



DISTRICT NEWS

MINNESOTA SOUTH

TALKING POINTS WITH PASTOR

‘Record of the **genealogy of Jesus Christ** the son of David, the son of Abraham...’
MATT. 1:1



A treasure to read

Genealogies are about as much fun to read as running into a brick wall. Most of us don’t care much for them unless we need some good bedtime reading to put us to sleep. At first glance, trudging through a long list of names can be rather cumbersome and boring.

However, if we pause and look at the big picture, genealogies are quite fascinating and informative. With each name mentioned in a genealogy, there is an incredible story to tell. Sometimes that may mean digging a little bit to find out more, but if you have ever done a family tree, you can recall how that process allowed you to discover the history behind each family member. Each name of a genealogy has a story to go with it — people, places, events, trag-



Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford
District President

edies and triumphs. What story will go with your name?

Therefore, I contend the genealogy of Jesus is a fascinating account to read. Simply start by carefully reading and noting each name in the list. It begins with a man named Abraham. Does his name sound familiar? What’s the history on him? Perhaps you remember? It goes like this: Abram leaves his homeland for an unknown country.

He and his wife are nearly killed on several occasions. He gets his maid pregnant at his wife’s request. He is the first to be circumcised (ouch!) and then passes that on as the sign of God’s covenant. At age 100 he has a son with his 90-year-old wife. Still bored?

What about some of the women on that list? What’s the story about these ances-

tors of Jesus? One woman mentioned is Tamar. Do you remember her story? She marries a great grandson of Abraham who dies. Her father-in-law, Judah (the grandson of Abraham), pledges her his youngest son in marriage, but then takes back the pledge. She then pretends to be a prostitute, becomes pregnant by her father-in-law, and then reveals her father-in-law is the father of her child. Still bored? The soap operas of today can’t even match up to this stuff.

Or what about Ruth? What was her story? She was a Moabite foreigner who marries an Israelite, and he dies. She stays with her mother-in-law (Naomi), goes back with her to Israel, looks for leftover grain in a harvest field, meets a guy named Boaz, uncovers his feet one night (a curious marriage proposal if I ever saw one), marries him and has a son named Obed, who turns out to be the grandfather of the great King David! Still bored?

The genealogy of Jesus is full of history and deep meaning. Though it may appear as just a long list of names, it tells an incredible story about the people whom God uses to bring forth and prepare the way for the coming of His Son, Jesus Christ. Within that list of names there is scandal, loss, pain, rescue, redemption, promise and joy. There are people of wealth and people of poverty, people of virtue and people of vice. God uses them all to bring forth His only begotten Son to redeem the world.

Jesus’ genealogy is a fascinating

See **GENEALOGY**, Page 8

INSTALLATIONS

Rev. Jorge Gomez was ordained and installed as pastor of **New Creation Church, Shakopee**, on Dec. 9. From left, (front row) Revs. Ben Griffin, Pat Simmons, Vue Lee, Hunde Takele, Jorge Gomez, Don Taylor, Matthew Barry; (back row) Ryan Alvey, Toby Schmidt, Dr. Lucas Woodford, Greg Snow and Fran Green, and Vicar Todd Bentz.



Rev. Ben Kangar was ordained and installed as associate pastor of **theAlley, Cottage Grove**, on Dec. 17. From left, Rev. Ben Griffin, Rev. Toby Schmidt, Rev. Erland Asmus, Rev. Ryan Alvey, Vicar Matthew Cephus, Rev. Tim Heinecke, Rev. Ben Kangar, Rev. Ted Diedrick, Rev. John Schildwachter, Rev. Martin Cornes, Rev. Vue Lee and Rev. Hunde Takele.



Rev. Dr. Jared Yogerst was installed as pastor of **Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minneapolis**, on Dec. 10. From left, Revs. David Kind, Mark Shockey, Dr. Jared Yogerst, Gen Hashimoto, Bill Hugo and Jason Krause.



Welcome!

St. James Lutheran Church, West St. Paul, became a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Minnesota South District on Dec. 10. We welcome our newest brothers and sisters in Christ! Pictured is Rev. Thomas Aadland signing the St. James constitution with Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, district president, looking on.



Lifted high

theAlley Church, Cottage Grove, celebrated the long-awaited addition of a cross on the outside of their church. It was constructed in a similar fashion to the cross in the sanctuary, and was designed, created and paid for by members and friends of theAlley Church.



Congratulations, 'Padre'!



Long-time pastor Rev. Howie Krienke, who serves as associate pastor of Zion, Hopkins, received a Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Concordia University, St. Paul, his alma mater, on Dec. 16.

Pastor “Padre” Krienke has made significant humanitarian and philanthropic contributions. He has served Zion and the Hopkins community for the past 44 years. At Zion, he initiated the After School at Zion program to care for Alice Smith Elementary School students who have working parents. Rudy Perpich, who served two terms as governor of Minnesota, presented Zion an award for that program.

Krienke was instrumental in assisting the Hopkins Clergy Association in organizing the Hopkins Community Resource Center, which helps care for families in need. The Hopkins Police Department has used his services as a chaplain.

Pastor Krienke also served as chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserve, retiring as a colonel after 32 years. For over 30 years, he held Memorial Sunday patriotic services for Zion in Burnes Park, with the Hopkins American Legion and VFW assisting. Additionally, Krienke often spoke at the Hopkins city Memorial Day observances.

In his retirement, “Padre” remains involved at Zion and in the community. He is Zion’s visitation pastor and he volunteers to serve homeless veterans through an organization called Minnesota Stand Down. Pastor Krienke is married to Linda (Baule), with whom he has four children: Jeremy, Lisa (Matt) Stender, Joshua (Christine) and Lindsay (David) Becker and 10 wonderful grandchildren.

Congratulations on your achievement, Pastor Krienke!

LWML

EIGHT GRANTS DOWN, FIVE TO GO!



By Wendy Sjolom

VP of Communications, LWML Minnesota South District

As the women of the LWML, it is our mission to joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others. Jesus said to His disciples:

“Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” **MARK 16:15**

Since its inception in 1942, the LWML has supported mission grants in 83 countries.

This biennium, the ladies of the LWML Minnesota South District chose 13 mission grants to support with a goal of raising \$270,000. As of the end of our sixth quarter (Oct. 30), we fully funded eight of our mission grants and partially funded five! By April 30, we need to raise \$55,753 to meet our biennium goal. Please continue to pray for our mission goal, the mission grants we are supporting and those impacted by our mites.

The partially funded mission grants are General Operating Support; Minnesota South District Student Aid; The Timothy Scholarship at Mayer Lutheran; Trinity First Lutheran School in Minneapolis; Bible Books for Indonesia’s Muslim Public Schools; and Student Tuition Aid at Martin Luther High School in Northrop.

If you are looking for inspiration to fill your mite box, visit mnskwml.org, go to “Missions” and select “Mite Calendars” from the drop-down menu. Click the monthly calendar. If you are in need of new mite boxes, contact me at vpcommunication@mnskwml.org. If you are hoping to donate but are not part of the LWML, send an email to finsecretary@mnskwml.org.

We hope to celebrate the completion of our mite goal with you as we “Walk in Love” at our LWML 30th Biennial District Convention in June. At convention, we will vote for both a new mite goal and new mission grants to support for the 2024-2026 biennium.

Go First! Tie-in: Outreach

Christ has called us to be light bearers and hope mongers in a broken and dysfunctional world. Through the daily vocations of life, we stand ready to reach out with the hope of Christ. Many long for a compassionate word, a welcoming smile, or a kind gesture. Extending the love of Christ in word and deed is a welcome relief for hurting and wondering souls. We extend the love of Christ to both the lost and the found, championing His sacrifice on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.



YOUR MISSION GIFTS AT WORK



The Royal Family congregation worships at Gloria Dei, Minneapolis, pictured here in January 2023.

Royal Family grows in NE Minneapolis



By Rev. Matthew Cephus
Pastor,
Royal Family

Royal Family is a multi-ethnic church plant that got started a few years ago in New Hope. Our congregation is multiethnic, comprised of people from Liberia, Congo, Cameroon, Nigeria, along with caucasians and African-Americans. We encountered Rev. Ben Griffin of LINC, who introduced us to Rev. Paul Biebighauser, who was then serving as the senior pastor of Christ Victorious Lutheran Church, Chaska. Pastor Biebighauser and his congregation began supporting us and then extended me a call as a church planter.

We weren't thinking of moving the congregation, but the Lord allowed some challenges to kick us out of our comfort zone in New Hope and into the building owned by Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Minneapolis. Doing ministry now in the northeast of Minneapolis is actually by God's own design as Royal Family and Gloria Dei are now partnering to spread the Gospel. Serving as a pastor for both congregations, there is a strong force of unity which binds us together and keeps drawing new people to the church. Our annual outdoor summer outreach community event, "Take It to the Streets," draws families, including children, in and outside the neighborhood. We're partnering with a food shelter in North Minneapolis, where we go once a week to encourage, give hope and pray for people.

The Lord keeps adding to His church. Here's some of the stories:

- **Matt**, a young man who has served in the U.S. Army, came to the church in October searching for hope and peace. After the worship service, he walked up to me and told me how much the sermon about the love of God really ministered to him. Matt

is now being disciplined and going through the new member class.

- **Lyle**, an elderly man, came in search for a new church when he moved into the community. Having visited other churches previously, he decided to make our church his home.

- **Kevin** and **Barb**, an elderly couple, also came to visit our church. According to them, they had been searching for a church that preaches and teaches the whole Bible. Before coming to our church, they had visited 15 other churches, but weren't satisfied with their teaching. During a second visit I made to them, they began to express how they have been blessed every Sunday by the preaching and teaching of God's Word. Barb also went on to say, "Kevin and I are so thankful to God for how the sermons are changing our lives. We also love the fellowship, and the love we receive every Sunday. We've decided to let you know that we'll love to join Royal Family by becoming members."

I think this is a fulfillment of God's Word that He's the builder of His church. Indeed, God is up to something in northeast Minneapolis with Royal Family and Gloria Dei!

Go First! Tie-in: Collaboration

Christ has called us to be united as the body of Christ. We desire to complete each other rather than compete against each other.



Collaboration, networking, and sharing allow us to more effectively unleash the potential of our congregations in the name of Jesus. Therefore we look for ways to engage with one another, to celebrate with one another, and to cooperate with one another for the good of God's people, the growth of His kingdom, and the glory of Christ.

COMING EVENTS

Camp Omega



Omega Plunge • Feb. 25

Get your team ready for the Omega Plunge, to be held for the first time at Camp Omega. For over five years, the plunge has averaged 20 teams per year. Teams can be one person or groups of many. Youth groups make great teams! To make it even more fun, teams are encouraged to dress in a theme for the big event. Funds raised will support the Camp Omega Adult and Family Retreat Center Building Fund. If you have ever thought about plunging, this is the year! Visit campomega.org/event/polar-plunge-2.

Man Up! Retreat • March 15–16

Men who are members of Minnesota South District congregations are invited to attend a 24-hour retreat in which faith will be strengthened and spirits renewed by God's Word. Rev. Dr. Rich Carter will speak on the theme "My Life Matters?! Freedom in Christ for Service with the Neighbor."

There will be time for fellowship and recreational opportunities. Participants are invited to bring their gear for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing and target shooting. Recreational equipment will not be provided by the camp. We encourage men to also bring a board game or a snack to share.

The registration cost includes three meals and lodging in hotel-style (double occupancy) rooms of the new Omega Lodge, or bunkhouse-style shared lodging. Those who stay in Omega Lodge will have beds with sheets and a pillow provided. Those who stay in shared lodging need to bring their own sleeping bag and pillow.

For more information and registration, call 507-633-2253 or visit campomega.org/event/manup.

Be inspired at LLL convention

Mark your calendars for **April 13** and join the **Minnesota South LLL** at their annual convention. It will be held at St. Michael Lutheran Church, Bloomington. All are welcome to attend.

The guest speaker is Dr. Kari Vo, theological editor for Lutheran Hour Ministries. She will focus on "Energizing Mission." Break-out sessions include presentations by Peo-

ple of the Book Lutheran Outreach (POBLO); Rev. Vue Lee, Minnesota South District Assistant to the President, Missions; and Chris Bellanger, interim director of LINC Twin Cities.

Join us for a day of spiritual growth with inspirational presentations to encourage and equip you as partners in His mission. Register by contacting Doyle Benson at doylebenson321@gmail.com.

Go First! conference is April 19-20

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. **MATTHEW 4:19**

Hanging on the wall in my home are two very distinct depictions of fishing. One picture shows a solitary person sitting in a boat in the middle of a lake. A single line is cast and the lone figure waits for the moment a fish will take the bait. Another picture shows a very different scene. In it, a small crew of people are working together to retrieve a large net that has been cast over the edge of a boat. The people are straining together to bring the net to the surface and discover what kind of fish they have caught. Some are smiling and some are deep in concentrated effort, but they are all working together.

Both scenes depict the task of fishing. One is a very solitary approach and the other requires teamwork and coordinated effort. Peter, Andrew, James and John were most familiar with the second approach. In their experience, the task of fishing was seldom solitary. The work was hard, but the support and encouragement of others lightened the load and brightened the task.

I am convinced this is the type of fishing Jesus has in mind when He calls His disciples to the task of fishing for people. His call is to a shared task that will require hard work from each person, but a task that is never solitary.



Working together we find that the work is made lighter and the time spent more enjoyable.

This is the focus of our **Minnesota South District Go First! Ministry**

Conference. As disciples of Jesus, we have been called to the important task of reaching our world with the Good News of Jesus' reconciling work on the cross, but we are not called to solitary effort! At this special event, we will gather with other disciples from across our district and beyond to learn and be encouraged, and to offer learning and encouragement to others in our shared task of "fishing for people."

Fishing can be challenging work, but it is so much better when we are working together. So join us **April 19-20** at Concordia Academy in Roseville and bring some of your "crew"! There will be over 40 different learning opportunities, special speakers and a Friday evening of singing and celebration. There is no cost for registration and all your meals at the event are included.

Learn more, volunteer your assistance, and register at mnsdistrict.org/go-first-initiative#go-first-ministry-conference. Together, let's learn the joy of His call to fish together for the sake of the kingdom.

Submitted by Dr. Phillip Johnson
District Assistant to the President,
Mission Formation
phillip.johnson@mnsdistrict.org

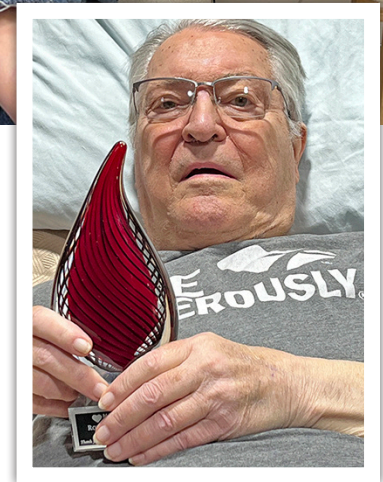
Indiscriminate giving is rewarding

Two LCMS pastors, Rev. Ronald Mathison and Rev. James R. Fuchs, are among an elite Minnesota group. They stand among 14 that have donated over 100 life-saving gallons of blood products through Memorial Blood Centers of Minnesota.

Mathison and Fuchs regularly donate platelets at the Eden Prairie Memorial Blood Center, where they met and became acquainted while enjoying cookies following their donations. Platelets are essential for normal blood clotting and are often needed by cancer patients, accident victims, patients with blood disorders, newborns and bone marrow transplant patients. Every 15 seconds someone in the United States needs a platelet transfusion. While whole blood donors (the most common donation) must wait 56 days between donations, two units of platelets can be donated every seven days, up to 24 times a year. Although platelets may be acquired via a whole blood donation, it would require six to 10 whole blood donations to acquire the volume in one platelet donation.

These selfless donors both started by donating whole blood and then learned about the need for platelet donations. Donating two units of platelets requires the donor to be connected to a blood cell separator for over two hours. The time is dependent on your platelet counts. Blood is drawn into the machine, which spins the blood to separate the platelets. The remaining blood (plasma, white cells and red cells) and an anticoagulant are returned to the donor. Donors often read a book or watch a movie during their donation.

Each unit of platelets can support two or three patients with a life-threatening illness. Between 3,200 and 4,800 critically ill patients have benefited from the combined 200 gallons of platelets donated by Pastor Mathison and Pastor Fuchs. "It is rewarding to donate blood, knowing that you could



Pictured above are Revs. James R. Fuchs (top) and Ronald Mathison, holding his 100 Gallon Donor award. Pastor Fuchs also received an award (the awards are pictured at left).

be helping anyone," Pastor Fuchs said. "You may be helping a good friend or someone you disagree with; you don't know and that is the beauty of it."

Selflessly donating blood products crosses all racial, political and religious boundaries.

When asked why he donates, Rev. Mathison said, "I give because I can and there is a never-ending need."

Indeed, the need is constant, but the supply is not. Donated platelets are only viable for five days, so donors are constantly needed. 62% of Americans

are eligible to donate blood, but only 5% donate. This means 57% of Americans could experience the joy and satisfaction of helping those in need through donating blood.

Are you one of the 57%? Eligibility requirements change periodically, so if you were rejected previously check the current eligibility requirements at mbc.org.

Submitted by Karen Van Wert (Pastor Fuch's wife)



2024 Minnesota State Pastors' Conference

May 13 – 15

Madden's on Gull Lake • Brainerd

Theme: Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Ministry

Bible study leader and breakout lectionary study leader:

Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing, professor of theology at Concordia University, St. Paul.

Speakers:

• Rev. Dr. David R. Maxwell, professor and chairman of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Dr. Maxwell will introduce the topic, addressing pastoral applications.

• Dr. Angus Menuge, professor and chair of Philosophy at Concordia University Wisconsin. Dr. Menuge will address anthropology (why we should think we are not organic computers and should question the metaphysical cogency of Strong AI and transhumanism); and ethics (the dehumanizing effects as people increasingly view themselves as technology).

Save the Date!

2024 Minnesota South Fall Pastors Conference

• Oct. 7–8

• Hosanna Lutheran Church, Mankato



GENEALOGY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

conglomeration of people. Likewise, the people of your church family are a fascinating assortment of people. You all have stories to tell and histories behind you, maybe some that are not so different from the ancestors of Jesus. And yet, together we are all equally redeemed and forgiven by Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of Matthew intentionally begins with a genealogy. He shows us who Jesus came from with all their vices, virtues, faults and failures. Matthew then unpacks the life of Jesus, showing us who He came



for with all their vices, virtues, faults and failures (ours included). Matthew ends his Gospel with the record of Jesus sending His disciples to “all nations” (MATTHEW 28:19), with all their vices, virtues, faults, and failures.

The genealogy of Jesus continues to extend even today as we have been brought into His family and as we reach out with the Good News of Jesus Christ to bring others into His family. Every

time you read a biblical genealogy, you can be reminded it's really a history full of unique and flawed characters telling the story of how God redeems His people, you included.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Minneapolis Scholarship was established to provide financial awards to eligible candidates pursuing a career as a professional church worker of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Students who are communicant members of Minnesota South District congregations are eligible.

The scholarship application will open on Feb. 15 and must be submitted by April 1. As part of the process, applicants must submit a separate District Financial Aid Form to their university or seminary Financial Aid office.

Applicants shall be enrolled in professional church work programs or be rostered LCMS workers (graduate students). The amount of student aid to be provided will be determined on the basis of district policy and funds available.

Colloquy financial aid is available on a first-come, first-serve basis beginning on Jan. 1 each year. Teachers and other ministry workers pursuing membership

on the commissioned minister roster should complete an application for each colloquy class and submit the application three weeks prior to the start of each class.

For more information, visit mnsdistrict.org/scholarships-and-financial-aid-2 or send an email to christina.krentz@mnsdistrict.org.



DISTRICT OFFICE

- ▶ 14301 Grand Ave. S.
Burnsville, MN 55306
- ▶ 952-435-2550
- ▶ mnsdistrict.org