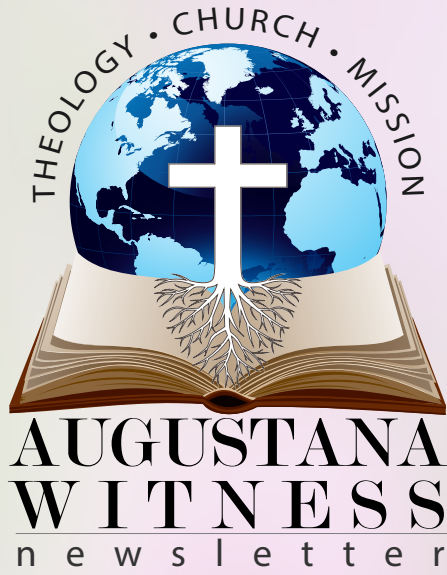


# Devotional

*“Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all works of your hand.”*

*Isaiah 64:8*



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## Staff Stuff

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When I was in high school I was enrolled in art class for two years. One of my favorite things to do was work with clay. I had the opportunity to do a variety of projects, and one of the best things about working with clay was that I could easily start over if a project wasn't turning out the way that I wanted. Starting over, however, required some extra work. When we initially started projects we used pieces of clay cut off of a fresh block. These blocks were vacuum sealed to ensure that no air bubbles were trapped in the clay. If you wanted to start a project over with clay you had already been working, you had to knead the clay and apply pressure to ensure that all the air was pressed out. If you did not go through the process of applying pressure and kneading the clay your project would blow up when it was fired in the kiln.

The Bible makes many references to clay and potters. The two most prevalent themes are that we, humans, are formed by God and that the clay cannot tell the potter how to form it. A glob of wet dirt telling a potter how it wants to be formed is an amusing thought, but the comparison becomes more significant when we remember that we are the clay and God is the potter. Romans 9:20-21 says, *“But who are you, a human being to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’ Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use?”*

Being shaped and formed by God is not always a pleasant experience. Sometimes it can feel like God is applying great pressure to push all the air bubbles out. Remember though that pressure is necessary before a new project can be started. The leader of a non-profit told me once that it is important to “get comfortable with being uncomfortable because it is through discomfort that we often grow the most.” Pressure and discomfort are things that we often try to avoid because they are not pleasant. God, however, applies pressure in order to form us into the masterpiece that He wants each and every one of us to be.

We do not get to tell God how we are to be formed. We are, however, given the promise that our Heavenly Father cares for us. As 1 Peter 5:6-7 reminds us *“Humble yourselves, therefore under*

God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Times of formation and struggle are hard but God promises that he is always there with us in both pleasant and hard circumstances.

You are the work of your Father's hand. Remember that He cares deeply for you.

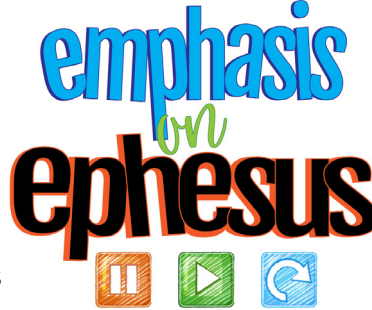
*Pastor Laura Webb*

Elk Horn Lutheran, Elk Horn, Iowa

## 2023 First Ever High School Retreat

OCTOBER 20-22, 2023 AT CAMP OKOBOJI

During this weekend retreat we will be taking youth on a deep dive into the book of Ephesians. Our first goal will be to teach them how to spell Ephesians. After that, we will have a mixture of short lessons led by various district pastors and leaders, personal devotion time as students read through sections of Ephesians on their own, followed by small group time to process and discuss what they read. We will conclude with a Sunday morning worship service as well as other times of worship mixed in throughout the weekend. We hope to help students think deeply about the book of Ephesians, but even beyond that, to develop skills that can benefit them in their personal



Bible study time at home. Of course, no retreat is complete without some large group games, night games, and various other activities that will encourage the youth to spend time together and develop meaningful relationships.

Please eat on your way to camp as dinner will not be served on-site Friday night.

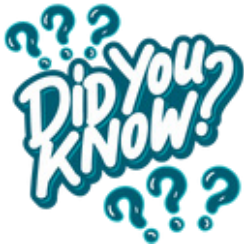
- ◆ **Friday, October 20:** Arrive at camp between 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- ◆ **Sunday, October 21:** Depart camp around 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. after brunch and worship.

As we move into June we continue to pray for the congregations in the district. This month we ask you to join in praying for:

- ✠ Living Word Lutheran Church – Alexandria, MN
- ✠ Living Word Lutheran Church – Marshall, MN
- ✠ Living Word Lutheran Church - Milbank, SD
- ✠ Living Word Lutheran Church - Moses Lake, WA
- ✠ Looney Valley Lutheran Church, Houston, MN
- ✠ Lund Lutheran Church, Detroit Lakes, MN
- ✠ Lands of the Moe Lutheran Parish – Hudson, SD
- ✠ Romsdal of the Moe Lutheran – Hudson, SD



Please add to your prayers St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Blossom in Elma, New York. This LCMC church suffered a major fire on Saturday, May 13. A WKBW News Report says: Flames swept through St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Main Street Saturday afternoon. The fire left a gaping hole in the roof of the church, along with its steeple. St. Paul's has been a part of this community since 1862. The council president of the church says they will rebuild and that there has been an outpouring of support from the community, as well as other churches in the area.



**... that the Augustana District has a seminary scholarship fund?**

The district is always looking for support for this fund and you can contribute to it via an online donation from the website

at [augustanadistrict.org/donate-now-2/](http://augustanadistrict.org/donate-now-2/) or by mailing a check (Made out to Augustana District and Memo: Scholarship Fund) to the district office at:

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

If you know of a student taking seminary classes that could benefit from a scholarship for the upcoming academic year they can find the application form on the district website at [augustanadistrict.org/theology/scholarship-application/](http://augustanadistrict.org/theology/scholarship-application/) Feel free to share this information with any qualified applicants you may know.

# Financial Update

During the worship service at the district convention an offering of \$1,634.30 was received and will be split evenly to support the district ministry partner AIMJ with the other half being set aside for church plants. You can read more about the AIMJ ministry on page four. Thank you for your support.

## **Financial recap for Fiscal Year April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023**

Giving was up, and overall expenses down, leaving the district with a net income of \$13,742.06. Thanks to you and your generous support, the Augustana District is in sound financial shape and continues to be equipped to serve you and your congregations well into the future.

# Church Support Staff Support Group

## **COMING SOON: Church Administrator/Secretary/HR/Finance Coordinator Support Group**



Do you sometimes feel like you are all alone, trying to figure out the best way to do things? Do you wish you had someone to talk to who understands the challenges of your day? Do you have a lot of experience in the church office that could be helpful to new office staff that you could share? Would you like to network with others in the same field?

If you answered yes to any of these questions then this new support group is for you! This group will meet for one hour, once a month, via Zoom to share struggles, ask questions, advise, encourage, and pray for one another. It is open to all church office staff as well as pastors and volunteers who work on church communications, scheduling, finance, etc.

If this is something you would be interested in please reach out to the Augustana District Office at [office@augustanadistrict.org](mailto:office@augustanadistrict.org) or 320-234-8403 for more information. Exact day and time of the month will be set based on what works best for those interested in participating.

Please share this information with anyone you think may be interested in participating in this group.





## Board of World Missions

In the Month of April, pastors in AIMJ baptized 144 people, met with 178 men, 149 women, 146 youth and 111 children. Praise be to God for the work he is doing in India! AD supports 4 pastors at \$125/month, \$1,500 supports one pastor for an entire year. if you would like to assist with this support please designate, "AIMJ" in your donation.

## PRAYER REQUEST

Maulana Jahiruddin Khan, who has been with Christ for the last 4 years has decided to come forward and serve the Lord. He has completed a Biblical course from CMA Bible seminary, Kolkata. As our Brother Abdul Roshid has gone to our Lord Jesus Christ, Brother Jahiruddin Khan has come forward and wants to continue doing the work that Brother Abdul Roshid was doing and has told us about his desire to continue the fellowships that Brother Abdul Roshid was taking care of. We are very happy that the Lord has sent someone to take care of His people as it was a reason for constant worry for us because without a strong leader, all the believers would be separated. We have given one month time to pray and in the first week of June, I will be visiting him and with prayers we will establish him there in place of Brother Abdul Roshid. Please pray for Brother Jahiruddin Khan, so that he continues the Lord's work in that area which is very difficult. Please pray so that he and his family are safe and that he becomes like a rock for all the believers in that area.



# Mission: All India Masihi Jamaat

## PRAISE POINTS

- ◆ We praise God as our Good Friday and Easter Services were very fruitful and all of our pastors or believers were safe. Our Good Friday and Easter Services took place in 219 locations and approximately 23,000 people attended the services. The services were amazing as so many felt what our Lord Jesus Christ went through for us in their hearts.



- ◆ We organized 2 seminars in Contai, East Medinipur, West Bengal and in Raghavpur, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. A total of 476 people attended the seminar. 292 people attended the seminar in Contai and 184 people attended the seminar in Raghavpur.



We hope and pray that through attending these seminars, people would commit themselves to the Lord and also get motivated to share their faith with others.

- ◆ We also organized a leadership training program with our Pastors in Contai city with Matthew 28: 18-20 as the center of the training. A total of 42 pastors and leaders attended the training.



# First Call Retreat Thank You's!

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you so much for supporting the first Augustana District First Call Retreat. It was truly a blessing to gather beginning and experienced pastors together for fellowship, education and prayer. Your financial donation made it possible for this to be an affordable event for all participants. The prayer support was evident in the ways God used this time to equip and encourage us all.

Thank you again,  
Pastor Sarah Carlstrom,  
Board of Theology and Ministry Chair



*"The First Call Retreat was a great opportunity to catch up with former classmates, mentors and meet other first call pastors and seminarians. I would honestly say I didn't even realize how much I needed the first call retreat until I attended. It's easy to get stuck in the cycle of ministry: making the round of visits, checking off the Lenten services, finishing another year of confirmation, etc. The first call retreat gave me the chance to stop, pause and really grasp the full blessing that this calling is. It is such a privilege to*

*be invited into all the ups and downs of people's lives. The first call retreat gave me a needed break from checking off the boxes, and instead provided me a grounding in the blessing of our vocation, a chance to pause and to hear the Word myself, so that I can go and freely give Jesus, crucified and risen, back to my community.*

*Thank you for providing this opportunity."  
Pastor Lexy Carson*

As you can see, your financial and prayerful support for this event was incredibly valuable. Thank you for your generosity!

The Augustana District Council

## CONVENTION DATE FOR 2024 - APRIL 27

The District Convention for 2024 has been set. In order to keep this event at Mount Carmel the council had to move the date for the 2024 event. So please mark your calendars and save the date of April 27, 2024 for the convention at Mount Carmel.

The Board of Theology and Ministry is also working on plans for another **First Call Retreat** to go along with the convention that will tentatively be held **April 25-26, 2024**.



# 2023 WOW Gathering

Saturday, September 16, 2023

hosted by St. John's Lutheran Church

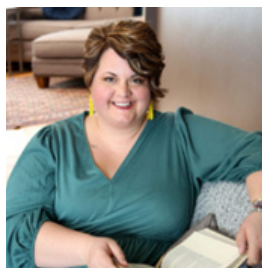
Springfield, MN



The Women of St. John's Lutheran church in Springfield, Minnesota invite all Augustana District Women of the Word to attend the WOW Fall Gathering on September 16, 2023. The annual gathering is an opportunity for women to get together to share thoughts and ideas on what their women's groups are doing as well as to worship and hear from some amazing speakers.

The theme verse this year is, *"Behold God is my salvation. I will trust and will not be afraid for the Lord God is my strength and my song and He has become my salvation."* Isaiah 12:2

There are two amazing speakers scheduled for the Fall Gathering.



Pastor Erica Varcoe is the pastor at The Table Ministry in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. There is an article on The Table Ministry in the April AD newsletter. Pastor Varcoe will be speaking on faith over fear.



Pastor Jennifer Bennet serves Trinity Lutheran in Jeffers, MN and Bethany Lutheran in Storden, MN. She will speak on the transformation that occurs when we trust.

The WOW Fall Gathering is a day filled with food, fellowship, and faith. Registration information is now available on the Augustana District website [augustanadistrict.org/church/women-of-the-word](http://augustanadistrict.org/church/women-of-the-word). We look forward to seeing you there.

Jodi Dalsgaard  
WOW Coordinator  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
Springfield, MN

## 2023 AD WOW LEADERS who would love to hear your suggestions, questions or feedback:

### Coordinator:

Jodi Dalsgaard • jodidalsgaard@gmail.com • 507-766-2323

### Secretary:

Marcia Heinje • mhheinje@tnics.com • 605-237-0373

### Members at Large:

Linda Anderson • lindaanderson46@yahoo.com • 507-381-0761

Jan Kreie • jkreie@mediacombb.net • 320-510-1942 (no texts)



# Augustana District Churches Staff Opening's

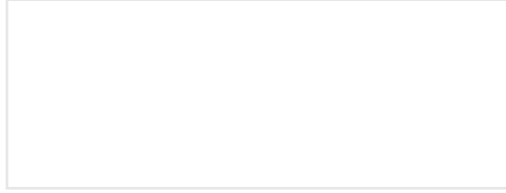
Here are the most recent listings of staff openings we have listed at the Augustana District website. Please visit [www.augustanadistrict.org/church/staff-openings/](http://www.augustanadistrict.org/church/staff-openings/) to learn more about each listed position, and how to apply.

- ◆ Full-time Pastor or Interim Pastor | St. John's Lutheran Church | Springfield MN
- ◆ Director of Youth Ministry | Living Word Lutheran Church | Marshall MN
- ◆ Pastor | Abounding Joy Lutheran Church | St. Cloud MN
- ◆ Pastor | New Hope Lutheran Church | Comfrey MN
- ◆ Pastor | Zion Lutheran Church | Kent WA
- ◆ Pastor | Living Word Lutheran Church | Milbank SD
- ◆ Lead Pastor | Hope Lutheran Church | Fosston MN
- ◆ Pastor (full-time) | Trinity Lutheran Church | Carrington ND
- ◆ Solo Pastor | Faith Community Lutheran Church | Slayton MN
- ◆ Worship Leader | Living Word Lutheran Church | Marshall MN
- ◆ Organist | Our Savior's Lutheran Church | Lamberton MN
- ◆ Pastor | Our Savior's Lutheran Church | Lamberton MN
- ◆ Pastor | Faith Lutheran Church | Monticello MN
- ◆ Full-time Pastor | Samhold Lutheran Church | Gonvick MN
- ◆ Part-time Pastor | Our Redeemer Lutheran Church | Badger MN



Happy  
Fathers  
Day!

The Greatest Gift  
I ever had  
came from God,  
I call him  
Dad!



Address Service Requested

Hutchinson, MN 55350

335 Main St S.

Augustana District



## Women of the Word 2023 Fall Gathering

Saturday, September 16, 2023

Hosted by

St. Johns Church • Springfield, MN

Registration form available at

[augustanadistrict.org/church/women-of-the-word](http://augustanadistrict.org/church/women-of-the-word)

## Coming Soon!

### The First Annual AD High School Retreat!

October 20-22, 2023 • Camp Okoboji • Milford, IA.

This retreat will feature a study of Ephesians that will be led by pastors of the Augustana District. Share this date with your high schoolers and their families and watch for registration information to be available soon.

