



Northern Illinois District
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The Community of Christ

Just today I met a fellow servant of the Church for lunch. We were chatting away. We ordered our food and then I asked the server, *“We are going to have a prayer before lunch. Is there anything we can pray for you in your life?”* She told us and we did.

She returned and then told us excitedly she was a teacher at a Lutheran preschool in a local community. She spoke positively about her pastor, church, and school. We had a connection and a common confession of Jesus! We were brought together, not in church, but in the community in Christ!

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common” (Acts 2:44). The earliest Christians shared a common faith in the Crucified and Risen Jesus that was lived out in how they cared for each other. They sacrificed and had “each other’s back.”

But I’ve built and maintained sinful and self-serving walls and so have you. Let’s be honest; we’ve justified our sin and our walls. Satan loves our walls in the church and our self-righteousness. These walls are spiritually dangerous and harmful to the mission.

Enter Jesus, *“[who] is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ... [that he] might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility”* (Ephesians 2:14, 16). Hostility has been killed by the One who was killed to reconcile you to God and reconcile us to each other! The work of the Risen Christ is big!

We do not cheer for theological compromise, but we do rejoice in the mighty work of the Gospel to connect us to a faithful confession and mission!

One great opportunity for me this summer in the NID was with a small group of pastors coming together to discuss a common mission. These men of God gathered from all around the District, from small and large congregations, and from a variety of ministries to discuss and be encouraged in our life in the



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LCMS. It was uplifting to witness first-time meetings. Others had not seen each other since seminary or even college and we reconnected! Connections and reconnections in the church are a gift from the Lord. How will you foster a reconnection with sister congregations or ministries?

This Ministry Update gives just a glimpse into the work that we are doing together. **Most of it would not happen except that we are working, serving, confessing, praying, and giving together.** Support and give thanks for “the things we have in common.” There is so much more happening! We humbly need to work on building and restoring our relationships and it’s all possible because the Gospel still works!

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss

President

LCMS Northern Illinois District