



Pacific Northwest DISTRICT

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

District President's Update

August 16, 2016

Fellow Called Workers in the PNW:

"Once you were alienated from God... But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation..."

- Col. 1:21-22

I trust your summers are going well. At this point, teachers are gearing up for new school years and pastors are ministry-planning for upcoming fall worship and Bible classes. May God bless your work as you proclaim the gospel in your preaching, teaching and reaching.

Here are a few updates to remember in your prayers this week:

- ✠ Thank God for blessing Redeemer in Yakima, WA with a new shepherd. Pastor Isaac Cherney was ordained and installed on July 10. On August 28, Lord willing, Pastor Cherney's wife, Andrea, will be installed as the new part-time teacher at Redeemer's Preschool. May God bless those ministries in central Washington;
- ✠ Praise God for his continued rich grace in gospel ministry at Messiah in Olympia, WA. On July 17, they celebrated their 25th Anniversary as a congregation. May our generous God bless them with many more years of his grace;
- ✠ In the first week of August, Pastor Chris Ewings returned the 2 Divine Calls he was holding (Spanish Prof. at MLS and New Mission start in Atlanta, GA). He will continue as the shepherd of both the Spanish and English congregations at Faith. On August 7, Miss Leah Snyder (MLC 2016) was installed as the Kindergarten Teacher. Faith is finishing up the long and dreaded project of retro-fitting their entire facility with a fire-code sprinkling system. Pray God bless the timely conclusion of this project as well as the ongoing preaching and teaching ministries at Faith in Anchorage, AK;
- ✠ Retired Pastor Jim Oldfield (Faith, Anchorage, AK) continues to battle cancer (brain). Jim and Colleen are grateful for everyone's prayers and they appreciate getting emails from friends and colleagues around the District and Synod. Jim remains strong in God's grace and cherishes the promises in Christ Jesus. He looks forward to when God might call him home to heaven. We pray that God continue to hold the Oldfield's firm in their faith;

- ✚ On August 2, Pastor Fred Voss returned the Divine Call to serve as Civilian Chaplain in Europe. We are thankful for his ongoing ministry at Shepherd of the Hills in Anchorage, AK;

- ✚ We praise the Lord of the Church on behalf of Beautiful Savior in Corvallis, OR. On August 7, Pastor Luke Tembreull (Our Savior, Two Rivers, WI) accepted their Divine Call. Lord willing, he will be installed toward the end of September. Thanks to Craig Wasser for his vacancy work there – may God bless the Tembreull’s upcoming move and future gospel ministry in Corvallis;

- ✚ May the Lord give wisdom, direction and peace to Pastor Daniel Lange (Light of Life, Covington, WA) as he wrestles with the only “open” Divine Call in our District. He holds a Call to be Associate Pastor at Resurrection in Rochester, MN;

- ✚ Many thanks to retired pastors Ted Lambert and Kieth Kuschel who are tag-teaming to do pastor-assistance work at Holy Trinity in Des Moines, WA. Pastor Lambert served for several weeks this summer and Pastor Kuschel will be assisting at HT from Sept. to Thanksgiving this fall. Since last January’s departure of Pastor Mark Schewe, Pastor Tom Voss has been shouldering the work there alone with no immediate plans for a permanent replacement. As “summer vacation” draws to a close, HT’s school has been very blessed with increased enrollment. In fact, they are looking for emergency staff assistance in their lower grades. They have also been blessed this upcoming school year with some new teachers. Miss Megan Ungemach (EC Dir., MLC 2016) and Mr. Geron Brown (upper grades) are new this year (installations set for 9/11). We pray for God’s continued goodness to these workers and the ministries that Holy Trinity carries out just south of Seattle;

- ✚ Back in April, Cross of Christ in Boise, ID was granted WELS Hm. Mission’s manpower funding for their multi-site mission effort in Meridian, ID (west Boise). After several declined Calls this past summer, today the COP assigned the final Seminary Candidate, Kurt Wetzel to be Associate Pastor at Cross of Christ (Boise Campus). This is a true blessing from God to the PNW corner of his kingdom. Unlike some areas of our Synod, our District is not overflowing with retired workers or ministry-trained spouses sitting on the sidelines who can readily serve. The Lord has lovingly provided our District’s churches and schools with the workers they need – and for that we are extremely grateful to him;

- ✚ Finally, we pray for Pastor Thad Bitter (Grace, Portland, OR) and his family. Thad’s brother, Gregg, was a pastor at St. Paul LC in Ridgeland, WI. On August 12, Gregg suffered an unexpected heart attack and God called him home to heaven. Gregg, 47, leaves behind his wife and 3 children. We ask our Risen Savior to comfort the Bitter Family with his victory over sin, death and the grave. We also pray for the Bitters’ safe travels back and forth to the Midwest. We also praise and thank God for the comfort they will receive from his powerful promises in Jesus. (Visitation at St. Paul, 3 - 11th St., Ridgeland, WI 54763 on Wed., Aug. 17 from 5-8PM; Christian Funeral: Thur., Aug. 18 at 2PM at Redeemer, 520 E. Orchard Beach Ln., Rice Lake, WI 54868; visitation from 12N until the service begins.)
“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord...” Rev. 14:13

*Serving our Savior Together,
 Pastor John W. Steinbrenner
 PNW District President*