

# The Happenings

## USA — Canada

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2



JUNE 2020

### From the Chairperson



Dear Members of the NW District:

Good morning from SUNNY Odessa WA!!!

I am sure all of you have had cabin fever... wanting to break out and go to the nearest STORE...just to get away and to see people. I know I have. A memory comes to mind when I say this.... My late husband Tim was serving in our 1<sup>st</sup> call in Dagmar MT in the late 80's. That winter was a cold one.... Below 0 for many days...and I was inside with a toddler for 7 days straight. Both Kelsey and I were getting cabin fever... we needed to get OUT... Kelsey was a social bug.... She needed people. So... The weather broke... it was -32 below (with wind) and not -40 as the previous day.... Tim, Kelsey and I decided to go to Williston to get OUT. When we put Kelsey in the cart at K-mart she was soooooo HAPPY.... She kept on

saying to everyone "HI" "HI" !!! Everyone who met her thought she was the cutest girl!!!

The moral to this story is, we are social people...we NEED each other... we NEED GOD.... I have been studying the books of Chronicles these past weeks and yesterday I was studying 2 Chronicles 7... where it says at verse 14... "and my people, who hear my name, humble themselves, pray and seek my face, turn from their evil ways, and I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land".

Out of these verses I "heard" HUMBLE myself, REPENT, and RESTORE.....

Then I read Pastor Fred's page on FOCUS....BOY, I KNOW God was talking to me.....confirmation of what I had just studied an hour before..... soooooo God...

### Running Toward Our Focus?

1 Chronicles 22:19a English Standard Version (ESV)  
<sup>19</sup> Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God.

1 Corinthians 9:24 English Standard Version (ESV)  
<sup>24</sup> Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.

Where does our focus need to be?

### LCMC Northwest District Council

#### Executive Committee

- Shelly Hauge, Chair
- Pr Eric Hullstrom, Vice Chair
- Mary Stubblefield, Secretary
- Mot Hedges, Treasurer

#### Board Members

- Pr Paul Berthelot
- Elvin Borg
- Bruce Grohn
- Carol Ann Buelow
- Pr Joe Beal
- Pr Drew Nelson

#### District Coordinator

Pastor Drew Nelson

#### Website Master

Steve Hruza

#### Editor of The Happenings

Sheryl Westerhold



**Continued from page 1**

For the last couple of months the world's focus has been on the COVID19 virus. People are studying it, analyzing it, giving opinions on it, striving to develop a vaccine for it, establishing all sorts of protocols to deal with it; and on and on.

Why? Because it is a matter of life or death – for anyone. Yes, there are stats out there that describe who is most vulnerable, but the fact is that anyone can contract it. Anyone. And if one comes down with it, how will their body respond; fever only then go away, or will it hit with a vengeance and bring death in a matter of hours – or anything else in between these two extremes?

What does one focus on when dealing with this virus?

Some people are quite cavalier in their attitude, "You have to die of something, so I'm just going to continue as I have." Their focus is to keep their lifestyle intact; no changes or modifications. "I'll do what I want."

Others are making all sorts of modifications and changes. These are the people whose focus is on not getting sick. All the suggested methods and procedures for prevention are taken to the next several levels and includes not infecting others as well. They're happy to share information as well as supplies and other help.

Another "group's" focus is on panic and thinking only of themselves. Rushing to the stores, they buy exorbitant amounts of TP, paper towels, hand sanitizer, water, canned goods, baking flour – good heavens! – everything you can think of. People like this have a tendency to go overboard in their reaction to the unknown whether it's real or not.

Now, I'm not judging whether any of these three "types" are

right or wrong. I'm merely attempting to draw attention to the various ways people respond and where their focus lies in such circumstances.

One particular area of focus and preparedness that seems to be ignored in all this: the spiritual. How does faith inform the responses to the issue?

If Jesus gave the world a heads up a week in advance of His coming, would people's focus be on buying disaster supplies? Would people think about their relationship with God in Christ Jesus or go into panic mode, wring their hands, moan and hide, thinking all is lost?



How might believers in Jesus guide the world's focus to be that of preparing for eternity? If one dies without believing in Jesus, that person's soul is lost! That is what Holy Scripture teaches.

In the Scripture above, David is preparing for the Temple to be built; Solomon, his son, is preparing to build it after David dies. The most important thing David instructs young Solomon to do is to set his mind and heart on seeking God. Before anything else is to take place, his focus must be to have his faith and trust in God intact!

The apostle Paul conveys to his congregation in Corinth that when their faith is sure, then the race against time to bring the good news of Jesus to all people

is the focus of life. This race is a matter of life and death; eternal life and death.

If you get the virus, are you focused on Jesus to walk with you through the course of events?

If you know somebody that gets sick, are you focused on Jesus in order to be an encourager for their faith? And if they are not a believer are you focused in Jesus to give you the words to guide them to faith in Jesus?

If you or I are focused enough to prepare for and live in these days of the pandemic, ought we also be prepared and focused to teach others how to be focused and prepared for eternity?

It shouldn't have to take a natural disaster nor a virus such as COVID19 to get us to focus on faith in Jesus and get prepared for eternity.

So, where is your focus today?

*Pastor Fred Westerhold*

As we enter into the new normal .... My prayer for all of you is to FOCUS on Jesus.... We need to be HUMBLE, REPENT, and RESTORE our faith.....because GOD'S GOT THIS!!!

NOW GO OUTSIDE, DISTANCE YOURSELF and GREET the next person with a "HI" and a smile through your mask!!!



**Shelly Hauge**  
LCMC Northwest District Chair

Pastor Fred Westerhold's article used by permission.



April 30th, 2020

Greetings to the Northwest District (LCMC),

**GRACE AND PEACE TO YOU FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

Today it is my joy to write another introductory letter for you. Since the Northwest District Annual Gathering in 2019 there have been several important developments within our district. The first is that I have been selected to represent the Northwest District as the District Coordinator. Together we have established our focus not only for the coming year, but are beginning to plan for the further future. Our current focus for the

## **FROM THE NORTHWEST DISTRICT COORDINATOR**

*“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”  
+Hebrews 11:1*

District Coordinator is three-fold, but will continue to develop.

First, as the District Coordinator, I will serve as a liaison between our regional district and the national association. Second, I pray to be a resource to congregations and pastors concerning the call process, intentional interim ministry, conflict resolution, education, programs, certification, and most importantly to be a person in prayer for those I am called to serve. Third, we seek to develop innovative ways for us to partner in ministry as a district. This includes anything from youth gatherings, retreats, local and international missions, seminaries, and our annual gatherings.

With our new challenges brought by COVID-19, the board has begun planning ways to use technology to bring us together in mass. After surveying congregations throughout the district we learned that most have the capability to participate in live or recorded

video streaming. We will use this to our advantage. At the same time, face-to-face fellowship cannot be replaced by this. Not everyone can or will participate on the internet. We must not forget that our call is to go out rather than stay in. Technology will be one of many gifts we seek to use, but we must not stop here.

Please pray for me as I enter into this new responsibility. There is not enough thanks that I can give to both Barb Fagley and Moe Bessey. These two women as previous District Coordinators have both paved the way and will continue to advocate for the district and every congregation in it. If I can be of any help to you as a pastor or member of a Northwest District congregation please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ, **Rev. Drew S. Nelson**  
PO Box 883  
Conrad, MT 59425  
(406) 278-3934  
dsnbygrace@gmail.com



## **Meet the newest member of our LCMC Northwest District**

**Faith Lutheran Church is located in Great Falls, MT,** and has been a member of the LCMC since 2010.

Rev. Ken Waag has served as the senior pastor here since 1994.

Travis Powers has been a stalwart as the Youth and Family Director there while also working toward his own seminary education. They are also supported by vital staff to assist and participate in ministry with them.

March 18, 2018, marked the start of a 52-week building project that placed this congregation into a beautiful new building, now finished, that you should go see.

Faith Lutheran Church serves as a hub for regional Montana LCMC pastors to meet monthly and invites you to take part. Locally, this congregation serves every age group and continues to give Word and Sacrament to those they are sent. This includes the Sunday morning worship services that

are live-streamed online throughout the community and world.

Finally, they are deeply invested in local, national, and international missions, and have the intention of giving to our region as much as they know will be received. Please, join us in thanksgiving and in welcoming every person at Faith Lutheran Church, Great Falls, to the Northwest District and always include them in our prayers.

—Rev. Drew S. Nelson



**Mot Hedges**  
Richland Lutheran  
Richland, WA

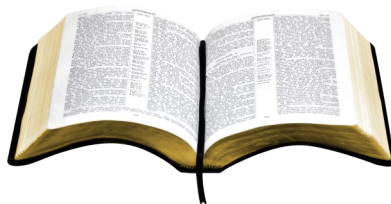
## Virtual Communion – Is it acceptable?

At our last NW District Council meeting the topic of “Virtual Communion” was discussed. Since government restrictions have prevented churches from holding traditional services in their sanctuaries, many churches are providing services on-line. Many of the LCMC churches holding on-line services have the pastor perform the words of institution for Holy Communion and allow the people to take the bread and wine/juice that they have prepared in their homes.

The following question was raised: Is it acceptable to allow people to take communion at home? It was then suggested that someone should write an article for the newsletter. As a lay person with no theological training, raised Methodist with no exposure to Luther’s Small Catechism, writing this article required a lot of research and reading.

### What does the Bible say about the Lord’s Supper?

Matthew 26:26-29  
Mark 14:22-25  
Luke 22:14-22  
1 Corinthians 10:16  
1 Corinthians 11:23-25  
John 6:35-59



The Lord’s Supper was instituted by the authority of Jesus Christ. Its proper use was reinforced by Paul in 1 Corinthians. The Bible does not specify who is to administer Holy Communion.

### What does Church Doctrine Say about the Lord’s Supper?

#### Excerpt from the Book of Concord on the Lord’s Supper

Now, as to the consecration, we believe, teach, and confess that no work of man or recitation of the minister [of the church] produces this presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, but that this is to be ascribed only and alone to the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Excerpt from the Large Catechism on the Lord’s Supper

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in and under the bread and wine which we Christians are commanded by the Word of Christ to eat and to drink. And as we have said of Baptism that it is not simple water, so here also we say the Sacrament is bread and wine, but not mere bread and wine, such as are ordinarily served at the table, but bread and wine comprehended in, and connected with, the Word of God. It is the Word (I say) which makes and distinguishes this Sacrament, so that it is not mere bread and wine, but is, and is called, the body and blood of Christ... If the Word be joined to the element it becomes a Sacrament... The Word must make a Sacrament of the element, else it remains a mere element. Now, it is not the word or ordinance of a prince or emperor, but of the sublime Majesty, at whose feet all creatures should

fall, and affirm it is as He says, and accept it with all reverence fear, and humility... Now here stands the Word of Christ: Take, eat; this is my body; Drink ye all of it; this is the new testament in my blood, etc. Here we abide, and would like to see those who will constitute themselves His masters, and make it different from what He has spoken. It is true, indeed, that if you take away the Word or regard it without the words, you have nothing but mere bread and wine. But if the words remain with them as they shall and must, then, in virtue of the same, it is truly the body and blood of Christ. For as the lips of Christ say and speak, so it is, as He can never lie or deceive. Hence it is easy to reply to all manner of questions about which men are troubled at the present time, such as this one: Whether even a wicked priest can minister at, and dispense, the Sacrament, and whatever other questions like this there may be. For here we conclude and say: Even though a knave takes or distributes the Sacrament, he receives the true Sacrament, that is, the true body and blood of Christ, just as truly as he who [receives or] administers it in the most worthy manner. For it is not founded upon the holiness of men, but upon the Word of God. And as no saint upon earth,

*Continued on page 5*



**Virtual Communion, continued from page 4**

yea, no angel in heaven, can make bread and wine to be the body and blood of Christ, so also can no one change or alter it, even though it be misused. For the Word by which it became a Sacrament and was instituted does not become false because of the person or his unbelief. For He does not say: If you believe or are worthy, you receive my body and blood, but: Take, eat and drink; this is my body and blood. Likewise: Do this (namely,

what I now do, institute, give, and bid you take). That is as much as to say, No matter whether you are worthy or unworthy, you have here His body and blood by virtue of these words which are added to the bread and wine. Only note and remember this well; for upon these words rest all our foundation, protection, and defense against all errors and deception that have ever come or may yet come.



While traditionally the pastor is the one that would administer the Lord's Supper, it does not appear to be a requirement. In summary, I found nothing in scripture or church doctrine that should prevent people from taking Holy Communion in their homes if it is properly administered. —**Mot Hedges**

---

## **Connecting the Dots in the Northwest District and the Implications**

Have you been to the <http://www.lcmc.net> website and looked at their Directory Map??? There are lots of dots!!!

Each dot represents a congregation. If you zoom in on our (very large) NW District, one thing that is noticed is there are several clusters of congregations in relative close proximity to each other.

**Puget Sound** - Stanwood WA to Morton WA

**Willamette** - Cathlamet WA to Eugene OR

**Wallowa** - Lone OR to Lacrosse WA

**Snake River** - Spokane Valley WA to Hamilton ID

**Yellowstone** - Belgrade MT to Billings MT

**Glacier** - Ruyard MT to Great Falls MT

**Fort Peck** - Nashua MT to Outlook MT

**Wheatland** - Ponoka AB to Leader SK

**NOTE:** There are also churches in Canada, Alaska, Idaho, and Montana that aren't close to the clusters listed above.

What are the implications of this?

#1: Pastoral connections - There are pastoral groups currently meeting in the Willamette Valley and in the Tacoma area.

Pastoral leadership can be difficult, especially in these current times. Pastors connecting with pastors either by phone, Zoom, or in person, can be a great boon for ideas, support, and spiritually lifting each other up.

#2: Church leadership - The sharing of ideas for "how do we do . . .?" This can be very helpful in worship outreach, administering the sacraments, how churches will open up, how they reach out to the community, and what this means to youth programs and Christian education offerings.

A discussion at our most recent NW District Board meeting took place on this topic. The board did not want to dictate to churches what cluster or group a congregation is in. Hopefully, this type of connection would come from within the congregations themselves. **This is a very good time to make that phone call or email to a sister church that is nearby to begin the dialogue.**

For more information, any of the board members can be contacted on this concept. You are also welcome to contact me:

Bruce Grohn, 40261 Providence Drive, Scio, Oregon 97374.

541-401-9406 [bggrohn@yahoo.com](mailto:bggrohn@yahoo.com)



**Bruce Grohn**

Christ Community  
Lebanon, OR



**Pr Eric Hullstrom**  
Living Word Lutheran  
Puyallup, WA

## Living Word Lutheran Church — now what?

What a year it has been. In 2019 I wrote an article for this newsletter relating our discernment process in purchasing a new building. Now we have a building and we have moved in but now what? Life has not been the same -- and I thank God for that -- but now things are changing again. God brought us to this new building, in this new community, but now we have COVID-19. *Oh God, now what?* Many are asking that question, including us, so allow me to address what Living Word is doing in the here and now as we move forward.

Living Word Lutheran Church was formerly a "Church in a Box" for 10 years, but on Reformation Sunday 2019 – our 10-year anniversary – all that changed. We had keys in hand for our new building. It seemed surreal. That day, October 27, was busy. In addition to my family celebrating my son's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, Living Word celebrated Reformation Sunday, our 10-year anniversary as a congregation and dedicated our new building and ministry to

the glory of God. It was a memorable day. There was so much excitement. The following week we began moving our offices into the building, but it was not yet ready for large group gatherings. Much work needed to be done to prepare the building for full-time occupancy. Thankfully, it was work that could be done by the members. During the first week of December we received the "all clear" from the fire marshal and on Sunday, December 15 we held our first worship service in our new building (correct that, **God's** new building). We worked through various kinks in smoothing out the flow of worship and everyday operations, but things fell into place quite nicely.

Enter COVID-19...

After worship on March 15 we suspended onsite worship services. Sunday, May 3 was our seventh Sunday not worshipping in the sanctuary, after twelve Sundays worshipping there. So much has changed for us. We worked so hard to set up this new building, and now it is just my office manager and myself in the building. Worship livestreams happen from my children's toy room in my home due to the poor Wi-Fi service at the church building. We are holding meetings via Zoom, we have an FM transmitter on order so we can hold drive-in worship

services and I am increasing my presence online – casting a net further and further out for the Kingdom. One could say that the virus was bad timing for us, but the way I look at it, God is using this to refine what He began 10 years ago with the charter group that formed Living Word Lutheran Church.

Yes, we were in the process of beautifying our building, but now God is in the process of beautifying this ministry. I am reminded of a camp song I sang as a camper at Green Lake Bible Camp in central Minnesota with this lyric, *"The Church it is the people, living out their lives. Called, enlightened, sanctified, for the work of Jesus Christ."* And that is what we are, the church "out there". We are the deployed church in mission not **for**, but **with** Christ. The Church is not about a building – it never was. And so, this former "Church in a Box" congregation finds itself back in a similar situation -- a church without a building. In some ways we were prepared for this. Now we wait to see what God will do to refine and beautify what He started. And when we return someday to this building God gifted us with, I can hardly wait to see the work God has done and will continue to do in order to more fully beautify this mission. It will be like move-in day all over again. To God be the glory, always and forever, Amen.



**lcmc**  
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

**20th Annual National Gathering**  
**October 4-7, 2020**  
**in Arden Hills, MN**

## LCMC-NW.com – Please check your listing

As you probably know, the website not only has information about the LCMC, but it also lists all the current members for the Northwest District.

I want to be sure that the information on the “District Members” page is accurate and up to date. Each member’s listing can have the following information displayed:

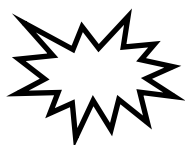
- 1 photo of the Church
- Church Name
- Physical Address
- Mailing Address
- Senior Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Lay or Interim Pastor
- Church Phone
- Email Address
- Link to your Website



**Steve Hrusa**  
NW District  
Webmaster

Please check your current listing to see if the information needs to be updated. It would be great to have a photo for each member’s listing. Perhaps you want to change the one that’s there to a newer one or you realize that your listing has none and want to have one added.

In any case, if you want to update your listing, please click on the “online form” link on the District Members page. This will submit the information to myself (the webmaster). I will then apply the requested update to your listing and email you when completed so you can review it.



## Pre-Retirement Retreat for Pastors and Spouses in the LCMC October 7-9, 2020

Basically, in conversations with many Pastors, I sense that there is a need for a Pre-Retirement Retreat in the LCMC. Last summer I surveyed all the retired LCMC Pastors, and the categories of this retreat reflect their feedback when I asked them, “What do you know now that you wished you knew before you retired?”

- Caring for your faith life in retirement
- Respecting Pastoral Protocol
- Change of Identity when you retire
- Future Serving Opportunities
- and yes, the most often stated....Finances in Retirement

I selected Camp Okoboji in NW Iowa for 3 reasons.

1. It is a 3 hour drive from our next Annual Gathering this fall.
2. I knew Rod Quanbeck would be terrific to work with as the director of the camp.
3. I wanted this event to have a retreat feel to it, versus classes.

### Retreat cost:

If Registration is by June 30, 2020 it is \$100 for the Pastor and \$50 for the spouse.

Note: due to a gift, the first 10 spouses can come for free if registered by June 30th.

If Registration is after June 30, 2020, then it is \$125 for the Pastor and \$100 for the spouse. Plus, if you would prefer to have a cabin instead of being in the lodge, that is an extra \$75.

I pray that this serves a number of Pastors and spouses and helps them better prepare for the years ahead. No minimum age to attend.

Peace,

**John**

Senior Pastor John P. Nelson

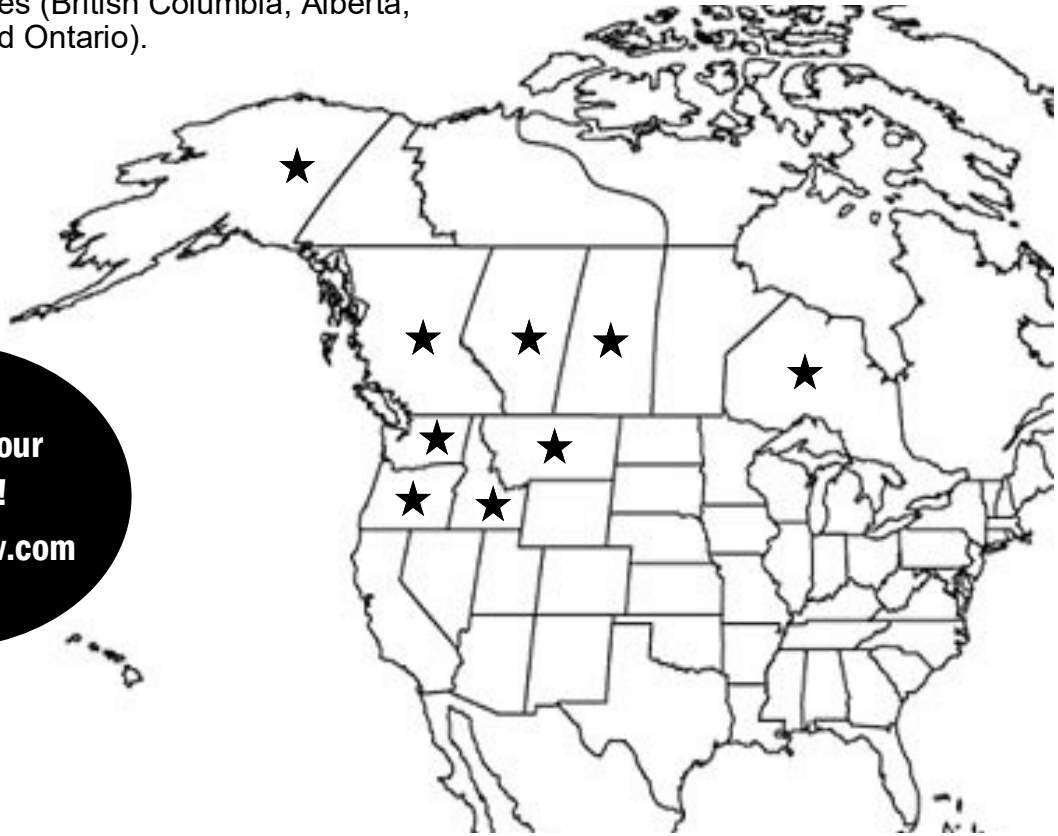
Hosanna! Lutheran Church LCMC, St. Charles, IL

**To Register, call:**

Chris Baugh  
1.800.OKOBOJI

**LCMC Northwest District includes. . .**

Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and  
Canadian Provinces (British Columbia, Alberta,  
Saskatchewan and Ontario).



**Check out our  
Website!  
[www.lcmc-nw.com](http://www.lcmc-nw.com)**