

Loving Our Minot Neighbors With Hands and Hearts

We left after church on a Sunday and got in to Glenburn, north of Minot, at about 5AM. We spent the week working on 3 homes, taking them from sheet rock to bare stud walls. In a state as full of Lutherans as North Dakota, you can bet Lutheran folks (Lutheran Disaster Response) are doing much of the work to coordinate the volunteer efforts to help the owners of 4,000 homes that were affected. Early on there more volunteers, but the water was still sitting in many homes until August. Then, as the water dried up, so did the help! At this rate there will be 1500 homes "not touched" by winter.

The region is booming with oil work. Housing was scarce before and now it is even worse! Pastor Krueger (from Our Savior, Minot) has three families staying with him. There were at least 75 families from just his congregation who suffered damage or loss, as well as 2 other LCMS congregations located closer to the flood area. Our congregation gathered funds for donation to local churches and to help send a team of 11 (one good brother from Whitefish and the rest of us from Hamilton). The District also helped to finance the trip.

Once there, we were housed and fed breakfast at a local church. The Red Cross, along with numerous volunteers, helped to feed us for the week. Each evening we gathered in the sanctuary for word and prayer, laughter, and stories from the day. The work is not easy at times, but there is always something for someone to do at any level of physical ability. Tools were provided for the most part, but we were grateful for a pickup to haul them. I highly recommend bringing your favorite heavy wrecking bar and a hefty hammer.

We have now enjoyed 4 such "Disaster Recovery" trips with folks from Grace Lutheran and every one of them has been more than a good experience; they were great. They teach us to love each other, trust in God's providing, and love our neighbor with hands and heart. I know there are neighbors in every congregation itching to do something in the name of Jesus Christ for the love of God for others. They may not be the ones who are active in other ways, but this can be a talent for good! There is nothing like taking out a wall with a sledge hammer to start your day out right!

Please consider organizing a crew of any size to help our sister District. There are very limited funds available on a first-come, first-serve basis to help with the trip. The District will provide two \$500.00 grants to help with transportation, etc. Please call the District office (406) 259-2908 to apply.

I also encourage you to consider joining us in Missoula on Saturday, November 19th for a circuit forum with Rev. Glen Merritt. This will feature reports and encouragement from Synodical Disaster Response and Human Care activities. More details will be available soon.

Call Lutheran Disaster Response in Minot at (218)443-4970 to talk directly to coordinators there and to volunteer. If you have any questions about these trips, please call or email me.

Pastor Vern Sandersfeld, Stewardship/Human Care-Disaster Response

(406)363-1924, or gracelutheranhamilton@gmail.com



MONTANA REFLECTIONS

"A Future and a Hope"

September 2011

Montana District—LCMS
30 Broadwater Avenue
Billings, MT 59101
(406) 259-2908
office@mtdistlcms.org
www.mtdistlcms.org/

"No, no, no. That's a boy's shoe."
She was only five years old but she was insistent. A Pastor and his family were over for supper. The adults were talking upstairs so I went downstairs to play with the kids. We ended up acting out the Cinderella story, but when I tried to put her brother's shoe on for the glass slipper, she put her foot down. I responded by saying, "Well don't you have an imagination?" "Oh yes," she answered, "I have a great imagination." Then after a long pause, a cloud came over her face, and she became afraid. "That makes me think of zombies, and I don't like zombies." "Well," I said, "let's not think about zombies. Let's think about Cinderella." And we did.

That brief episode reminded me about how powerful our imaginations really are. You don't have to be five years old to allow your imagination get away with you. I suspect that many of us have been recently imagining the worst. It doesn't help much that the news media seems to be constantly conjuring up one zombie after another. Whether it is the latest dip in the stock market, the rise in the jobless rate, the lifeless housing market, or a rogue trader losing everyone's shirt but his own, the zombies of our imagination seem to be everywhere. Down the dark halls of our minds they chase us until we find ourselves in a room where even God is not very strong. How many believers have allowed their imaginations to back them into a corner in fear of this recession? How many Christians have lost hope for the future?

Many years ago things look just as bad for the Church. God had just sent the people of Israel into captivity in Babylon. In a foreign land, far from home, beat down, oppressed, they could not see much hope for the future. It was not an economic zombie that was hounding them.

It was the unnerving idea that God had abandoned them.

God had the prophet Jeremiah write a message into this dark room of their imaginations. Here is a part of what He said, "Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you..."

We may not be able to point to prophets and diviners today but our own imaginations more than fill the role. We deceive ourselves into thinking God is not here and doesn't care. Jeremiah continued, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:8 & 11)

What is interesting about this promise is that it follows the revelation that the nation of Israel is going to be in captivity for 70 years. At least two generations would not see freedom. So where were the future and the hope? Perhaps Jeremiah had in mind something more than a present hope and a nearby future. The prophet's job is to point to spiritual life. The hope of the Scripture is not just a fond wish.

Our hope and our future is a person. "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope." (1 Timothy 1:1) Our future, despite the persistent zombies of our imaginations, is settled. Jesus defeated every zombie, every demon, and every sin. He rose in victory over death to secure our future. We don't know whether the current economic crisis will be with us for seven more months, seven or seventy more years. But we do know that we have a future and a hope in Jesus.

Terry Forke, District President

- September**
 24 Lutheran Free Conference; Peace, Great Falls
 25 Installation of Rev. Paul Shupe, Bridger/Belfry, 4:00 p.m.
 30-10/1 Early Childhood Conference; Trinity, Great Falls
- October**
 2 Official Visit: Peace, Great Falls
 7-9 Pastor's Wives Retreat; Helena
 9 Installation of Rev. Gerald Paul, Trinity, Great Falls
 10 Trinity, Great Falls
 11-13 District Pastors Conference; Peace, Great Falls
 16 Official Visit: Colstrip
 17 Board of Directors, Billings
 31 Reformation
- November**
 6 Official Visit: Hardin
 15-17 Council of Presidents—Raleigh, NC
 20 Official Visit: Miles City
 24-25 Thanksgiving—Office Closed
 27 Advent begins

Lutheran Hour Ministries Takes the Gospel to Muslim Countries:

Reformation will mark the beginning of a new effort to reach those who can't be reached by traditional means. On that day, LHM will begin broadcasting the Gospel in Arabic in such a way that the broadcasts will permeate all of the Middle Eastern, Arabic speaking countries. Our churches can't go there; our missionaries can't go there; but radio waves can. People in Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan – every Arab country – will have the opportunity to meet the Savior who loves them!

In a few months LHM will begin the process of opening an office in Indonesia, the world's most populous predominately Muslim country!

Please pray for the recipients of these radio messages as they learn about the love of Jesus.
Lou Marting, LHM

Rev. Gerald Paul of Thayne, WY, has accepted a call to Trinity, Great Falls. Installation is planned for Sunday, Oct. 9th at 4:00 p.m.

Ordination and Installation of Rev. David Preus, Mount Olive, Billings



Back Row, L-R: Al Ebel, Jerry Goetz, Jason Menagh, John Sias, Doug Thompson, Herb Schiefelbein, Middle Row, L-R: Dan Rinderknecht, Arlo Pullmann, Dennis Bauer, Ryan Wendt, Terry Forke, Bob Lane, Front Row, L-R: Park Timber, Ken Zoeller, David Preus, Rolf Preus, Mark Grunst

Montana District LWML Convention

The LWML societies of the Flathead Zone are looking forward to hosting the 2012 Montana District LWML Convention. It will be held April 27-29, 2012 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Kalispell. The theme of the convention will be **Stand Firm...** based on Philippians 1:27.

Goal Statement:

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, I courageously and enthusiastically share the saving message of salvation in Jesus Christ found only in God's Word.

Objectives:

- Worship the Triune God
- Encounter Jesus' saving message in His Word
- Rejoice in the mission opportunities God provides
- Live boldly as his children

The convention will offer Bible Study, mission speakers, grant proposals, worship, comedy, elections, fellowship, food and fun. Put the convention dates on your calendars now and join us for the 35th Biennial Montana District LWML Convention in Kalispell and **Stand Firm!**



Crow Lutheran Ministry Receives International LWML Grant

The International LWML has awarded Crow Lutheran Ministry a grant in the amount of \$69,999.64 for 2012-2013. This grant will enable the Ministry to continue the work of proclaiming the Gospel on the Crow Reservation and on other reservations in Montana.

Lutherans Across the Country Help Launch Lutheran Malaria Initiative

Baltimore—September 15, 2011—The Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) will launch publicly Sept. 18-20. LMI is an unprecedented campaign to mobilize U.S. Lutherans in the global effort to eliminate malaria deaths in Africa by 2015. LMI goals are to increase awareness of malaria and raise \$45 million to help fight the disease. LMI is made possible through support from the United Nations Foundation. Lutheran congregations, schools and individuals have already contributed nearly \$2 million for LMI to help the people of Africa whose everyday lives are affected by malaria.

Churches, schools and individuals can show their support by **joining LMI** to receive an "LMI Starter Kit" that gives a step-by-step guide on how to organize and complete a local campaign in congregations, schools, neighborhoods and communities.

"I want to thank everyone who is participating in this LMI public launch and am likewise grateful for all those who plan to join in the future," said LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison. This initiative will vastly increase the capacity of our partner churches to deliver care, education, and prevention of malaria where they live."

"Between 40 percent and 60 percent of health care in the developing world countries is provided by faith-based organizations, like our Lutheran partners," UN Foundation CEO Kathy Calvin added. "It is inspiring to see how the Lutheran community in the U.S. can help the UN reach families in rural villages on the other side of the world."

"We are thrilled and excited about this Lutheran Malaria Initiative, this global partnership to end needless deaths due to a preventable disease," said Rev. John Nunes, LWR president and CEO. "Malaria is a devastating disease, and through LMI,

There is something that each and every one of us can do to make a difference."

About the Lutheran Malaria Initiative

The Lutheran Malaria Initiative, a partnership of Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and made possible through support from the United Nations Foundation, aims to mobilize Lutherans in the United States to help end malaria deaths in Africa by 2015. Both LWR and the LCMS have a long history of working to alleviate suffering and reduce poverty in rural communities around the world.

Through the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, the LCMS and LWR can leverage the reach and power of the Lutheran network to make a significant impact through education, prevention and treatment of this devastating disease. For more information, visit

www.lutheranmalaria.org

Area Agency on Aging

An Opportunity for Older Adult Ministry

Area Agency on Aging is a coordination of services to our distinguished aging population of 60+ provided by the Older Americans Act passed in 1965 and amended in 2006. It provides a variety of services, assistance, health promotion, advocacy, and protection for our aging brothers and sisters.

Every community and church body has members who fall into this area of need. I have a tremendous amount of respect for all of our elder Americans. They have raised families in tough times, fought in war time, and have pulled together to sacrifice necessities for the good of our county. They have been very productive members of society and are a strong generation of people whose vigorous zeal for life may begin to grow dim as they near the end of the trail.

The Area Agency on Aging has services and assistance through which we as members of Christ's body can minister to our older adults:

VOICE (Volunteer Ombudsman Improving Care for our Elders) members work closely with an Ombudsman, a trained individual who advocates and assists in problem-solving for adults over the age of 60. This includes long-term care information and assistance regarding home care, assisted living, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation. The primary role of an Ombudsman is to investigate complaints and assist in resolution. There are background and reference checks and training involved in becoming a VOICE member.

RESPIRE is relief by a trained volunteer for someone who is caring for a family member or friend in the home. It is twofold in nature. The caregiver is given time away from their care-providing mission, which helps them to remain healthy physically and mentally. It also helps the individual to stay in the home, which is what all of us would want for ourselves. The companionship and bond that is part of the dynamics of this program can create a lifelong friendship.

RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) provides an opportunity for people 55 and older to serve others with their talents. Some activities include assisting at a library or museum, transporting others to appointments, tutoring, assisting teachers, helping with clean-up in the community or home, and consulting on tax issues.

There are Area Agencies on Aging in Montana in various communities. You can go to www.dphhs.mt.gov and search the Index under A for Area Agencies on Aging for a list throughout Montana. The Area on Aging in Salmon, Idaho is part of the Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership (EICAP).

Dorene Johnson – Stewardship and Human Care

The happy shouts from more than 22 preschoolers testify to the joy that comes from a simple swing set newly installed in the yard at King's Kids Preschool in Columbia Falls. The swing set, paid for in part with a grant from Lutheran Schools Fund, joins a wooden 'Noah's Ark' and a rather impressive castle that were built by a member of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church for the children of our VBS and Preschool.

Teacher Robin Erickson and aide, Heather Wicks manage to harness and direct this youthful whirlwind of energy as they teach, shape, and guide these little ones.



The high school member who mows our lawn at Holy Trinity in Belgrade had a great idea for a Christian witness to the community. Nice job Lane! In the cross of Christ I glory!



Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf Hosts Annual Camp at Trinity Lutheran Camp, Bigfork

Everyone had a wonderful time at camp from Aug. 11- 14. The gathering was hosted by Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf of Great Falls, but was open to all who had an interest in the deaf community. There were 34 attendees including people from Montana, Idaho, Washington and Utah. Bible studies and devotions were available to all every day, along with swimming, fishing, or canoeing in beautiful Flathead Lake. There was also hiking, catching up with old friends and enjoying the scenery. For many members of Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf, this is the only opportunity of the year to attend a Bible study conducted by a Lutheran Pastor who can teach the study and answer questions solely in sign language. Camp concluded with a worship service with communion on Sunday, followed by many goodbye hugs. In August 2012, the camp will be hosted by Peace Lutheran Church of Great Falls, MT .

News From Concordia Health Plan

Effective December 31, 2011, Walgreens will no longer be a network pharmacy for Concordia Health Plan (CHP) members with prescription drug coverage through Express Scripts (members in Options A-E, HDHP, and CSS, as well as members with Medicare supplemental coverage).

Concordia Plan Services and Express Scripts will communicate more about this change with members as additional details become available. Be sure to visit the "News" section at www.concordiaplans.org over the next several months.

Frequently Asked Questions are available for viewing at http://www.concordiaplans.org/graphics/assets/documents/Express_Scripts_Walgreens_FAQ.pdf or call the District office and we will send them to you.



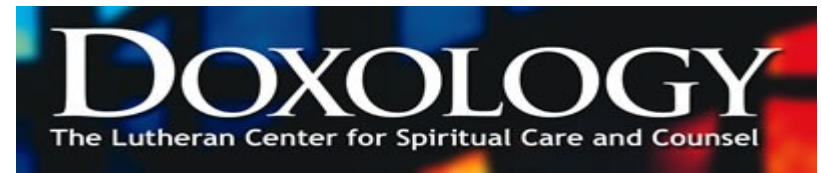
Understanding Autism: CIGNA Education Series Beginning in September

To help parents and caregivers better understand disorders like autism and Asperger's Syndrome, CIGNA Behavioral Health, who administers mental health care for the Concordia Health Plan (CHP), is offering the CIGNA Autism Education Series that will run September through February 2012. All 6 telephone seminars in this series are free and do not require registration. They are open to CHP members who are parents or caregivers interested in learning more about autism and autism spectrum disorders.

The CIGNA Autism Education Series telephone seminars will be held from 1-2 p.m. EST on the following dates:

- October 13 – Topic: Teaching Children How to Think (What Does it Mean?)
- November 10 – Elopement and Wandering in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- December 8 – Strengthening and Improving Marriages and Couples Relationships while Raising Children on the Autism Spectrum
- January 12 – Topic: Autism and Comorbid Disorders
- February 9 – Topic: Grandparents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

To access these seminars call 1-866-431-5314. When prompted for a passcode, enter 1150266. If you have additional questions, contact a CIGNA health advocate at 1-800-274-7603.



We help pastors be better pastors.

Since our beginning in 2008 we have equipped more than 250 pastors with advanced skills in caring for those they serve. We've served seasoned pastors, new pastors, confident pastors and struggling pastors. Each has been enriched and encouraged.

What do pastors gain?

Practical skills for ministry include:

- Emotional Intelligence - developing highly effective relational skills**
- Spiritual Diagnosis and Cure - enhancing pastoral care skills and building**
- Compassion Fatigue - staying healthy while helping struggling people**
- Depression - learning the clinical realities and providing spiritual care**
- Pastoral Ethics - establishing personal/professional boundaries**
- Suffering - discerning the key to insightful care for people in pain**
- Suicide - providing prevention and spiritual care when life caves in**
- Sexual Temptation - remaining mindful and proactive**
- Authority vs. Power - creating a healthy parish environment**

What is the cost?

The actual cost of the entire program (16 days of training, food and lodging for pastors, wives, and laity) is \$3,400. However, due to generous gifts from funding partners and foundations each 2012 congregation receives a grant of \$2,000.00

2012 DOXOLOGY Training Sites

CALIFORNIA

The Jesuit Retreat Center of Los Altos
Los Altos, California www.elretiro.org/
The Gathering (pastors only)
January 8 - 11

ILLINOIS

Bishop Lane Retreat Center
Rockford, Illinois <http://blrc.dpsrfd.org/>
The Gathering (pastors only)
January 15 - 18

INDIANA

Lindenwood Retreat Center
Donaldson, Indiana <http://www.lindenwood.org/>
The Gathering (pastors only)
July 15 - 18