



Northern Illinois District
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The Power of the Word



Just the other day, I was greeted by this sign. The artists and messengers are Adrian and younger sister, Hadley. Their parents, church, and school have taught well.

It's an example of the power of the Word which overflows to others. Adrian and Hadley couldn't just keep it inside or for themselves. I was moved and encouraged.

These are days of religious confusion in our culture, nation, the world, and yes, in the church, our church. And as Jesus says, *"the love of many will grow cold"* (Matthew 24:12). Is that an issue for us? In too many places of the church we have an unhealthy internal focus which can wear us out or become idolatry of self or institution. Lord forgive me! Lord forgive us! Where Jesus and His Gospel is spoken, there is the *"power of God unto salvation"* (Romans 1:16).

If we have lost our zeal for witnessing it is not because Jesus has not lost His love for those outside His Church. I believe that every relationship ultimately will lead to a spiritual conversation of some kind. It may take a while, but people have spiritual questions and may not even know it. We do!

We do not have control over what the Gospel does, but talking about the Word and work of Jesus for us sinners is never a waste. Friends, the Gospel still works!

Pastors bear witness in the public ministry. Commissioned workers have a significant witnessing role. **But every laywoman and layman is on the front line of communicating the message.** Yes, so are Adrian, Hadley, and their faith-filled mom and dad. Yes, it can be messy and slow, but the Word works!

We speak of the reconciling work of Jesus in our congregations, schools, and homes. He takes our garbage and gives us clean conscience and confidence as we live and die. This witness to



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the Risen Savior spills out into our conversations inside the church in our relationships, communities, and world.

“For where Christ is not preached, there is no Holy Spirit to create, call and gather the Christian Church, apart from which no one can come to the Lord Christ.” (Large Catechism of Martin Luther)

After we listen, we get to speak. We speak of what Jesus has done and is doing. I would love for the NID to be known for a passion for personal and corporate witness to the Crucified and Risen Christ!

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss

President

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