



Northern Illinois District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

It's seen in a Samaritan leper who rushes back to Jesus to praise God for healing. It's revealed in the loving act of a sinful yet forgiven woman as she "washes" Jesus' feet with her tears and anoints them with fine oil. It shines as a virgin named Mary faithfully receives her role to be the mother of the world's Savior! It's the heart of gratitude, and it's the quality of humility.

Gratitude is certainly returning "thanks" for some blessing received. Yet, the heart of gratitude, especially in relation to our Lord, reflects one's sense of having received the blessing unworthily. Thus, the blessing is purely a gift of grace. Gratitude is humility's expression for the manifold gifts of God's love. We know we are not worthy of that love, and yet we receive in full measure!

I am humbled to witness the blessings our Lord brings to the Church through you and our service together! I am grateful to Christ for blessings joyfully given:

- In financial offerings which provide scholarships for church work students to bless the Church of the future, and which also provide grants to bless the work our Lord gives us to do today!
- In willing hearts and hands, ready to serve as Jesus' vessels of compassion and mercy through events like *SHINE!*
- In faithful pastoral and lay leaders who work together through events such as the NID Partnership Gatherings to build one another up so that the Gospel might be boldly proclaimed in each of our communities!

These, and so many more blessings are the reasons that our hearts might be filled at this time with humble gratitude for all our Lord freely gives that we might receive His love! I am grateful for our Savior! I am grateful for His grace in you!



With You, My eyes are on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2,3)

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss, President

