



# News

## of the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church



[www.iowamissiondistrict.com](http://www.iowamissiondistrict.com)

August 2024

### *A Word from the Dean*

#### *If you can't say anything nice about somebody....*

We all (should) know how this saying above ends. It was drilled into me by my mother, and I'm guessing you heard it from your mother too. And in the catechism, Luther writes: *"We should fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, lie, or gossip about our neighbors, but defend them, speak well of them, and put the most charitable construction on all that they do."*

All this is to say that the spoken word has the potential be used as a weapon. We read in James 3:7–10: *"Every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so."*

Too often I hear of a dispute within a family that festers and remains unhealed because of a harsh, cruel word spoken. And as a bell can't be un-rung or toothpaste can't be put back in the tube, a spoken words can't be unsaid or unheard. Not only can they not be unheard, it is as though the words are put on an endless and amplified loop that drives a wedge deeper and deeper between people.

And not only do such disputes arise within ordinary families, they can also affect church families. And it seems as though when it happens within the church family, the hurt can be even more long-lasting since we have higher expectations of our sisters and brothers in Christ's family. I fear that many people have drifted away from attending church because of something someone there said.

But this is precisely the problem that James describes above. Too often the tongue expresses a thought before the thinker has had time to measure the words. And because of the damage to relationships such a thing can cause, James ends with that short invective, *"My brothers these things ought not to be so."* St. Ignatius of Loyola, an important figure from centuries ago said it this way: *"Be slow to speak, and only after having first listened quietly, so that you may understand the meaning, leanings, and wishes of those who do speak. Thus you will better know when to speak and when to be silent."* In other words, the best thing to say in a heated situation may be to say absolutely nothing at all, at which time we bite our tongue, that untamable beast.

Then again, we are all fallen creatures, and so we are all likely to fail to put this sage advice into action on every single occasion so that our tongue takes over and wields a painful slash. What then? Should we allow the damaging word to do irreparable harm to the relationship? If it is your tongue that has spoken ungracefully, you should seek to be reconciled with the one injured. And if you are the one on the receiving end, you will find again in scripture a helpful word: *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."*  
(Colossians 3:12–13)

*Pastor Christopher Staley, Dean,  
Iowa Mission District, NALC*



## The Ultimate Love

*Pastor John Saethre  
Rochester, Minnesota*

Dianna Ross sang years ago: “What the world needs now is love, sweet love.” How true, and yet the world so often turns it into: “If you can't be with the one you love; love the one you're with!” The Old Adam turns it into - what's in it for me?- kind of love.

Pastors invariably come across the topic of love as they counsel couples before their wedding. God calls husbands and wives to this special love often overlooked by secular society. This unconditional, servanthood, agape love is the mature kind of love couples are challenged to grow into—a love that invests in each other, husband and wife, into what truly lasts as servants to each other.

We often refer to the “Love Chapter,” First Corinthians 13, for the text – even though Paul meant it to address the Corinthian Church mired in disarray and disunity. Some were lording their gifts over others in the church; some were still living in the debauchery of their pagan past. Paul pastorally brought this messy congregation back to the truth – that God's love is what we need for unity and the health of the Church. It's a love that . . . *bears all things, believes all things endures all things. It's a love that never ends.* (vss. 7-8a)

This is the same formula for healthy marriages as well – to rely on God's agape love that never ends. What we need to capture in this topic is—this love we're talking about is an ACTION word. It is more than just words. Many of you remember the musical, *My Fair Lady*. Lisa Doolittle, the heroine of the story wants a real demonstration of love from the one she has fallen in love with: “Words, words, words. I'm so sick of words. . . don't talk of love, show me. Here we are together in the middle of the night, don't talk of love just hold me tight. Anyone whose ever been in love will tell you that this is no time for a chat.” Words, words, words, but no action. Paul says in First Corinthians 13:1, that “without love we are a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” The kind of love we're talking about is a verb – it moves unconditionally to the other person.

The epistle of First John is a classic place to understand the love of God for us. It was written primarily as a defense against the heresy of Gnosticism. Gnostics believed that God didn't mess with creation. They didn't believe in the incarnation – God taking on human flesh. Flesh is evil – why would He do that? The purpose of First John was to expose false teachers and to give people the assurance of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. No other writer puts as much emphasis on the incarnation – or the “enfleshment” of Jesus Christ—than John. Without God becoming human flesh in His Son, Jesus Christ, the whole gospel comes down like a deck of cards. You can see it from the very start: *That which was from the beginning which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of Life.* (1 John 1:1)

The evidence of God's love is sprinkled throughout the epistle as an example of how we are to love as followers of Christ. “We love because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19) He loved us first through His Creation, through His Incarnation, through the Cross and Resurrection, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon us, and so on. Now, we are called to love with that same kind of agape love toward our neighbors, hence the Great Commandment of John 13:34.

It's out of God's greatest demonstration of love in Jesus Christ that we take our marching orders – faith working through love. (Gal. 5:6) The world needs it so desperately! May the love of Christ consume you in the work of sharing this gift.

# *This and That From Around the Iowa Mission District*



Left to right: Council President Jeff Patzke, Pastor John Saethre, and Mission District Dean, Pastor Christopher Staley.

## **Emmanuel Lutheran Church Rochester, Minnesota**

*On Saturday, June 29, 2024, Emmanuel Lutheran held their long-awaited groundbreaking ceremony. Emmanuel's Council President, Jeff Patzke, opened the ceremony in their shelter house at 1:00 pm with a welcome, opening prayer and a brief history of the congregation. Those gathered for the event then moved outside where Iowa Mission District Dean, Pastor Christopher Staley, presided at the ground breaking ceremony. Following the blessing of the land, Pastor Staley dug three spadefuls of earth "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." In the prayer that followed, he prayed that the Gospel would be faithfully preached, the Sacraments rightly administered and prayer and praise continually offered in this place from generation to generation.*

*Among those who have preached, offered prayers, and rightly administered the Sacraments in that place were Pastor David Steffenson, beloved first pastor of Emmanuel, who faithfully served Emmanuel until his death on April 28, 2022. Currently, Pastor John Saethre has been regularly offering pastoral ministry to the congregation in the interim as they seek a new pastor.*



SAVE THE DATE

# **IOWA MISSION DISTRICT YOUTH MISSION TRIP**

We don't know where we are going but, we know we are going.

**JULY 27TH - AUG 3RD**

These dates are approximate depending on where we go and how we travel.

At our Iowa Mission District convocation on September 21st, we would like to Stuff The Truck (and trailer) with supplies needed for Disaster Response. We also want to Fill The Tonka with gift cards used to support Disaster Response. Please refer to the **"What's in a kit?"** link below for the listing of items needed to Stuff The Truck and the listing of gift cards needed to Fill The Tonka. If you have any questions about the items/gift cards, you can reach out to your congregation's Women of the NALC contact or to me.

*Betty Burkhalter  
Disaster Response Coordinator*

**What's in a kit? Here is the link to the listing from The NALC's website:**

<https://thenalc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/30.-NALC-DR-Kits-List-072023.pdf>



## What has Disaster Response been up to?

We have been very busy these last two months and will be busy again in August! With all of the tornados and flooding, many miles have been put on our truck gathering items for Disaster Response. We have been working with our warehouse managers to get supplies from our warehouse in Chatfield, MN to our warehouse in Boyden, IA. We have taken supplies to Spencer, IA to assist with their flood relief. We have worked with the warehouse managers to secure and transport flood buckets and health kits from from the Heartland Mission District (warehouse in Indiana) and flood buckets from the Great Rivers Mission District (warehouse in Illinois).

A small mission trip was developed to assist a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Avoca, IA with debris removal as a result of the spring tornados and heavy rain in Southwest Iowa. Members from Trinity Lutheran Church and St John Vilmar in Greene, IA worked with Gary and me. The eight of us worked hard for 5 hours (ages 10 years - 70+) and were able to accomplish everything the family needed help with.

Next week (August 1-3) we will be in Northwest Iowa accessing and assisting with clean up from flooding. In addition to Gary and me, we will have help from Trinity Lutheran Church (Avoca), St John Vilmer (Greene) and St John Lutheran Church (Boyden).

If you are interested in scheduling a mission trip, please let me know. If you are interested in scheduling a youth mission trip please reach out to Alana DeMoss. Our contact information is on the last page of the newsletter in the Iowa Mission District Leadership section.

*Betty Burkhalter*  
*Iowa Mission District*  
*Disaster Response Coordinator*





## Pondering the Parables: Laying Up Treasure

*And [Jesus] said to them, "Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."* (Luke 12:15-21)

If we're listening carefully to our Lord's parables, there are many of them that make us squirm. When I was in high school many decades ago, we had a class on money management. We were taught how to budget, and there was encouragement to put aside some savings from each paycheck for emergencies. Most of us have insurance policies to cover damage to property, to help pay for health care, and to protect vehicles and lives in case of an accident on the highway. Many people have retirement funds to provide for their retirement years, and life insurance policies to pay funeral expenses. As we read this parable from Luke's Gospel we may be wondering if Jesus is telling us not to plan ahead; not to manage our money wisely to provide for the future. It's certainly a question I have struggled with throughout my life, and as I ponder this story, I believe it's appropriate to take a careful look at what I do with money—and why.

Our Lord begins this parable with a warning—"Take heed—pay attention!" "Beware of all covetousness—watch out for avarice and greed!" What comes first in our lives? Is it the Lord God? Jesus gives us the first and greatest commandment: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind.* If we take this commandment to heart, we will want to use all our resources in ways that honor Him. Does it honor Him to ignore our responsibilities in this life? We are encouraged to give generously and to help others in times of need. We can't do this if we throw away all our income and fail to manage it appropriately. On the other hand, some people "pinch a penny until it bleeds" (to use an old saying)—depriving themselves and others of the things that they need in order to "save" money. The bottom line is, "who is your god?" If the Lord of heaven and earth is our God, we will

recognize that He is the One who provides for our material needs, and we will give Him thanks, and seek to use our earthly treasures to His glory. We won't let our earthly treasures "own us" or become our "gods". This is where we must begin when we listen to this parable. Remember, too, that Abraham, King David, many of Jesus' followers, and others throughout the Bible were well-to-do and used their resources to the glory of God. They can be examples to us of how to use the earthly treasures our Lord has bestowed upon us. God looks at our hearts. On what—or whom—do we set our hearts?

Following this warning, Jesus describes a wealthy man who already had more than he needed. When he had an unusually large crop one year, he decided to tear down the barns he already had and build bigger ones to store his excess. Rather than share from his abundance, he chose to keep it all for himself. Rather than trusting the Lord who had given him a great harvest on this particular year, he tore down his perfectly good barns to build even bigger ones in order to hoard his excess. We might think of the poor who lacked food and homes who could have benefited from a gift from this man's excess. Looking only to his own comfort and lavish lifestyle, he ignored the most basic measure of human integrity—compassion and concern for others—in order to indulge himself. In the Old Testament the Lord gave commands about giving from our resources. The tithe—ten percent—was to be given as provision for the priests. People were not to harvest to the edge of their fields so that food could be available for travelers and those who had no resources of their own. In the story of Ruth and Naomi, Ruth was allowed to follow the reapers to pick up the grain they had missed or dropped. Throughout the Scriptures we find the Lord calling His people to be aware of the needs of others. The "second table" of the commandments addresses this very thing—*Love your neighbor as you love yourself.* This means thinking of the needs of others and helping as we are able.

Following this parable Jesus reminds his listeners—and us—to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. He will provide for our needs. As we consider the generosity with which our Lord provides for us, may we prayerfully and faithfully use God's good gifts to share His love and mercy with others, and to give Him thanks, honor, and praise.

*Pastor Barbara M. Wills*



# Announcements

## Upcoming Events

**August 9, 2024—NALC online Convocation**—all-day meeting online

**September 21, 2024—Iowa Mission District Convocation**—St. John, Western Douglas

**September 28, 2024—Iowa Mission District Council Meeting**—Cabin Coffee, Mason City

**July 27—August 3, 2025—Iowa Mission District Youth Trip**—destination TBD

## Please Pray for:

**Pastor James Puotyual** who is awaiting a kidney donor.

When sending **correspondence** to the NALC please use the following address:

NALC Office  
P.O. Box 130455  
St. Paul, MN 55113

Please send **donations** to this address:

North American Lutheran Church  
PO Box 860565  
Minneapolis, MN 55486-0565

*Donations to NALS, Disaster Relief, Great Commission Society, etc. are to be made out to the NALC with the specific fund written on the memo line of your check.*

## Donations and Correspondence

Checks sent to the Mission District for support should be made out to the ***Iowa Mission District, NALC***, and mailed to Pastor Gary Burkhalter at **312 E. Mission St., Strawberry Point, IA 52076.**

Correspondence for Pastor Solveig Zamzow, Mission District Secretary, should be sent to **619 Elm Avenue, #309, Story City, IA 50248**

Items for the Mission District newsletter (pictures, news, etc.) are best sent via e-mail to Pastor Barbara Wills at [barbaramwills@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramwills@gmail.com).

## Pastors available for pulpit supply:

Pastor Kristine Dohrmann—515-802-2539  
Pastor Natacha Kemp—507-785-0412  
Pastor Jack Miller—507-798-2408  
Pastor Mike Wikstrom—480-203-1556  
Pastor Solveig Zamzow—641-903-9416



Pastor Tim Nappe is also available for pulpit supply. His primary focus is his ministry with “Reaching the Unreached”, and he will share information about this mission work whenever he does pulpit supply for a congregation. Contact information: 712-331-4245. Or email at [pastortim.milford@gmail.com](mailto:pastortim.milford@gmail.com)

## Mission District Pulpit-Supply Guidelines

In October of 2022, the Mission District Council voted to recommend that congregations pay a visiting pastor \$200 for a worship service in addition to the current IRS mileage rate. At a subsequent meeting, we also decided to recommend that congregations do the same for a visiting pastor who performs a wedding or a funeral. Any honorarium that the family might want to give to the pastor would not be deducted from this, as the pastor is providing a service to the congregation. We also recommend that a congregation which has more than one worship service in a day, pay an additional \$50 to the pastor for each additional service. (The current IRS rate is \$0.67 per mile, but changes nearly every year.)



## *Congregations of the Iowa Mission District*

Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Dan Buhs, Lay Minister  
Avoca: **Trinity**, Pastor Matthew Bahnfleth  
Badger: **Badger Lutheran**, Pr. Scott Meier  
Boyden: **St. John**, Pr. Jeremy Winter  
Des Moines: **Unity Evangelical Lutheran**,  
Pr. Donna Joseph; Pr. Diane Joseph  
Dorchester: **Waterloo Ridge**, Pr. James Glesne  
Eagle Grove: **Evangelical Lutheran**, Pr. Jason Cooper  
Eagle Grove: **Samuel Lutheran**, Call Process  
Ellsworth: **Trinity**, Pastor Jon Rollefson  
Emmons, MN: **Emmons**, Call Process  
Gilmore City: **First**, Tracy Nerem, Lay Minister  
Grafton: **Emmanuel**, Call Process  
Greene: **St. John, Vilmar**, Pr. Tamara Keen  
Gunder: **Marion**, Pr. Marshall Hahn  
Harlan: **Bethlehem**, Pr. Ronald Rasmussen  
+Huxley: **Shepherd of the Prairie**,  
Scott Licht, Lay Minister  
Irwin: **St. Paul**, Pr. Ronald Rasmussen  
Laurens: **Bethany**, Pr. David Klappenbach  
LeMars: **St. John**, Pr. Chris Meier  
Manchester: **First**, Call Process  
Monona, **Faith**: Pr. Mel Harris  
Northwood: **Peace**, Pr. Barbara Wills  
+ Osage: **First Grace Lutheran Church**  
Palmer: **St. John's Lizard Township**,  
Marlene Nimke, Lay Minister  
Plainfield: **St. John, Western Douglas**, Call Process  
Readlyn: **St. Matthew**, Pr. Jean Rabary  
Readlyn: **Zion**, Pr. Jean Rabary  
Robins: **Servants of Christ**, Pr. Ronald Voss  
+Rochester, MN: **Emmanuel**—Call Process  
Ruthven: **Zion**, Eric Patten, Lay Minister  
St. Ansgar: **First**, Pr. Christopher Staley  
+ St. Charles, MN: **Trinity**, Pr. Douglas Hedman  
St. Olaf: **Norway**, Pr. Marshall Hahn  
Sheldon: **St. Paul**, Pr. John Jensen, Interim  
Spencer: **Trinity**, Pr. Renae Behrends  
Strawberry Pt.: **Mission in Christ**, Call Process  
Thor: **Ullensvang**, Pr. Darryl Landsverk  
Waterville: **Old East Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball  
Waukon: **Old West Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball

+ indicates mission congregation

## Iowa Mission District Leadership

Pastor Christopher Staley, Dean  
[cbstaley@netins.net](mailto:cbstaley@netins.net)  
Pastor Solveig Zamzow, Secretary  
[solveigzamzow@gmail.com](mailto:solveigzamzow@gmail.com)  
Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer  
[pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com](mailto:pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com)

### Mission District Council Members:

Pastor David Klappenbach  
[klappenbach98@rpt.coop](mailto:klappenbach98@rpt.coop)  
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### Disaster Response Coordinator

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[bettyburkhalter@hotmail.com](mailto:bettyburkhalter@hotmail.com)

### Mission District Registrar

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[kscharnhorst51@gmail.com](mailto:kscharnhorst51@gmail.com)

### Mission District Website Administrator

Pastor Gary Burkhalter  
[pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com](mailto:pgburkhalter52@hotmail.com)

### Mission District Youth Trip Coordinator

Alana DeMoss  
[fivekidscrazy@outlook.com](mailto:fivekidscrazy@outlook.com)

### Mission District Communicator/Newsletter Editor

Pastor Barbara Wills  
[barbaramwills@gmail.com](mailto:barbaramwills@gmail.com)

*The Iowa Mission District  
has 39 congregations.*

*The Iowa Mission District website may be found  
at: [www.iowamissiondistrict.com](http://www.iowamissiondistrict.com).*

# Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

**Saturday, September 21, 2024**

**St. John's Lutheran Church, Western Douglas,  
1760 130<sup>th</sup> Street, Plainfield Iowa 50666**

The 2024 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at St. John's Lutheran Church, Western Douglas, Plainfield. Iowa, on Saturday, September 21, 2024. Our theme is "Love" from 1 Corinthians 13:13 *"So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."* We are pleased to have the Reverend David Keehner, the North American Lutheran Church Director of Renewal & Discipleship, as our keynote speaker. The Convocation is our opportunity to gather as brothers and sisters in Christ for the purpose of fellowship, worship, learning and sharing of ideas and to hear up-dates on the work and mission of the NALC. We also will have a business session to conduct the necessary business of the Mission District. As you prepare for the convocation, please be thinking of nominations for *Iowa Mission District Treasurer*, one *Lay Representative* and one *Clergy Representative* to the Mission District Council. Each is for a three-year term. Also needed is a *Clergy Representative* to serve one year, the final year of a three-year term that is vacant since Pastor Ryan Henkel has accepted a call to another Mission District. A nomination form is included in this month's Iowa Mission District News. Please get permission from the nominees before submitting their names. The nominees will need to complete the nomination form and mail it to Mission District Secretary, Pastor Solveig Zamzow (619 Elm Avenue, #309, Story City, IA 50248).

**Please Note:** According to Article 4.01 of the IA- MD Constitution: *"Delegates with voting privileges at a Convocation shall be the ordained ministers of the NALC within the territory of this Mission District and [two] lay delegates from the member congregations"*. In addition, we strongly encourage congregational participation beyond the delegates—visitors are welcome! There is no cost for the event other than a free-will offering for lunch. A worship offering will also be taken and designated to the NALC Disaster Relief. The day will begin at 8:00 am with registration and a time for fellowship with coffee and refreshments. A service of Holy Communion will begin at 9:00, and the closing of the convocation will be at 3:45 pm.

Junior High and High School youth are also encouraged to attend the convocation. It is hoped that we can have youth attendees on a regular basis to promote their interest and involvement in the Church beyond their home congregations.

To help with planning, and so that we may have appropriate name tags for **delegates and visitors**, we ask that you fill out the registration form below and mail to **Kathy Scharnhorst, Registrar, at 1594 Garden Avenue, Waverly, IA 50677**. It is most helpful in keeping track of registrations if each person being registered is listed on a separate sheet. If you wish to submit your registrations via email, please fill out the form and send the information as an attachment to **kscharnhorst51@gmail.com**.

*(Please fill out a separate form for each person.)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone and/or email: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation & Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Clergy \_\_\_\_\_ Lay Delegate \_\_\_\_\_ Visitor \_\_\_\_\_ Youth \_\_\_\_\_



## Biographical Information of Nominee

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position for which you are being nominated: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregational Member at: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us something about yourself (*family, hobbies, etc.*)

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How do you understand your faith?

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How have you been active in the church?

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Please list one of your favorite Bible verses and tell why it has meaning for you.

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Please sign below to indicate you are willing to serve if elected and mail this completed form to:

*Pr. Solveig Zamzow, Secretary Iowa Mission District, NALC  
619 Elm Avenue, #309  
Story City, IA 50248*

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Signature