



**Northern Illinois District**  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

## **Raising Up Workers of the Word**

The question caught me off guard. I was surprised at the young man who asked it. It was asked at an adult instruction class. ***“What was it that led you to be a pastor?”*** It was a really good question and for a moment I wondered if he doubted my suitability to be a pastor.

Your professional church workers will have varying responses. Why not ask them? Ultimately, it is the Holy Spirit who is at work through the encouragement of people. Have you ever thought about being a Lutheran teacher? Director of Christian Education? Pastor? In my case I was blessed by the example of faithful pastors. I not only had examples but words of encouragement from teachers, family, and friends. They saw what I did not see.

Every church worker is an answer to prayer. So pray! Pray earnestly! Jesus sees the large harvest and desperate world and he commands, *“Ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers into the harvest field”* (Matthew 9:38). This sending Lord is the One who sent Jesus to save the world ... and you to bear witness to Him.

***“Why would you want to be a pastor? Sounds like a boring life to me,”*** questioned my childhood friend. That question made me think and someday still does. Serving in full-time church work is a calling by God. It is more than a career choice. It is a calling which is confirmed by the church who also calls and places the workers. Another friend, ***“Allan, I am not sure you are good enough to be a pastor.”*** That is true of me and every servant! Amazing Grace in Christ!

Fifty percent of current LCMS pastors are 55 or older. Many of our schools lack the called and commissioned teachers they desire. There is a shortage of principals for our schools.

**Somebody should do something.** Well, our convention offering associated request is designated for the support of the men and women preparing for full-time church work from the NID. This year we are supporting 19 students from all over Northern Illinois. I invite you to look at the bigger church, pray, encourage, and support these future servants financially. This gift reduces their indebtedness. **“Raising Up Workers of the Word”** is one special way. Marie and I have made a gift and we invite you to do so as well.

The LCMS also has an initiative, “Set Apart to Serve”. ([lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve](http://lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve))



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**And for the workers we have, pray for them, encourage and help them be effective in their God-given calling.** I've been amazed at how much time and effort the NID staff is asked to provide for and support church workers who serve in our congregations, schools, and ministries. It's beautiful and humbling! See the resources provided by the NID Worker Wellness Team. ([nidlcms.org/care-team](http://nidlcms.org/care-team))

All we are doing is because we desire the work of the Kingdom to go on faithfully in our midst and worldwide. It is humbling and exciting to see new workers in the church ... and the not so new!