



VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

# The Happenings

## USA — Canada

JUNE 2023



Greetings to the Northwest District LCMC members. Wow! Another Northwest District Annual Gathering has wrapped up and what an event it was! We were inspired and uplifted by our guest speaker, Pastor Julie Smith, the LCMC Coordinator for Districts and Fellowship. I asked Julie to inspire us and as usual, she didn't let us down. Her message was one of encouragement along with sharing all the great things that are happening in the LCMC Districts.

Thanks to Pastor Julie for her great support to our Northwest District.

Rev. Greg Finke and his wife Susan, our keynote speakers offered us practical insights into how to recognize where Jesus is already at work in our neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools and how to join with him in what he is already up to. Their presentation was uplifting and kept us on the edge of our seats waiting for what was to come. Thanks, Greg and Susan for your outstanding message!

THANKS to April Johnson and Ken Olson for all the thoughtful planning and leadership that went into our Youth Impact track. It was great to see some young Jesus followers involved in the Northwest District gathering! We have established a new Youth Team to coordinate activities for the youth of the Northwest District. While their primary focus will be planning and leading the Youth Impact Track at our Annual Gathering, we are also looking forward to promoting some regional events in the future. If you have ideas or thoughts, please feel free to contact Ken Olson, April Johnson or Pastor Travis Powers.

Please help me in giving the Annual Gathering Team a big THANK YOU for all their hard work and dedication to the Northwest District this year. Awesome Job!! This year's team included: Pastor Carol Ann Buelow, Mot Hedges, April Johnson, Ken Olson, Pastor Fred Westerhold, and Pastor Donna Zipp. This is the team that makes an Annual Gathering each year possible. Every last one of them, so gifted, faithful, and sacrificial with their time and service. Thank you to Camp Lutherhaven and their amazing staff. Of course, no Lutheran event would be a success without snacks and we had plenty! Thanks to each and every one of you who donated goodies for us to eat. We're so grateful for your generosity!!!!

Another big THANK YOU to our valued Ministry Partners- Lutheran Asian Ministries; Harvest Workers; The Master's Institute; Blessman International; Preparing for Amazement Ministries; the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute and Wilderness Ranch! We gratefully acknowledge the unique and trustworthy ministry resources each of you offers. From faith formation in camp settings to theological training to healthy church resources and life-changing opportunities for service – each of you help to equip and empower God's people for lives of discipleship and service. And it's done with imagination, creativity, and enthusiasm! Thank you for your desire to help God's people in the Northwest.

### LCMC

#### Northwest District Council

#### Executive Committee

Jonathan Davis, Chair

Pr. Donna Zipp, Vice Chair

Pr. Carol Ann Buelow, Sec.

Mot Hedges, Treasurer

#### Council Members

Pr. Grant Crichton

Pr. Marney Fritts

Pr. Craig Nissen

Ken Olson

Pr. Travis Powers

Pr. Fred Westerhold

Pr. Greg Wightman

#### District Coordinator

Pr. Horacio Castillo

Pr. Drew Nelson

#### Webmaster

Steve Hruza

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The campfire evenings were the BEST! We gathered, sang and joyfully celebrated the unity we find in our LORD JESUS CHRIST as we worshipped with old friends and new acquaintances. Thank You Pastor Fred Westerhold and Ken Olson for playing this fine music!

And the biggest THANK YOU goes to YOU, all who attended the event! It's your presence and engagement that truly make this event meaningful. I hope to see you all in St. Charles, Missouri, October 1-4, 2023, at the Saint Charles Convention Center for our upcoming LCMC Annual Gathering & Convention.

Blessing and Peace to all my brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Jonathan Davis*, Chair Northwest District LCMC



We're about to set forth on a new adventure and we would love for you to come along! The LCMC has grown quite a bit since the first Annual Gathering and Convention in 2001 and with that growth comes new challenges, questions, and opportunities. Are you interested in where we are headed?

The theme for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Gathering & Convention is "All Hands on Deck" and it's an opportunity for LCMC congregations to join together and intentionally look at who we are and where we need to go from here. The nickname for this new season of life and ministry together is LCMC 3.0.

If there's one thing that is true about ships, it's that they are not made to stay in the harbor. In order to be able to take on the challenge of navigating new waters, the LCMC needs a strong and functioning crew. Every congregation, leader and member of this association is important and has something to offer to fulfill the call that God has given us!

Please consider coming to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Gathering & Convention at the Saint Charles Convention Center in St. Charles, MO. Registration is open now.

See: <https://www.lcmc.net/23-ag/registration> for more details.



### **Nice to have you on board!**

As the Northwest District grows and changes, we are always eager to bring new voices and perspectives on to the District Council. This year we are welcoming two new members – Pastor Grant Crichton and Pastor Marney Fritts. Thank you both for being willing to serve in this capacity!



**Pastor Grant Crichton** grew up in Washington. While attending Pacific Lutheran University, Grant felt the call into ministry. He began his ministry as a Four Square pastor planting and serving churches in Washington, Oregon and Saskatchewan before accepting the call to serve as an Associate Pastor at Victory Lutheran Church in Medicine Hat, Alberta. With a heart for missions and outreach, Grant holds great excitement for the future and what the Lord is doing in the Northwest! He is married to Marta and they are blessed with two wonderful boys.

**Rev. Dr. Marney Fritts** is the pastor of Tahoma Lutheran Church <https://www.tahomalutheranchurch.org/>, a mission start in Maple Valley, WA. Since 2007, she and her husband, Barry, have served congregations in varying capacities in Pennsylvania, Montana, Nebraska, and Washington. For the last 12 years, she has taught systematic theology to M.Div. students of St. Paul Lutheran Seminary. She enjoys reading, writing, teaching, preaching, gardening, watching her kids grow and spending time with her family. Together, they enjoy cooking, grilling, camping, kayaking, hiking, and spending time at the ocean. She is also a regular contributor to *Connections* magazine, a publication of Sola Publishing, and *Simul*, an academic journal of St. Paul Lutheran Seminary. She, her husband, Barry, and their two children have lived in the Maple Valley for 6 years. She looks forward to serving the NW District.



## Northwest District Annual Gathering 2023

Amid the towering pines and the aromas of conifer, lake and food, approximately 104 people were present for a weekend of activity at Lutherhaven. The setting provided a restful yet invigorating atmosphere for our Annual Northwest District Gathering, May 19 – 21.

Our Guest Speaker, Pastor Julie Smith brought us up to speed on the continuing mission of LCMC; changes in leadership positions, availability of pastors, and a “new wave” of congregations joining with LCMC. We are a church which continues to preach, reach and teach the uncompromising truth of the Word of God rather than formulating social statements. God’s Word is our unchanging authority upon which we stand. Pastor Julie always has pertinent information for us and a challenge, comfort and hope for our future. There have been many changes in society and the church since the COVID lockdowns took place, but God’s Word remains constant and true – for all generations.

Our keynote presenter, Rev. Greg Finke, and his wife, Susan - cofounders of **dwelling 1:14** - “tag teamed” a delightful journey through a MISSION ROAD MAP. It’s all about Mission, Discipleship & Multiplication. The model is Jesus’ own: **Tell Me How** = Hearing the teachings of Jesus; **Show Me How** = Seeing the way Jesus lived out His teachings for the good of others so I can imitate Him; **Show Others How** = Show others how to do the same.

Greg and Susan presented practical ways to join Jesus in His mission; fielding five core questions to encourage reflection and conversation during the day and throughout the week. This process involves one’s own relationship with Jesus; joining Jesus in His ministry. Then, the natural progress would be to filter those experiences into everyday encounters with “pre-Christian” friends – especially within your neighborhood.

“It’s not what you know that will change your neighborhood, but what you do with what you know.” – Greg Finke

We praised our Lord Jesus in worship and evening campfires. We celebrated fellowship, encouragement and ideas; exchanging information and wisdom with friends old and new through meals, private and group “huddles” that popped up here and there.

The work of the District (our business meeting) had several highlights; celebrating milestones, looking back over the past year, vision casting our goals and the election of (and not so new) Council members. We welcome Grant Crichton and Marney Fritts to the board, and Carol Ann Buelow agreed to return for her 2<sup>nd</sup> term. We are excited about our future as the “new” Council continues the work and ministry with our district. There is an atmosphere of joy and a “let’s get to work and get it done” attitude.

Our District initially passed a change in our Bylaws (which will need the approval of a majority of our member congregations before next year’s Gathering), and we approved continuing our Congregations Family Album and establishing a District Scrapbook.

God’s peace and blessings to you all,  
Pastor Fred Westerhold

# NORTHWEST DISTRICT ANNUAL GATHERING 2023







# CAMP LUTHERHAVEN



## Northwest District Starts Digitization Project

It's a leap forward for the NW District! The LCMC NW District recently established a partnership with Global Archives in Big Fork, MT to create an on-line document library for our LCMC NW District records. This will ensure the security and preservation of all district records while enabling all board members to easily access, search and share them from their home computers and laptops. Permanent records and photographs are now being identified, labeled, scanned and uploaded. Dusty crates and boxes in the secretary's closet will be eliminated and this will enable seamless transitions whenever board members change.

If you or your congregation would like to have more information about this project, please contact Pastor Carol Ann Buelow at [buelow@aol.com](mailto:buelow@aol.com)



### **The Hand of God**

Little Philip was walking home in the rain with his mother following Sunday worship. It finally stopped raining as they rounded the corner, where to their surprise and delight appeared a vivid double rainbow in the sky.

"Doesn't it look like an artist painted this rainbow?" his mother exclaimed. "I bet God painted this just for you!"

"Yes," replied Philip, "God did it, and he did it left handed."

Confused, his mother asked him, "What makes you say God did this with his left hand?"

"Well," said Philip, "we learned in Sunday School that Jesus sits on God's right hand."

The Happenings is a publication of the Northwest District of LCMC.

We welcome comments, suggestions for stories and submissions from our members.



**His  
Grace Is  
ENOUGH**  
2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

