



VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1

The Happenings

USA — Canada

JANUARY 2024



Dear members of the Northwest District LCMC,

Warmest greeting in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I pray this finds you well and ready to take on 2024.

Every year I look forward to the LCMC Annual Gathering with great anticipation and I am happy to report that this year's gathering did not disappoint. We have so many outstanding preachers and leaders in the LCMC. Our keynote speakers and break-out session leaders encouraged us to speak, live and share the Gospel in our churches, our homes, our communities and throughout the world. It was a fun-filled week of worship with the most inviting group of fellow Christians I've ever met. It was a real treat to join members of the Joy Community Church in O'Fallon, Missouri for their Church in the Bar and it opened my eyes to the joy and fellowship we can bring to people that have yet to find our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What a beautiful ministry!

Since returning from Annual Gathering in St. Louis, Missouri we have been busy planning the Northwest LCMC Annual gathering that will be held at Christ Community Lutheran Church in Lebanon, Or. The Annual Gathering sub-committee has put together a fun packed weekend for the members of our district. Our theme this year is "I Love to Tell the Story" (Isaiah 55.10-11) and we are delighted to announce that the Rev. Dr. Ebassa Berhanu will be our guest speaker. Pastor Ebassa escaped from Ethiopia when the Communist government was going house to house taking boys for the army. He presently serves as an LCMC pastor in Torrance, California. The event will be held on April 12th and 13th 2024 and you won't want to miss it!

It brings me much sadness to inform the district that Pastor Drew Nelson has decided to resign from his District Coordinator position to pursue a new adventure. We wish Drew and his family great success in their new endeavor and our thoughts and prayers will be with them.

Upon Drew's resignation we formed a District Coordinator sub-committee which includes Jon Davis, Pastor Donna Zipp, Pastor Jon Anderson, and Moe Bessey. Our thoughts are we need to rethink the duties of the District Coordinator to cover the vast territory of the Northwest District. Please feel free to reach out to any member if you have ideas that may help us improve the duties of our coordinators. I would like to thank Pastor Horacio Castillo for his continued service and helpful input on this matter.

Hope to see you all at the Northwest Annual Gathering at Christ Community Lutheran Church in Lebanon, Oregon on April 12th and 13th 2024.

May God continue to bless you and keep you in His grace.

Jonathan Davis LCMC NW District Chair

LCMC

Northwest District Council

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District Coordinator

Pr. Horacio Castillo

Webmaster

Steve Hruza

... GATHERING AGENDA ...**Friday – April 12**

- 9:00 – 1:00 PM NW Gathering Event Registration and Fellowship
- 9:30 – 11:00 AM Pastor's Gathering (includes spouses) with light refreshments provided
Rev. Christian Huntley, LCMC Coord., Leadership and Pastoral Development
- 11:00 AM NW District Choir Practice (Choir Director: Karla Kaleva).
All are welcome to join!
- 12:00 PM Lunch on your own
- 1:00 PM Opening Praise / Worship and Prayer
- 1:15 PM Opening of General Session / NW District Business Meeting
- 2:00 PM Equipping and Empowering People for Ministry (20 minutes each)
- Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT) – Leon Miles
- Harvest Workers – Bryce Formwalt, Director
- Saint Paul Lutheran Seminary – Rev. Marney Fritts
- 3:00 PM Break
- 3:30 PM Additional Exhibitor Introductions / Short Overviews
- 4:00 PM Key Note Speaker: Dr. Ebassa Berhanu - Focus: What God Has Done
- 5:30 - 6:30 PM Dinner
- 6:45 PM Hand in Hand Farm Ministry – David Berger and Athena Perry
- 7:00 PM Evening Worship with Communion. Message: Rev. Elvin Borg
Includes collection for designated charity – Hand in Hand Farm Ministry

Saturday – April 13

- 8:00 AM Light Refreshments Available
- 8:30 AM Opening Praise & Worship
- 9:00 AM Key Note Speaker: Dr. Ebassa Berhanu - Focus: What God Is Doing Now
- 10:00 AM Break
- 10:30 AM LCMC Updates – Rev. Christian Huntley and Rev. Julie Smith
- 12:00 Noon Lunch
- 1:00 PM Youth Impact Update
- 1:15 PM Reopen Business Meeting (election of new board member)
- 2:00 PM Key Note Speaker: Dr. Ebassa Berhanu – Focus: What God Will Do
- 3:00 PM Closing Remarks: Jon Davis, Chair
- 3:30 PM Break
- 4:00 PM Closing Worship with Communion, Message: Rev. Christian Huntley
- 5:00 PM Final Dinner
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LCMC NW Gathering Registration

April 12 - 13, 2024 • Christ Community Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Oregon

I Love to Tell the Story

So shall my words be that go out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11

Mailing Address:	Names of Other Attendees:
Name: _____	Name: _____
Address: ----- _____	Name: _____
_____	Name: _____
Phone: _____	Name: _____
Email: _____	Name: _____
Church: _____	Name: _____

Registration (\$ 75.00/adult):

No. attending: _____ Total Submitted: \$ _____

Childcare Needed: Yes, No. of children _____

I/we plan on attending the following meals:

Friday, April 12: Dinner

Saturday, April 13: Lunch Dinner

Food Restrictions or Allergies:

Gluten Dairy Nuts Other (please specify:) _____

Registration Submittal (Registration ends April 8, 2024):

I prefer to print my registration form and pay by check

Please make checks payable to: **LCMC NW District**.

Submit registration form and check to: Mot Hedges, Richland Lutheran Church, 901 Van Giesen Street, Richland, WA 99354.

I prefer to register and pay online at www.richlandlutheran.org

Gathering Check-in: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm April 12th, 8:00 – 9:00 am April 13th

Lodging information and the Gathering agenda may be found at www.lcmc-nw.com

For more information, contact Mot Hedges at motleyhedges@charter.net

NW Annual Gathering Hotel and RV Information

Best Western Premier Boulder Falls Inn (4.7 stars) - Phone: 541-451-1000

We have rooms blocked out in Lebanon for the Annual Gathering. Just tell them you are with the NW District Annual Gathering – LCMC at Christ Community Lutheran Church. This is a very nice hotel and breakfast is included. \$149.99 per night for a deluxe king or double queens. **To receive the discounted rate, reservations must be called in and affirmed by March 14, 2024.**

Shanico Inn (3.3 stars) - Phone: 541-259-2601

Within walking distance of shops and restaurants, this basic, 2-story motel has clean rooms with kitchens, but no pool. Approximately \$75 – \$80 per night.

Valley Inn (2 star hotel) - Phone: 541-258-8184

Older property but pet friendly, and close to the church.

Waterloo County Park - Phone: 541-967-3917

We have 5 beautiful sites reserved at the Waterloo County Park, just five miles east of Lebanon right off Highway 20. This is a 120-acre park with water and electrical hookup located on the banks of the South Santiam River. If you need an RV spot, just let them know you are with the NW District Annual Gathering – LCMC at Christ Community Lutheran Church. **This reservation block will be held until March 31st.**

NW Annual Gathering Scholarships

The Northwest District has ten (10) scholarships of \$50 per family member, maximum \$200 per family that are available to help with the registration costs of the Gathering. Requests are on a first come first serve basis. To obtain a scholarship, please feel free to contact:

Mot Hedges at motleyhedges@charter.net

Or

**1821 Thayer Drive,
Richland, WA 99354**

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

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

News for “The Happenings”

We would love to hear what you are up to! If you or your congregation would like to include information in the next LCMC Northwest District newsletter, The Happenings, please submit to Carol Ann Buelow. Her email address is: buelow@aol.com

In light of current discussions several Northwest District Board members have been involved in regarding church polity, we thought the following letter published in the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ third quarter newsletter “By the Word” the LCMC from Pastor Randy Freund, Chair, LCMC Board of Trustees might be of interest to our readers:

The Mystery & Miracle of LCMC Polity

How many times have you been asked to explain LCMC polity? It might rise to the top of most-asked questions. The questions come in many ways. How are you organized? Who is in charge? Who has the authority to deal with errant congregations or pastors? How do you do global missions? What is a district? What is a fellowship? Most who join LCMC have come out of a mainline church denomination with some form of hierarchy or clear organizational structure. What I call “the experiment called LCMC” brings with it a flatline polity that has been greatly misunderstood and maligned. Yet, there are some things that are confusing, and LCMC is hardly above critique. I bring this up not only because of the challenges of “LCMC 3.0”, but also as we approach our 25th anniversary. It is a good time to return to our roots. (As an aside, a 25th anniversary book is in the works, designed to tell the story of LCMC.) The founding documents of LCMC contain solid, foundational theological and biblical roots that shape polity. But the questions still come. They are reasonable questions. They come naturally with growth. They are behind the work of LCMC 3.0. But there could be another way to think of this. Luther’s famous quote comes to mind: “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject of all, subject to all.” Isn’t this the freedom and accountability of LCMC’s polity? God’s right-hand and left-hand kingdom work is in play. It can be tricky, messy, and confusing. **Freedom and accountability can seem to work against each other.** But when they are held in tension and grounded by that third LCMC tenet, “Rooted in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions,” this creates disciples of the Great Commission. This is how we are organized. The church will always be a strange and mysterious organization. After all, the Holy Spirit “calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the church, and keeps it united.” So, there is no need to be defensive or apologize for the organization of the church, or our association of congregations.

There is a mystery and a miracle about how the church and this association hold together. Everything is grounded in the Word Alone. The mystery and miracle of the Word “accomplishes its purpose” and “succeeds in the thing for which it is sent.” This sounds like solid church polity.

In Christ, Pastor Randy Freund Chair, LCMC Board of Trustees

Next Annual Gathering:
LCMC 24th Annual Gathering & Convention
SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 2, 2024 | ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN
CHURCH | MARION, IA



In the Spotlight: American Lutheran Church – Kellogg, Idaho Craig Shorey Called as New Pastor



American Lutheran Church of Kellogg has extended the call to be pastor to Craig Shorey. The church has been a chartered Lutheran congregation for over 85 years and Pastor Shorey will be her 17th called pastor. American Lutheran Church of Kellogg is believed to be one of original charter congregations in the LCMC (2001); a founding member of the Lutheran group which purchased Camp Luther Haven and they have also mothered another church in the Silver Valley.

Pastor Craig and his wife Jamie are both public school teachers in the community and have three daughters named Grace (20), Faith (17) and Joy (7). Jamie was baptized at the American Lutheran Church of Kellogg when she was a child, and her parents were married in the church and members for many years. Jamie's mother and aunt currently attend the church also.

Craig is a second-generation minister. His parents, served for nearly 30 years as pastors until his dad passed away. Craig was a senior pastor for a decade among several congregation before teaching full time. This will be his first pastorate of a Lutheran Church and he'd be thrilled to share with you his journey into the Lutheran tradition.

The church celebrated his pastor call with an ordination and installation service on Sunday, January 14th at 3PM.

Melville Lutheran Church Calls New Pastor

Melville Lutheran Church (Melville, MT) is pleased to announce and welcome Roger Milheim as the church's new pastor. Roger and his wife Jean arrived in Melville on November 29. Roger took the pulpit on December 3 and Jean has already become active in the Melville Lutheran Church Women's group. Roger's installation is scheduled for January 28, 2024.



With grateful hearts, we welcome Pastor Craig and Pastor Roger into our Northwest District. We thank God for guiding and leading them to these beloved congregations and we pray that the Lord might bless their ministries abundantly.

Are you interested in some worship helps? Rev. Dr. Gary Wetzel has put together a free reference site which enables worship leaders to easily find scriptures which can be used in a service beginning with Calls to Worship and ending with Benedictions. These scriptures are indexed in many different ways. See: <https://worshippingwithgodsword.com/> if you are interested.