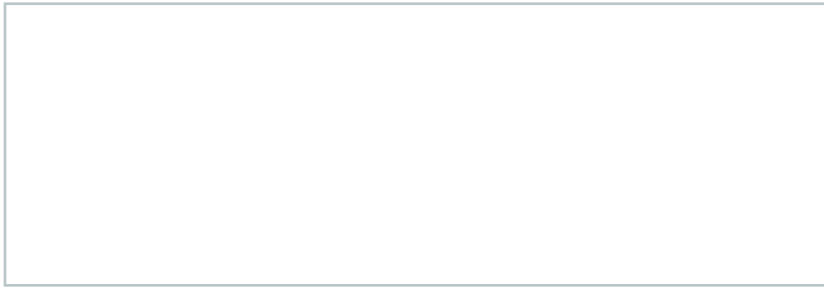
Financial Goal for the Sr. High Event, Youth Task Force Meeting, Summer Internship support and Mission Start is \$35,000


ANNUAL CONVENTION VIDEO REPLAYS



The 2020 Annual Convention Videos are now available at the website.

(<https://augustanadistrict.org/video-channel/>)




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



SAVE THE 2021 DATES

- ☒ Theological Conference February 7-9, 2021, in Bloomington, MN
- ☒ Confirmation Retreat March 5-6, 2021, Luther Crest in Alexandria, MN
- ☒ Augustana District Convention on Saturday, May 1, 2021, in Springfield, MN.
- ☒ Next WoW Gathering September 18, 2021, in Dawson, MN