



Northern Illinois District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

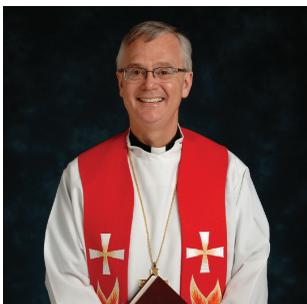
November 2024

Gratitude is the warmth of heart which helps clear away the fog of self-centered worry. Gratitude is the refreshing stream which helps douse the burning fire of anger against perceived slights. Gratitude brings along its friend, humility, and together they are the lenses that help focus our eyes compassionately on the needs of others. **Gratitude reminds us that we are loved and freed in God's love to be Christlike to our neighbors.**

I love the way Luther writes to lead us to gratitude in his explanation of the Creed's first article in his Small Catechism. He writes how our Lord has granted us our very selves in creation. **We are grateful for the 103 children brought to the Baptismal font this year through our Lutheran schools.** He details how our Lord supplies us richly and daily with all we need, from significant gifts like family to the simple blessing of shoes! He then leads us to gratitude: ***"For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true."***

- We've doubled our support to men and women from the NID preparing for church work at our Concordia Universities and Seminaries, **supporting 22** Fall 2024 students.
- We encouraged and engaged nearly 350 lay leaders at the Lay Leadership Summit, representing over 100 congregations in work, service, and ideas for congregational life. Survey results were helpful and strong.
- Thousands from 63 congregations participated in SHINE! 2024, serving in our communities in the name of Jesus with His Word on our lips in witness.
- Dozens of congregations connected through our Partnership Gatherings in the last 12 months.

I am chiefly grateful for Jesus' blood-bought redemption for you and me! May our praise and service to Jesus be bountiful!



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

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss

Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss, President

