



NORTHDALÉ NEWS

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Dear friends in our Savior,

So what does the future hold for us? Why would God do this to us right now? These are questions you might be asking since Mark Thiesfeldt announced that he accepted his call and will be leaving us this summer. This leaves so much uncertainty! From a human standpoint, the situation might appear rather dour. What will happen to our school ministry? Will we lose families? How will we afford to keep going if we lose too many families? We easily get scared when things get uncertain. Doubts run through our minds and fear starts to reign. What will happen?

We are not the first to face this kind of doubt and uncertainty. God had sent his judgment on the people of Judah because they had turned away from him and failed to heed warning after wanting to come back. The mighty Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple and killed most of its people. They had preserved a small remnant whom they had taken into exile in Babylon. All the while God had threatened his punishment, he had promised to save a remnant of people who had been faithful to him through whom he would bring the promised Messiah. These people who had remained faithful to God were confused about how to feel about the exile. They had been faithful to God yet still had gotten caught up in the destruction. They had lost family and friends, their homeland and Temple and now they were residing in a foreign land. Add to that false prophets who were saying that God must not love them to let them go through this difficult time. They were having a hard time accepting what had happened. To these people, God through the prophet Jeremiah said, *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the Lord, “and will bring you back to the place from where I carried you into exile.”*

God had a plan for them—a plan that wouldn’t harm them or hurt them, but a plan that would bring blessings for them. They would have to wait awhile—about 70 years—but God would bring them back to their homeland. God’s plan for them grew out of his infinite wisdom and were laid in the foundation of his eternal love. God was teaching them the lesson of no longer trusting in themselves and their cunning and power to maintain their national strength. They would learn to lean on the Lord with all their hearts and would see firsthand how God blesses those who lean wholly on him. They would learn that no matter how dark the hour, no matter how distant and obscure the object of their hope might seem, God works for the good of those who love him. With determined step and sure confidence the exiles could face their future.

As we look to the uncertainties of the future, we can do so with the same confidence. Though God has not yet revealed his plans to us, he has them. The plans God has for us grow out of his infinite wisdom which is far superior to ours and were laid in the foundation of his eternal love for us and those souls whom he plans to reach through us. Whether we thought we needed it or not, God is teaching us not to trust in ourselves or our own cunning or plans to grow our school but in his almighty strength and power. We will learn how to completely lean on him and his love and trust that when we do, his blessings will be there.

We don’t yet see the blessings God intends for us through this time of uncertainty, but we trust they are there. We don’t yet know God’s plans for us, but he does. So we make our plans with the best of our abilities and the information we have trusting that God will bring his blessings in his way according to his time. God already knows the next man who will serve as our principal. We trust he will reveal that man to us in his time. Trusting fully in God’s power and God’s plan, Pastor Charlie Vannieuwenhoven

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

One Size Fits None

If you have even a generic estate planning document in place, such as a will, you are in a better position with your plans than most people, since less than half of people even have a will. However, you are a unique individual, and one size does not fit all when it comes to estate planning. There is no one like you with the exact same possessions and plans to provide for your family and the Lord's work after you're with our Lord.



That is why WELS offers the services of local Christian giving counselors to help each household prepare a multi-faceted estate plan covering their personal situation and goals. A giving counselor can help you consider things you might not have thought about. Once he works with you to determine the specifics of what you would like done, he can help you find a reputable, Christian estate planning attorney near you who will take care of the final steps of making your plans official.

In addition, WELS offers a booklet titled, "Estate Planning for the Christian Steward," to help you prepare for your meeting. Topics include writing a Christian preamble, considering the people in your life and the blessings God has given you, and determining your planners. There are tear-out forms you can use to provide your planners and your family with all the information they need.

This is all available to you at no cost or obligation. The goal is to assist fellow Christians with formally documenting their wishes to support their families and the Lord's work. To receive a copy of the estate planning booklet or to speak with our congregation's Christian giving counselor, call WELS Ministry of Christian Giving at 800-827-5482.

MISSIONS HIGHLIGHT

Each month, we designate and send a portion of our offerings to WELS as our congregational mission offerings. These offerings help to support missions and ministry that is taking place in our country and around the world. Here are few areas where your mission dollars are hard at work supporting workers who are proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus in your name:

It takes Seven Years

These were the words of Mission Counselor Mark Birkholz when Hope Lutheran Church in Toronto, Canada, began planning its first summer Music Camp back in 2010. Why a Music Camp? Our congregation is located in an area of Toronto where we are surrounded by homes and high rises, with people from many different countries and religious backgrounds. The question was asked, "How can we get to know our neighborhood better? And more than that, how can we help our neighbors to know who Jesus is?"

Because Hope is blessed with a variety of musical talent, including a full steel pan orchestra, it was decided that we would try a summer Music Camp. This one week, full-day camp would include instruction in steel pans, keyboard, guitar, djembe drum and singing. Most importantly, every day would also include Bible study.

Our first Music Camp was offered in 2010 and what a blessing it has been. For the past several years, we have reached our capacity of 140 children every summer and have had to start a waiting list because of the high interest. Over 60 volunteers from our church and other congregations give of their time to help run an exhausting and exhilarating camp.

It will take 7 years.

What was Pastor Birkholz referring to? Yes, every year we had opportunity to share the Word with the children of our neighborhood, so many of whom did not know Jesus. But Pastor Birkholz mentioned that 7 years was how long it would most likely take for children and families from Music Camp to become a part of the Hope church family.

What began in 2010 bore fruit in a special way in 2017. Five of our seven youth confirmands first came to Hope through the Music Camp! They kept coming back, and in time found a home at Hope. Of those five youth, all three of their mothers also joined Hope and we all continue to grow in Jesus together. To God be the glory!

Hope Lutheran Church in Toronto has 151 communicant members and 202 souls from 20 different countries, and is served by Pastor Mark Henrich and Vicar Ben Berger. To learn more about Hope, visit their website at www.hopetoronto.com or check out their Facebook page.

Cottage Meetings to Begin



Perhaps this is a new term to you. A **cottage meeting** is where one church member family opens up their home to host some other families for a night. We believe that this type of meeting will be a great way for our members to get to know one another better and talk further about the ministry we carry out together. More information will be coming soon!

As this newsletter is being written, Pastor Vann is in the process of dividing out the congregation into meeting groups. Each group will be invited to meet with Pastor twice a year. The purpose of these meetings

will be Bible Study, fellowship, and the opportunity for Pastor to share information and answer any questions you may have. These will prove to be valuable opportunities and you will be strongly encouraged to participate.

Ladies' Bible Study

The Ladies Bible Study normally meets the second Sunday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. They meet next on Sunday, March 4. This study will help the participants to think through different questions ahead of time so that each person will be prepared to answer when the question is asked. All ladies are invited to join us for this study.



Northdale Youth Ministry

For the Northdale members who are in grades 5 through college, we have some fun activities coming up and fundraisers to offset the costs of the summer youth rally and Camp South trips - mark your calendars!

Sun 3/18 - Bowling after 10:30am worship, Pin Chasers, \$6/person (*bring change of clothes, \$ for food*)

Fri 4/13 - Fun Night, 6pm, @church. Video games, glow-in-the-dark kickball, pizza (*bring drink/snacks to share*)

Sat 5/12 - Dodgeball Tournament, *more details to come!* Contact Mr Haring at 517-202-7283 if you are interested

South Atlantic District Sponsored Recruitment Trips

Our South Atlantic District Commission on Youth Discipleship is sponsoring a number of different recruitment trips to our WELS Schools in the north. If you have a student who is interested in attending any of these schools these are great opportunities to visit the school and talk to the faculty firsthand. If you have any questions about these trips, please speak to Pastor Vann and he will be glad to answer them for you.

Luther Preparatory School

6th, 7th & 8th grade students (parents are encouraged to attend)

Host: Pastor Paul Horn Contact: 270-304-1682 or revhorn2004@gmail.com

Dates: March 8-11, 2018

Cost for student: Flight minus \$150 reimbursement

Cost for one accompanying parent: Flight minus \$100 reimbursement (housing not guaranteed)

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

6th, 7th & 8th grade students (parents are encouraged to attend)

Host: Pastor Harmon and Shelly Lewis Contact: savinggracepastor@gmail.com

February 26-March 2, 2018

Cost for student: Flight minus \$150 reimbursement

Cost for parent: Flight minus \$100 reimbursement (housing not guaranteed)



Senior Winners

Senior Winners will meet on Wednesday, March 21st @ 12pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will meet before the 2pm Lent worship that day. Any questions, please speak to John Kim, Sr. We'd love to have you join us. Be sure to sign up on the small group sign up forms if you are planning to come.

VBS 2018!!



It's time again to start planning for our 2018 Vacation Bible School, which is planned for July 16-20. Registration is now open online at www.northdalelutheran.org. We will be looking for many volunteers to help us with this. If you are interested in helping, you can talk with Kristin Phillips or Pastor Vann and they will get you more information. We are excited to serve the many young campers who come to our VBS with the wonderful grace of our God!

Mid-Week Lent Worship



We continue the solemn journey of Lent with weekly worship opportunities every Wednesday through March 21. We will worship at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. This year, we are following a series entitled, "Jesus is our Great High Priest".. Please set aside time during your busy weeks, to gather for this hour of worship and meditation.

Call Meeting Scheduled

The Ministry Leadership Team has scheduled a call meeting to extend a call for someone to fill Mark Thiesfeldt's position and serve as Principal and 7-8th grade teacher in our school. All members are invited to attend this meeting and participate in the discussion but are reminded that only voters (male communicant members over 18) are eligible to vote on the candidates. Keep our school in your prayers as we call for a new principal.

South Atlantic District Summer Youth Camps

The South Atlantic District's summer youth camps are now accepting registrations! We are excited to host TWO summer camps in 2018. With the Lord's blessing and your recruitment/encouragement within your ministries, we have set a goal of 2400 participants between both camps. How incredible to even consider such a large number of hearts to be touched by God's grace! That will only happen with your focused effort and support. Here are the dates of the upcoming summer camps:

2018 WELS International Youth Rally

Bowling Green State University

June 26-29, 2018

\$345 per participant if registered by April 30, then \$370 by May 31 (Students completing 8th grade thru completing 12th grade)

Road trip to Bowling Green, Ohio

You can find more information and registration forms at www.wels.net/2018youthrally

Camp South - Soul Survivor

Covington, GA

July 23-27

\$285 per participant (Students completing 3rd grade thru completing 8th grade)

Let Pastor Vann or Mr Haring know if your children are interested in participating. The deadline for registration is April 30th. We will send one check per congregation to the address provide in the attachment.



Spring Clean Up Date

We will be meeting on Saturday, March 24 for our annual Spring Clean Up Day here at Northdale Lutheran. This is our opportunity to clean up our grounds and facilities in preparation for Easter Sunday. We'll meet at 8:00 a.m. on the 25th. Please join us.

Taste of Carrollwood 2018

This year, we will once again be participating in the Carrollwood Area Business Association event entitled, "Taste of Carrollwood" on Sunday, April 15, from 12-4pm. This event will allow us reach almost 3,000 people with information about our church and school. Our school students will also be singing for 20-25 min as a part of the event. What a great way for us to reach out into our community so that we can make contact with more people and share with them God's love in Jesus! This year's event will be held again in the newly renovated Tampa Yankees Stadium at George M Steinbrenner Field. There will be many family friendly activities to participate in. CABA generously raised and donated \$4,500 to our Building Our Faith - Family - Future project with their annual golf outing in 2017.



Northdale Fun Fest 2018

Join us for community fun at the annual Northdale parade and Fun Fest on Saturday, April 14, 2018. Perfect for all ages, the celebrations kick off with a great parade featuring marching bands, floats and dozens of marchers from community organizations through the Northdale neighborhood. Then the fun moves to the neighborhood park where guests can enjoy a variety of entertaining attractions, live music, and dance performances that are held throughout the day.

Tampa Circuit LWMS Spring Rally

The spring rally of the LWMS Tampa Bay Circuit will be held at Christ the Lord Lutheran Church in Clearwater on Saturday, March 17. Registration begins at 9:15 a.m. the rally begins at 10:00 a.m. The guest speaker is Stephanie Heitsch who is the wife of a WELS missionary to Cameroon. Her presentation is entitled, "God and Tell in Africa."



HOLY WEEK

Here is our Holy Week Worship schedule:

- Palm Sunday:** March 25, 2018. Worship at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.
- Maundy Thursday:** March 29, 2018. Communion Worship at 7:00 p.m.
- Good Friday:** March 30, 2018. Worship at 7:00 p.m.
- Easter Sunday:** April 1, 2018. Worship at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.
Easter breakfast (Potluck) starting at 9:15 a.m



MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

The following are highlights from the Ministry Leadership Team meeting on February 26, 2018:

- The meeting began as a joint meeting between the Ministry Leadership Team and the School Ministry Board. The meeting began with a discussion of the current status of our school, where we are at with prospects, etc. Mark shared with the group the enrollment numbers where we are at right now. Mark's best guess for next year is that we will need 10-15 new students for next year in order to maintain current enrollment figures. Mark stated that the way that we've been growing so far, it has put a lot of stress on this school. Long term, pre-school should be on everyone's minds. It is a built-in feeder into the elementary school. Mark felt it was critical to have a secretary to aid in the transition for a new principal. Having Pastor and Mark spend a significant amount their time doing secretarial work is not a good business decision and it also detracts from their abilities and primary roles. After this Mark left the meeting and discussion continued about moving forward. After much discussion, the motion was made by Brian Busch and seconded by Mike Laurin to approve making a call for March 11, motion carried. Call forms were completed with input from the group. Pastor will take care of the request and enter it into the call system. School Ministry Board members David Mosakowski and Jim Smith left at this point in the meeting.
- The following membership actions were reported or approved:
 - Transfer In – Robert and Edda Gilbert from Grace Lutheran Church, Spring Hill, FL
 - This leaves our Total Membership at 225 with Communicant membership at 171.
- Steve Ward reported for Evangelism. Taste of CABA is April 15th. Northdale Family Fun Fest is April 14th. Wristbands (5,000) were purchased to give away at both of these events.
- Chris Teeples reported Chris has worked up the usher team and will be calling two prospects for the early service. He has a team for the late service
- Mike Laurin reported that he received 2 quotes for the repairs to the church/fellowship hall (loose boards, downspouts, stucco work, seal & paint). Handyman quote was \$3,150 and GC was \$17,962 (that included repair of the cracked up driveway). Mike was pleased with the handyman and will ask if there is any kind of warranty provided with the work.
- Rick provided the following financial update for January 2018: Church offerings \$14,604.42, YTD \$124,234.70. This is \$10,000 behind budget for YTD. School income \$12,693.11, YTD \$207,802.79. I do not have any info on the percentage of the \$365K that is expected to come in. I cannot update the expenses for January, still waiting for some transactions from the debit card account. But I can report that I have recorded over \$50,000 in expenses for Jan. Capital Improvement account received \$17,797.74 in January with expenses of \$1,900. Balance is at \$188,763.87 as of Jan 31, 2018.
- Steve reported that Chris Warren is moving forward with the building plans. Pastor got Massmann to send the CAD files. Chris had mechanical and electrical guys out last week and he is moving forward. Pastor added that adding a bathroom to the back classroom is not really feasible and upgrading to commercial flow toilets would be cost prohibitive. Steve said communication with Chris has been very thorough. Steve is estimating that within the next few weeks, we should have something to take with contractors. Sierra has volunteered to come in and give a presentation to the MLT.
- Jeff gave an update on the new church management software entitled Breeze Church Management System. Overall the costs for ACH/debit/credit card electronic offerings is very similar to what we are paying for currently with eChurch's PushPay system. PushPay also charges a monthly fee of \$150 whereas Breeze is only \$50/month and comes with a significant amount of additional church management software (member directories, grouping capabilities, event broadcast & registration, check-in for special activities, group texting and e-giving options. We will continue to use PushPay through the 1-yr anniversary to see if we obtained the 5% increase in offerings and will then be cancelling that account. Jeff mentioned that we would have to have the members who currently make offerings through PushPay transfer their account info over to Breeze so there may be some learning curves with doing this and having to educate the congregation on why/how to transfer their info over. Breeze mentioned that due to the confidential nature of bank/credit card accounts, this would happen regardless of what company system/software we would transfer our information over to. Motion made by Steve Ward seconded by Mike Laurin to move forward with the Breeze software, motion carried.
- The MLT considered a proposal to put a Cell phone tower on our property. The MLT agreed to not move forward with this option.



STAY CONNECTED...

**to your school.
to your teachers.
to your youth.**

Salsa Track Meet

The annual SALSA Track Meet is coming up on Saturday, March 2nd. The meet will be held in Bradenton, and we expect well over a couple hundred athletes from our fellow Florida WELS schools to be participating. Our Northdale Lutheran Hurricane track and field participants have been practicing under the direction of Mr. Haring for a couple weeks and are looking forward to representing NLS well. God's blessings to all the participants!

Scholastic Book Fair

We will once again be holding a Scholastic Book Fair at Northdale Lutheran during the week of March 4th through 11th. This is an opportunity to stock up on some great reading materials for the kids. There is a wide selection of books available for kids of all ages. We hope that you will come and check it out! More information will be coming your way soon concerning specific times that you will be able to view and purchase books.

Donuts with Dad

Our annual Donuts with Dads event is set for Wednesday, March 7th and will be held from 7 to 8 am in the fellowship hall. We hope that all of our school dads will be able to join us. If dad can't make it, then another family member is certainly welcome to attend in dad's place. This even is not intended to serve as breakfast for the morning, but more of a light snack and opportunity for some quality time before work and school. Hope to see you then!

LPS Basketball Tournament and Ministry Trip

The trip to Wisconsin is almost here! A group of our 6th-8th grade basketball team members will be flying to Wisconsin Thursday evening, March 8th for this fun basketball tournament and ministry recruitment trip. We are looking forward to playing basketball with our fellow WELS schools from around the country, participating in a morning of classes and learning what it's like to be a student at LPS, and enjoying the musical production of Beauty and the Beast. Thanks to all who have contributed to our various fundraisers to help make this trip possible. We couldn't do it without your support!

Spring Break

Spring Break this year will be held March 12th through 16th. At the end of spring break, a group of students from grades K-3 will be participating in Pee Wee Soccer Day hosted by New Hope in West Melbourne. The kids have been practicing hard under the direction of Mr. Haring and are looking forward to a fun day!

**Northdale Lutheran Church and School
(WELS)
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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**Pastor Charles Vannieuwenhoven: 813-850-7520
Principal: Mark Thiesfeldt: 941-209-0010
Teachers: Chris Haring: 517-202-7283
Aimee Hardman: 813-464-5113
Lynn Marggraf: 262-613-3020
Amy Vannieuwenhoven 813-850-7520**

**Sunday Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Communion Services: First and Third Sundays of the month
Sunday School & Teen Bible Class: 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. (September through May)
Sunday Bible Class: 9:25-10:15 a.m.
Fellowship: 11:30 p.m.
School hours: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. M-F**