

Devotional

"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." - Galatians 6:2

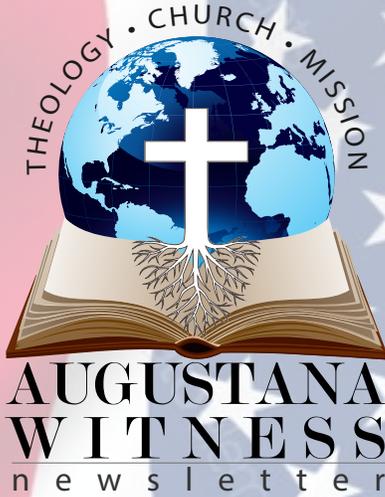


Table of Contents

Devotional	1
Mission Minute.....	2 - 3
Women of the Word	4
Guest Speakers	4
Registration Form.....	5

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Can you imagine doing such a thing? Can you imagine bearing one another's burdens? I can't really. I've got my own stuff to deal with, my own burdens to carry. How could I possibly take on the added load of someone else's burdens? This is an unreasonable word from Paul in Galatians. It would be one thing if he encouraged us to help out from time to time, or if he put some clear parameters on how heavy of a load we need to pick up. "Bear one another's burdens . . . to the best of your abilities." "Bear one another's burdens . . . if it doesn't interfere with any other aspect of your life." "Bear one another's burdens . . . if the other is at least trying to pull their weight." "Bear one another's burdens . . . if you have time."

But Paul doesn't put any of those kinds of limits on this word. "Bear one another's burdens . . ." with no caveats.

The letter to the Galatians is relentlessly focused on being clear that our righteousness is not based on fulfillment of the law. Then, at the very end, Paul comes with this word about bearing one another's burdens and fulfilling the law of Christ. It is confusing to the say the least. Verse after verse after verse Paul sets us free with the gospel, and then we get this impossible task of bearing one another's burdens, just when we thought we could kick back and rest, coasting into the new kingdom that's coming.

What Paul is talking about here, in part, is how to live with fellow sinners in this thing called the church. Week after week we are surrounded by sinners, transgressing in every possible way. They hold all the wrong views on all the issues. They are rude. They are don't meet our standards when it comes to how they're raising their children. They engage in shady business practices. They drive gas guzzling vehicles. They have loose morals. All that sin gathered in one place on Sunday morning is a lot to take. The notion of just tuning in on-line for the sermon and avoiding all the entanglements of church-life sounds pretty good sometimes.

Then this word from Paul rings in our ears. "Bear one another's burdens." He's calling us to hang in there with one another. Against all of our natural inclinations, stick with those we'd rather abandon. We can hardly imagine this, let alone actually do it.

But when the Spirit makes us forgetful of ourselves, when our own burdens are lifted from our shoulders and we can stand up straight again, when we know what it means that we have not been abandoned by the one we abandoned, when faith takes hold of our hearts, then what we can't even imagine becomes second nature to us. Those sinners we'd rather avoid become sisters and brothers. And even as we pick up their burdens, we find that there is another who is carrying the whole load. One who will never conclude you're not worth it.

Mission Minute

In 2018 Awakening Lives to World Missions (ALWM) began a journey to provide a gap-year program for young adults to serve and learn in a cross-cultural setting. This program is called the Young Adult Missionary Internship. In 2020 that program was put on hold. As travel restrictions are being lifted around the world, we are working towards getting that program up and running once again.

What is a “Gap Year”? Ethan Knight, the executive director and founder of the nonprofit Gap Year Association, defines a Gap Year as “a semester or year of experiential learning, typically taken after high school and prior to beginning a career or postsecondary education, in order to deepen one’s practical, professional, and personal awareness.”

In the summer of 2007, my wife and I finished college and got married. A year later, in August 2008, we moved to Port Elizabeth, South Africa (now also known as Gqeberha). We were 23 years old and we were trying to learn about who we were and what God’s calling was for us in our life together. We stayed in Port Elizabeth for approximately 11 months and served in various church ministries, such as soup kitchens, youth ministry, and volunteering at a nearby nursing home.

However, the greatest part of the experience was living in a different culture for a long period of time. We were half a world away from friends and family. While many people in South Africa speak English, we were quickly overwhelmed by how new and different everything was. We experienced difficult times of loneliness and homesickness, but we also had incredible experiences filled with joy. We made wonderful new friends. We saw hippo and crocodiles in their natural habitats. On one safari we saw a lion eating a giraffe! We visited important cultural sites in South Africa and learned about the diverse and tragic history of the country.

The experience of living in another country for a year is hard to encapsulate in a few short sentences, but it has continued to make an impact on my life and ministry now. This is why I have been working with Awakening Lives to World Missions (ALWM) to develop a faith-based, Christian gap year program for young adults, especially in the LCMC and NALC. But if you are not Lutheran you are still welcome! We have developed a relationship with the Bible

Institute of South Africa (BISA) located in Kalk Bay, South Africa off the coast of False Bay and near the city of Cape Town. Through this partnership with BISA young adults will have safe housing on the campus, be able to interact with other young adults from South Africa on a daily basis, serve in various local ministries around the area and even take classes if they desire. We are very excited about this partnership because of the connections BISA has to local churches and various learning opportunities on campus. ALWM is offering two options for young adults ages 18-24 to participate in this gap year program:

8 Week Summer Immersion Trip

- For students who are not ready to commit to a full year living abroad.
- Longer than a typical 10 day “mission trip” to allow for deeper learning experiences and more personal reflection.
- Easily fits into a summer break.
- Includes a week-long, in-country orientation, a one-week class at the Bible Institute of South Africa and various excursions, such as visits to historical sites and a safari.

12 Month Gap Year Trip

- Focused on deeper experiences.
- Candidates for the 12 month gap year program will work with ALWM and Director Pr. Matt Shields to determine how to make this the best possible Gap Year for them as an individual.
- Guidance will be offered throughout the year to help with the ups and downs of the year.

Both the shorter 8 Week Immersion Trip and the 12 Month Gap Year Trip will be available starting in May of 2023. We will begin accepting applications later in 2022. If you would like more information you can contact Pastor Matt Shields at pastormatt@alwm.org or visit the program website here: <https://alwm.org/young-adult-missionary-internship>.

Pastor Matt Shields is an ordained LCMC pastor currently serving a congregation in central Illinois. He grew up in the Lutheran church, the son of a pastor. He and his wife have served in South Africa twice, 2008-09 and 2014. In 2014, with their first child, they lived in northern South Africa helping to plant a church that is still thriving today. Pastor Shields is also in the Augustana District of the LCMC and serves as part of their Board of World Missions. He loves

spending time with his wife and three daughters, camping, woodworking, and traveling the world.

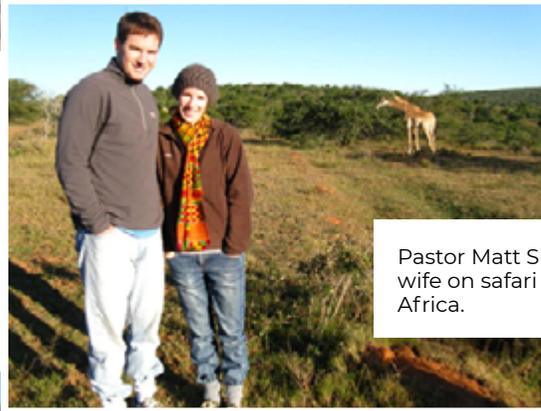
You can contact him at pastormatt@alwm.org or matthew.shields07@gmail.com.



Pastor Matt Shields and wife with gap year group in 2008 at the Cape of Good Hope.



Playing games at youth group night in South Africa.



Pastor Matt Shields and wife on safari in South Africa.



Bible Institute of South Africa in Kalk Bay.



Playing with children at a daycare center in South Africa.

Welcome
New Congregation
 Trinity Lutheran Church, Birchwood WI
New Endorsed Clergy
 Pastor Jeffrey Iverson, Brooklyn Park, MN

Happy
4th of July

Women of the Word

My name is Debbie Flatau. I am one of the Augustana District Council representatives on the Women of the Word board.

My husband and I moved to Perham, MN, in 2014 and became members of New Creation Lutheran. Before that we were members of LCMS churches. My husband's career required us to move often. I have enjoyed serving in several ministries in our different congregations, from teaching Sunday School and VBS, heading a preschool board, Bible studies, and building committees. At New Creation I have been involved with the Mission Board, our weekly

community meals, and the funeral committee. Six years ago, I lost my husband/best friend to cancer after being married almost 40 years. I have three children and nine grandchildren. They all live in different parts of the country so I don't see them nearly as much as I would like.

Through the Augustana District and Women of the Word I am enjoying meeting new people and being influenced by their Christian examples of faith and service. I am looking forward to attending the annual WOW gathering in September. I really enjoyed last year's gathering.

2022 Fall Gathering Featured Guest Speakers



Pr. Patricia Baglien

Patricia Baglien is a retired Lutheran (LCMC) pastor. She has served as co-pastor with her husband, Tim Baglien, in Comfrey Lutheran Parish and Liberty, Missouri. She was also pastor of Danebod, Tyler, Minnesota. Patricia also served as chaplain in the senior care centers at St. John's, Springfield, and Knute Nelson, Alexandria. She currently resides in Carrollton, Missouri, near her only daughter, Rachel, son-in-law, Ian, and grandchildren- Maliyah and James.

Music is her passion. She plays guitar, piano, and writes her own songs which she's recorded on three CDs. She enjoys sharing music as music leader for a local children's midweek school and, along with Tim, at the Adult Camps held every August at Mount Carmel Camp in Alexandria. She loves to sing and share the Good News about Jesus!



Pr. Diane Odermann

Diane is a wife, mother, pastor, spiritual director, and retreat leader. She's married to Bill and has an adult daughter, Anneliese. She has been an ordained Lutheran pastor for 33 years. She and her husband currently co-pastor a small congregation of the North American Lutheran Church. She lost her mom at age 19 to cancer and is a two-time cancer survivor herself. She has spent much of her ministry specializing in pastoral care in diverse ministry settings.

As a spiritual director, she companions individuals on their faith walk, noticing where God is present. Diane and her husband Bill have been trained in healing prayer and biblical dream interpretation. She has led retreats for both of these passions. She has a love and passion for helping people hear Jesus through their numerous life changes. She also enjoys music, spending time with friends, and walks with her dog Bella. She lives in Austin, MN.

2022 Fall Gathering

Women of the Word



September 17, 2022



Hosted by

New Hope Lutheran Church
204 Court Street • Comfrey MN 56019

Email: newhopeluth@frontiernet.com
Phone: 507.877.2316

8:30AM Coffee/Registration
9:00AM Worship • 3:00PM Dismissal

Speakers: Pastor Patricia Baglien & Diane Odermann
Attendees please bring an item for Operation Christmas Child shoebox.
The offering is designated to go to Samaritan's Purse.

Registration Deadline: Before Sep 1, 2022. Please mail to the address below by Sep 1, 2022
Make checks payable to Women of the Word

Type of Registration

(Circle one & enclose check)

In Person/Individual Online (\$10/person)

Church/Online (\$50)

Mail to:

Dianne Anderson C/O WOW Treasurer
134 Detroit Avenue SE
Hutchinson, MN 55350

First & Last Name _____

Home Church _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Comments _____



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



*Ministry through
Music*



*Serve the Lord with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!*
Psalm 100:2

Women of the Word

2022 Fall Gathering

September 17, 2022



Featured Guest Speakers

Pr. Patricia Baglien

&

Pr. Diane Odermann

See additional details on pages 4 & 5