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## Contact Us

Pr. Randy Freund ..... Service Coord.  
director@augustanadistrict.org

Pr. Becky Hand ..... Program Coord.  
b.hand@augustanadistrict.org

Wendy Magruder ..... Office Assistant  
office@augustanadistrict.org

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

Phone ..... 320.234.8403

Web ..... www.augustanadistrict.org

## Devotional

Once again, the drums of war are beating on the world stage. The news is filled with every move of the Russian Army, every pronouncement from Moscow, every update from Kyiv. As has happened so many times in the past two years, we have been reminded of the fragility of life in this world. Danger is all around.

At the same time, we've been reminded of our capacity to cry, "Peace, peace" when there is no peace. Our capacity to pretend at good will. As the world came together in the spirit of the Olympic Games, with its usual stories of deep commitment to excellence, overcoming adversity, displays of sportsmanship, and pushing the limits of human achievement, powers were at work behind the scenes, making ready for war. Those displays of unity obscured the deep strife on the horizon.

It is tempting in such times to let fear and resignation take hold. We fear the impact of a growing conflict, worried that we are on the brink of World War III. We are resigned to the reality of the deep darkness that grips the human heart, knowing that since the Garden we have never found peace. War and strife are part of our curse.

Some are quick to say that, come what may, God remains on his throne. His creation remains safely in his hands. Such pronouncements, while true, are much easier to make when the danger is half a world away, affecting someone else's home and family. The fact that God is still on his throne does not absolve us from tending to the needs of the neighbor. It never has.

Our gospel reading from a couple of weeks ago is still sounding in my ear. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you." (Luke 6:27-28) While the words haven't changed, and we've heard them countless times before, they sound different today, as I read stories of families fleeing the bombs that are falling on their cities. Today, "enemies" look very specific for some. And loving those who are trying to kill you is unthinkable.

And yet, we continue to pray, "Thy kingdom come." As we pray these words, we know that God is on his throne. We know that his kingdom is coming without our prayers. We are praying that it would come also to us. That it would come to our brothers and sisters in warzones. That it would come to the leaders of the nations. As we look for the coming of his kingdom, we pray also that he would open our eyes and our hearts to those neighbors whose needs have become so acute. That he would open our mouths to cry out against oppression. That he would open our hands to share with those who are losing so much.

It is Christ Jesus, himself, who loves his enemies and does good for those who hate him, blesses those who curse him, prays for those who abuse him. We pray that by his Spirit we might be moved to such love.

Pastor Julie Smith

# Mission Minute

From the Board of World Missions

## New Chairperson of the Board

New Chairperson of the Board: Pastor Tom Christenson, the chairman of the Board of World Missions, submitted his resignation for that position after taking a new call to a NALC congregation. The board then chose Eric Knutson to be the new chair. Eric has been involved with this board since its beginning. He was a member of the delegation

that went to Ethiopia in 2014 and was involved as we began our partnership with the Tabor Congregation's outreach witness. More recently, Eric has also served as the treasurer of the Augustana District Council.

## Focus on the North Central Ethiopia Synod: Overcoming a Devastating Civil War

The Amharic region of northcentral Ethiopia took a major hit from the rebel forces seeking to regain control of the country they previously held for some twenty years. The NCES suffered a significant brunt of the incursion. Churches were damaged, tens of thousands had to flee for their lives, the synod compound was ransacked, and the president of the synod, Wagnew Andagre, and his family, had to flee to keep from being killed. Thankfully the government troops acted with force and the Tigray army gave up the battle and returned to their home area. Thanks be to God!

Congregations and families of the Augustana District responded to a request for help with mind boggling generosity. A goal of \$10,000 resulted in a Spirit empowered response of over \$50,000. The leadership of the synod executive

committee have, along with President Wagnew, expressed their profound gratitude for your generosity. Displaced people were fed, the synod compound was put back in good shape, congregational structures repaired. With the end of the conflict the huge numbers of those who were

forced to flee have returned home. We include here a couple of pictures forwarded to us showing some of the food that has helped meet these immediate needs. Thank you for our outpouring of prayers and financial support for our brothers and sisters in Christ.



The congregation of Living Word in Moses Lake, WA, will continue its regular funding of the ongoing training program of synod pastors and evangelists in this area. Thank you, brothers and sisters of Living Word

Lutheran Church for your continued support.

## Known and Trusted Leaders at Tabor Call Forth Our Ongoing Partnership

Recent communication with Tabor's leader of their elders makes it ever so clear that this congregation's stewardship of the funds we send for their outreach witness deserves ongoing support. Ashenafi Wachomo, the head of the elders at Tabor, expressed their profound thankfulness for the AD congregations and families continued support. The AD mission leaders urge ongoing faithful and generous financial support. Thank you for what you have done and will do.

Pastor Paul Knudson, Board of World Missions

# CHURCH PLANT: Living Word International Christian Fellowship (LWICF)

***"Casting the net. Planting the church of Jesus Christ on the U of M Saint Paul Campus."  
Getting to know Living Word International Christian Fellowship (LWICF).  
What it is? What is the vision?"***

Living Word International Christian Fellowship (LWICF) is a LCMC affiliated church/congregation that has been planted in the heart of the U of M campus in Saint Paul. LWICF started in November of 2021 and are hoping for the vibrant life of the gospel in us to bud, blossom, and become a tree.

History and Vision: LWICF is growing from the ashes of Living Word Antioch Church (LWAC) which was located on Larpenleur Avenue in the Falcon Heights City Council building. The explosion of the pandemic two and a half years ago put a stop to the gathering of LWAC. It was very difficult to restart the church, and instead of closing the church definitely it was decided to rename it and to move to a location on the campus. We kept the LWAC vision as our church DNA. Our new location gives an indication of our new mission and target.



The DNA of LWICF is contained in the previous name of the church, *"Living Word Antioch Church"*

1) *Living Word*: The new congregation will faithfully stand on the rock of the Living Word which is Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, the Son of God. The Jesus we believe is the one defined and described by the written word of God as contained in the Scriptures, or the Bible, and under the enlightening of the Holy Spirit. At this time when all things keep changing we believe that the Word of God will remain forever, and will withstand the storms of evil, secularism, fear, and uncertainty that are blowing in the world today.

That Living Word is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, and represents the only real hope for the world.

2) *Antioch Church*: reminds us of the Antioch Church of Acts 11:19-30 and 13:1-3, the very paradigm of the church of the New Testament where the followers of Jesus were called

Christians for the first time (Acts 11:26). The Antioch church was International (Jews and non-Jews mixed together), filled with the Holy Spirit, founded on the Bible, and generous.

The new name, *"International Christian Fellowship"*, sets before us our new mission. We will be unapologetically missional, believing that the gosepl is more than ever relevant and representing the only hope for the world. The world is at the door of the campus and its neighborhood. We do not need to go overseas to make disciple of all nations. We pray for the Holy Spirit to open the doors to share the gospel to people and to empower us to be true disciples of the Risen One. We are going to reach out to students, both nationals and internationals, neighbors, and people in our sphere of influence.

The world needs salvation, food, healing, and hope. Matthew 10:7-8

represents our understanding of the Great Commission for today: "Preach the gospel, heal the sick, cast out demons, cleanse the lepers, and raise the dead." It's a holistic definition of the Great Commission, it is the mission that will respond to the true needs of this desperate world. It is the unchanging commission from our unchanging Lord in a constantly changing world.

We feel blessed to be a part of LCMC and to partner with you all to fulfill this mission Jesus is giving us as we wait for his return.

In his name,

Pr. Daniel Rakotojoelinandrasana

651 239 3848 | [drakotoj1@yahoo.com](mailto:drakotoj1@yahoo.com)



# Women of the Word

(WOW)

Hello, my name is Diane Anderson. I am from Hutchinson, Minnesota, and I am a member of Christ the King Lutheran in Hutchinson. At the WOW Gathering last fall I was elected Treasurer for the WOW organization. I also served as secretary on the first board when WOW was organized.

A little about me. I have been married to my husband, Jim, for 51 years. We have three adult children and five grandchildren ages 10-15. We are fortunate that they all live fairly close to us so we can spend time with them. I was a stay-at-home mom for twelve years and when my youngest child started school, I started working for the Hutchinson School District. I worked part-time for the District Office and then for 20 years as the High School Principal's secretary, a job which I very much enjoyed. I retired in 2007. My hobbies include sewing, crafting, reading, and spending time with friends. Jim and I also enjoy traveling. We usually spend a couple of winter months in Mesa, AZ, which is where I am while writing this.

At Christ the King, we do not have an organized women's group. We do, however, have two circles that meet monthly. One in the evening and the other one on a weekday morning. We have a quilting group that I



participate in, that meets two days a month from

September through May. We send our quilts to Lutheran World Relief and local causes.

We don't have regular meetings, but women will occasionally plan a special event. We recently had a speaker who portrayed women of the Bible - at this program the speaker played the part of the prodigal son's mother.

We have an annual event we call *Trees and Traditions*. It is always held the first Saturday of December. We have the church decorated with MANY trees, have a bake shop, a gift shop which features all homemade items, and krumkake and lefse demonstrations, with a free will offering for samples. In our meeting hall we have table settings, Christmas trees, and Christmas collections displayed. People sign up to decorate a tree, bring a collection, etc. We also serve a light soup/sandwich lunch, and the youth group has a coffee bar. The money we earn from this event is given to pre-planned groups such as the youth mission trip, the community backpack program, local domestic abuse programs, etc. We also tithe and give 10% back to the church.

We have a coffee fellowship every Sunday morning that my husband and I host one Sunday a month. We also volunteer to serve at the outreach breakfast that our church serves one Saturday morning a month that provides both take-out and dine-in meals.

I look forward to meeting you all on Saturday, September 17, 2022, at New Hope Lutheran Church in Comfrey, MN!  
Diane Anderson

## Congregational Services

The Augustana District recently purchased access to the service ChurchSalary.com. This service is available to all AD congregations, and you can find more information and submit a request for information via the website at [augustanadistrict.org/board-of-congregational-services/](https://augustanadistrict.org/board-of-congregational-services/)

**ChurchSalary**  
**REPORT**  
MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

# Church Staff Openings

There are Staff Openings on the AD website so if you know someone who is seeking a position, please share this information. Don't forget that if your congregation has an opening you can easily post it directly to the AD website on the Church Staff Openings page (under the Church tab) by filling out a simple form.

## Current Staff Openings

- Director of Music (Part-time) | St. John's Lutheran Church | Howard Lake MN
- Part-time/Half-time Pastor | Pioneer Lutheran Church | White SD
- Lead Pastor | New Hope Lutheran Church | Comfrey MN
- Full-time Pastor | St. John's Lutheran Church | Springfield MN
- Part-time Pastor | Our Redeemer Lutheran Church | Badger MN
- FT Senior Pastor | Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Big Sandy | McGregor MN



## Augustana District Update

SUPPORT

Have you decided what your special Lenten offering will support this year? Consider using it to support the growing mission and ministry of the Augustana District.

GROWTH

The district is growing, the services provided are multiplying and as the district continues in this direction some of the expenses also will continue to go up. This may require a raise in the 2022 budget that will be up for discussion and approval by all member congregations at the May convention. Approval will mean needs for more congregational giving to support the growing mission and ministry of the district.

PRAYER

Your prayerful and financial support are vital to this growth. Please share this with your congregations and discuss how you can support the district in the coming year.

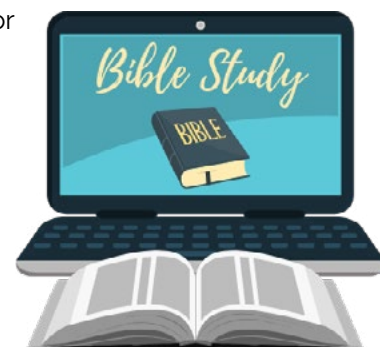
## Reading the Bible for Faith

Ever wonder why people have different interpretations of the Bible? Want to learn how to take Bible study to a deeper, more engaging level? Want to understand how and why people arrive at different interpretations of the same passage? Do you sometimes find yourself confused or mystified about the meaning when reading the Bible? Want to learn a way to make sense of the Bible for the sake of faith? If your answer to any or all of these questions is yes, then this course is for you!

The 5-session course, for the person in the pew, is taught by Bud Thompson, of the St Paul Lutheran Seminary faculty. Pastor Thompson is a retired Lutheran pastor who

has 35 years of experience as a parish pastor, 20 years of experience teaching the Bible to university students, and for many years has written on the Bible and Catechism for *Connections* magazine. Beginning on Thursday, April 21st at 6PM Central, we will meet online for approximately 90 minutes each session for 5 weeks. The sessions will be recorded should someone miss a live session.

To register please email [jmattson@semlc.org](mailto:jmattson@semlc.org).



## Prayers & Petitions...

Pray that those who participated in the Augustana District Confirmation retreat were refreshed, renewed, and strengthened through fellowship and God's Word. May they return to their homes strengthened by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, we pray that you will guide and direct those who are preparing the 2022 Convocation and Convention at Mount Carmel in Alexandria, MN. Please guide the speakers as they prepare to deliver your words. Direct those preparing the business and vision of the district to follow your path.

Shouts of praise and hearts of thankfulness as reported from our Ethiopian global mission partners:

- ✠ Tabor Partners in Ethiopia (sending out 60 evangelists) express gratitude for the financial help of this courageous outreach
- ✠ NCES (North Central Ethiopia Synod) partners endured rebels destroying churches and property, caused people to flee for safety and destructive forces have been turned away; Our AD financial response provided food and assistance allowing them to start to return to normal.
- ✠ In Addis Ababa (the capital of Ethiopia) a pastor leads his congregation in witnessing to Christians whose faith is not centered in Jesus Christ

Lord, grant us freedom and generosity in sharing your Good News as we claim the promise of Proverbs 18:16, "A gift opens the way and ushers the giver into the presence of the great."

Grant that our Lenten walks, along side of Christ, create an appreciation for the sacrifice and salvation that He gives and create in us, a joyous hope of our resurrection!

Sustain and strengthen our ministers and church leaders, so that the details of their tasks do not feel like a burden. As they tend and lead us, may we assist them and uphold them in prayer. Thank you for the opportunities through the LeaderCare Initiative for pastors to refresh, recharge, and connect to share struggles and praises with others.

Is there something you or your congregation are going through that you would like the district to be praying for? You can send those to the district office or to go to the AD website at [augustanadistrict.org/prayer-warriors/](http://augustanadistrict.org/prayer-warriors/) and submit your prayer requests there.



**Pastor Maxwell Whitehead**

Spring Valley and Our Savior's in Viborg, SD

**Pastor Sarah Stenson**

Co-Director of Luther House of Study

**Ben Lashley**

student at St. Pauls Lutheran Seminary



## NEEDED!! YOUNG ADULTS!

~ Pastors & Congregations ~

If you know young adults  
(high school seniors through college students)  
with a passion for ministry, please contact  
Randy Freund at [director@augustanadistrict.org](mailto:director@augustanadistrict.org)  
- or -  
(320)583-3648

## Hidden Treasure

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."  
~2 Corinthians 4:7

May 5 - 7, 2022 at Mt. Carmel in Alexandria, MN.

### **THE WORD ALONE**

Thursday, May 5, 2022

*"Where's the Truth"*

7:00PM - 9:00PM

For those who are in, or interested  
in, ministry.

### **THE PREACHED WORD**

Friday, May 6, 2022

*"Luther's Outlaw God"*

9:00AM - 4:00PM

Annual Convocation of the Cross

### **THE SENT WORD**

Saturday, May 7, 2022

*"Jesus' Life/Our Bodies"*

10:00AM - 4:00PM

Annual District Convention

Combined Events of  
**CONVOCATION &  
CONVENTION**

**New in  
2022**  
One Trip  
Two Great Events



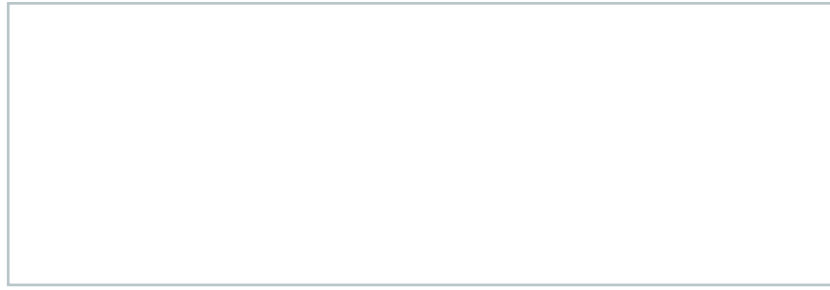
**Registration  
NOW OPEN**  
Limited Space  
so please register  
soon!

\*While the emphasis for this evening session  
focuses on raising up the next generation of  
ministry leaders, all pastors are encouraged to  
invite ANYONE interested in parish ministry.



To register, visit [augustanadistrict.org/events/2022-convocation-convention-meeting/](https://augustanadistrict.org/events/2022-convocation-convention-meeting/)





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



## *Repent, it's* **LENT**



**PRAY**



**FAST**



**GIVE**

*"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn unto me  
with all your heart and with fasting and with weeping,  
and with mourning." - Joel 2:12*

## *Have You Registered?* **HIDDEN TREASURES**



**See page 7 for full details.**