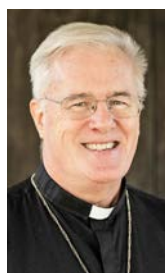




/ APRIL 2025

DISTRICT NEWS

OKLAHOMA



**Rev. David
Nehrenz**
District President

All of us love drama. We experience drama in many ways. We watch a play on a stage or a show on TV.

We also have lives filled with drama every day, through interactions with others.

But the greatest drama of all time happened during Holy Week. This is Divine Drama, authored by God the Father Himself, in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

This drama begins on Sunday, which is called Palm Sunday and the Sunday of the Passion.

Jesus enters into Jerusalem on a donkey while the crowds wave palm branches. They cry out “Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!”

Monday of Holy Week, Jesus enters into the temple courts in Jerusalem and drives out the money-changers and animal-sellers. He uses a whip and with anger in His voice says:

“Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.” **MARK 15:17**

On Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, He teaches the people in

the temple courts. He tells the shocking story of the son who is thrown out of his own father’s vineyard and killed. This was a prophecy of what was about to happen to Jesus on the cross.

Thursday of Holy Week is called Maundy Thursday. That evening, Jesus washed His disciples’ feet. He instituted the Lord’s Supper. After they sang a hymn, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed three times about the cup of suffering He was about to experience. His sweat fell like drops of blood on the ground.

In that garden, He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. He was arrested by the mob of soldiers and deserted by all His disciples. He was dragged before Caiaphas and Herod and Pilate at night. Peter denied Him. An illegal trial was held. He was denounced for blasphemy since He claimed to be the Messiah.

On Friday of Holy Week, called Good Friday, He was turned over by Pontius Pilate for crucifixion. He was condemned to death. His suffering would include being mocked by the soldiers, crowned with thorns, scourged with whips, clothed with a purple robe and nailed to a cross.

The seven “words” or sentences Jesus spoke from the cross reveal the scope of His sacrificial death on the cross. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He exclaimed, “It is finished!” The work of dying as the Savior of the world, in our place and as our substitute, was complete.

Saturday of Holy Week was the

See **MESSAGE**, Page 3

First celebrates 100 years

First, Ponca City, joyfully marked 100 years of God's faithfulness on Feb. 5. The following weekend was filled with festive celebrations — a lively family game night on Friday, a hymn festival and soup supper on Saturday, and Divine Worship followed by a grand 100th anniversary banquet on Sunday. Over 200 people attended the worship service and banquet.

Rev. Scott Heitshusen, pastor of Lifebridge Community Lutheran Church, Sealy, Texas, and a former member of First, preached; with Rev. Joseph Highley (First pastor) and Rev. Marvin Henschel (First pastor emeritus) assisting in leading the service. Special guests at the banquet included Jay Wagner, representing the scouts troop housed at First; Kelsey Wagner,

Ponca City commissioner, and Homer Nicholson, newly elected mayor; and Ashley Hibler, House FM ministry partner. Memories and stories of the past were shared, and an unforgettable skit of the "First Lutheran Founding Fathers" was performed by congregation president Steve Vaughan and vice-president Rob Davis.

The congregation enjoyed a "Potluck of the Century," with the First Lutheran "YALL BBQ" team providing the main course and members contributing sides. The banquet was hosted by Pastor Highley and Jennifer Heitman, with musical entertainment during the meal provided by Chris Schelp and Jaclynn and Jordyn Heitman. Glory be to God for His abundant blessings at First Lutheran!

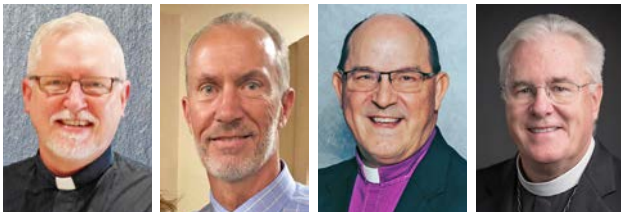


Jennifer Heitman, First Lutheran Next Generation coordinator, and Rev. Joseph Highley served as banquet hosts.



From left, Rob Davis (congregation vice-president) and Steve Vaughan (president) performed the skit, "First Lutheran Founding Fathers"

Officer ballots set for convention



Hall

McCarty

Muenchow

Nehrenz

The Oklahoma District Convention will be held June 13–14 at the Hilton Garden Inn and Conference Center in Edmond, under the theme "Praying to the Lord of the Harvest" (Luke 10:2).

As the district secretary, one of my duties is to solicit nominations for district president and district first vice-president. From a mailing I sent to all district congregations, I received 28 replies with nominations.

The ballot for district president will consist of:

- Rev. Timothy L. McCarty – Emmanuel, Kingfisher
- Rev. Mark R. Muenchow – Messiah, Oklahoma City
- Rev. David R. Nehrenz (incumbent) – Trinity, Norman

The three candidates for first vice-president are:

- Rev. Christopher D. Hall (incumbent) – Grace, Tulsa
- Rev. Timothy L. McCarty – Emmanuel, Kingfisher
- Rev. Mark R. Muenchow – Messiah, Oklahoma City

— Submitted by Rev. W. R. Rains, The Oklahoma District Secretary



Immanuel, Broken Arrow, welcomed 24 new members on Feb. 9 (some were not available for the photo).

Call Day 2025

This month, students at our seminaries will receive their first pastoral or diaconal ministry placements, and second-year students will receive their vicarage or deaconess internship assignments.

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

April 30 (times CST)

3 p.m.: Vicarage and deaconess internship assignments

7 p.m.: Pastoral and diaconal calls

For more information and to watch the livestreams, visit csl.edu/call-day. The services will also be shown on CSL's YouTube and Facebook pages.

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

April 28

6 p.m. (CST): Vicarage and deaconess internship assignments

April 29

6 p.m. (CST): Pastoral and diaconal calls

For more information and to watch the livestreams, visit ctsfw.edu/callday.



Living Water, the women's ministry group of Messiah, Oklahoma City, held an Epiphany retreat in January. Under the theme "Bringing Our Gifts to the New Born King," thirty-five women attended. The retreat was planned and led by, from left, Amy Leochner, Margy Muenchow and Kathy Brown; and Linda Stark (who is missing from the photo).

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Sabbath. His body rested in the tomb on that day, having been buried by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.



Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of our Lord, He rose from the dead. He was seen by eyewitnesses, which included the women and the apostles. His body came back to life. He was now in His glorified state, but He still bore the marks on His hands, feet and side. These marks showed the price He has paid for our justification. In Jesus, we are declared innocent before His Father in heaven.

By faith, we believe that this was done for me, for you, for everyone. In the Lord Jesus Christ, we have forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Unlike TV fictional dramas, these events actually happened in history, in time and in reality. Attend Holy Week services and experience for yourself this divine drama authored by God.

Happy Birthday!

Our Savior, Tulsa



Charles Nordholm
92 years,
April 8



Melvina Schneider
96 years,
April 2

Redeemer, Bartlesville

Alice Gilbreath
104 years, April 8

Evelyn Burling
96 years, April 21

Immanuel, Broken Arrow

Earl Franklin
94 years, April 1

Hulin Staton
92 years, April 22

Faith, Owasso
Elmer Schmall
92 years, April 3

St. John's, Covington

Joy Schweer
94 years, April 29

Redeemer, Enid

Darlene Schulz
92 years, April 30

Trinity, Norman

Lois Bollinger
91 years, April 1

First, Ponca City
Gerry Correll
90 years, April 20

Congratulations!

We rejoice with those who are celebrating anniversaries of 50 years or more.

Immanuel, Broken Arrow



Glen and Loretta Herzberger
57 years, April 6



Ron and Valerie Eberhardt
54 years, April 17

Our Savior, Tulsa



Kurt and Kathie Klein
51 years, April 5

Zion, Alva



Ernie and Verlinda Otte
52 years, April 25



John and Lena Rehkop
51 years, April 20

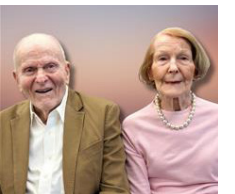
Christ the Redeemer, Tulsa



Tom and Bev Bordner
58 years, April 1



Del and Jan Dreyer
62 years, April 20



Bob and Jean Paulsen
69 years, April 21



Dan and Georgette Kuehn
62 years, April 28



Don and Marie Vavra
54 years, April 24

St. John's, Covington
Gerald and Arba Jo Pope
60 years, March 11

Holy Trinity, Edmond

Tim and Nancy West
50 years, April 6

Gary and Eva Goeringer
58 years, April 16

Redeemer, Enid
Eugene and Shirley Sharp
60 years, April 30

St. Paul's, Enid
Robert and Twana Winter
56 years, April 7

Ken and Cindy Fischhaber
51 years, April 20
Bud and Pat Durham
61 years, April 25

Christ, Perry
Farrel and Brenda Stanley
51 years, April 20

Messiah, Oklahoma City
Harl and Mary Dubben
60 years, April 17

Rick and Sharon Olmstead
52 years, April 14
Bob and Audrey Smith
63 years, April 21

Trinity, Norman
Duane and Nancy Brosowski
63 years, April 9

First, Ponca City
Fred and Jane Miller
60 years, April 24

Christ the Redeemer, Tulsa
Gene and Betty Kuhlmann
55 years, April 18
Dan and Georgette Kuehn
62 years, April 28



MITES IN ACTION

Messiah Lutheran School, Oklahoma City, was the recipient of an LWML Mission Grant, which was used to upgrade its audio system. The first production using the new system was *Arrest These Merry Gentlemen* on Dec. 11, which included a ribbon dance by the preschool and prekindergarten classes before the show.



‘Courageous leadership’

The LWML Oklahoma District met Jan. 31–Feb. 1 at Zion, Stillwater, for a leadership workshop. “Compass for Courageous Leadership in Christ” was presented by the members of the Organizational Resource Committee. The theme was based on Joshua 1:9: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be wherever you go.”

Deaconess Rachell Highley (pictured) of First, Ponca City, described how we can show appreciation to church workers. Getting God’s Word out through social media outlets was also discussed. Vice-presidents met with their committees and developed goals. Revs. Ryan Honeycutt (Redeemer, Claremore) and James Bozarth (Trinity, Blackwell) led opening and closing devotions that focused on leadership.



Share your news with us!

Submit articles and photos to oklahomalutherans.org/lutheran_witness.

Articles and photos may also be emailed to commsokdistrict@gmail.com.

Please ensure that the photos you are sending are in high resolution.

