



/ AUGUST 2021

DISTRICT NEWS

OKLAHOMA



Getty Images

'GRIPPING' GOD'S WORD

Work Gloves

Driving east on Highway 51 just west of Stillwater is Country Club Road. Turning south and driving 1.5 miles is located a valley shaded by large pecan trees.

This was a portion of the 1889 claim staked by my great-grandfather, Montgomery. It was passed on to my mother's parents.

My grandparents raised cotton, corn, wheat, watermelons, peanuts and, of course, the pecan crop in the fall.

My grandfather, also named



Rev. Barrie Henke
District President

Montgomery, farmed with a team of mules because he said they worked harder, smarter and faster than horses. The names of his last team resonated throughout the valley as he encouraged them: "Ho, Tom! Ho, Kate!" He had a ritual after harnessing the team. He would spit in his gloves,

rub them together, then securely grasp the reins.

This ritual also carried over to his driving. Behind the wheel of his pale grey, 1952 Ford se-

dan, he would slip on his gloves, spit in them, rub them together and then grasp the steering wheel. For him, any task needing a firm grip involved spitting in his gloves and rubbing them together.

Work Stoles

I recently experienced the blessing of ordaining and installing three men into the office of the holy ministry. These new workers have been placed by God among us to serve in His spiritual vineyard here in Oklahoma. At ordination they were not given a pair of gloves to begin their work — and for this I was glad because my mouth was pretty dry, which made spitting almost impossible!

However, they were vested with a red stole, by which they symbolically put on the "yoke" of Christ for doing His work. These men made promises to be faithful in their ministry and to seek the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for devoted service to Christ and His church.

As I installed each one of them, the congregation members also made promises to faithfully help them carry out the ministry entrusted to their specific congregation by God. The divine purpose to which they have been called is described by the apostle Paul:

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

Eph. 4:11-12

Did you catch what Paul said?

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**GOD'S
BLESSINGS**
Saints of
Oklahoma!

Confirmed in Adair

Confirmation day at Bethlehem, Adair, was March 28. The confirmands, pictured with Rev. Dwight Moeller, are, from left, Steven Holt, Abby Ferrari, Briley Roberts and Amanda Peper.



Congrats!

Ryan Groh, a member of St. John's, Moore, graduated with honors from Concordia University, Nebraska, in May. A pre-seminary student, he majored in psychology. Ryan was also selected as the distinguished biblical languages student for his three years of coursework in Greek and two years of Hebrew studies.

Ryan and his wife, Grace, are moving to Fort Wayne, Ind., this summer and he will attend Concordia Theological Seminary in the fall. Grace will graduate later this year after completing her student teaching in the Fort Wayne area. The newlyweds appreciate the Oklahoma District's ongoing support through its church-worker scholarship program.

—Submitted by Beth Groh



Blessings in Shattuck

From left, Johnnie Brace (88), Martha Tolley (89) and Gertrude Knowles (90) are pictured with Rev. Gary McClellan at Christ, Shattuck. Martha and Johnnie were in the same confirmation class at Christ in 1948, and Gertrude was confirmed at Trinity, Borger, Texas. Pastor McClellan has worshiped with these faithful saints for 26 years. Congratulations to all!

—Submitted by Lisa Kelley

Congrats!

We rejoice with those in the Oklahoma District who are celebrating anniversaries of **50 years** or more!

Bartlesville, Redeemer

William and Irene VanWey
65 years, Aug. 12

Ron and Roberta Hall
61 years, Aug. 27

Blackwell, St. John's

Charles and Berneita Boesch
56 years, Aug. 7

Edmond, Holy Trinity

Dale and Cheryl Swiggett
54 years, Aug. 5

Phil and Lois Parduhn
66 years, Aug. 7

Floyd and Mildred Treiber
54 years, Aug. 13

Louis and Evelyn Kastens
56 years, Aug. 14

Orlie and Sharon Boehler
62 years, Aug. 16

John and Linda Seikel
55 years, Aug. 16

Bob and Yvonne Swanson
62 years, Aug. 23

Darrel and Annette ZumMallen
63 years, Aug. 23

Bruce and Shirley Confer
64 years, Aug. 24

Enid, St Paul's

Pallop and Pranom Chivaluksna
59 years, Aug. 10

Richard and Bonnie Szczepaniak
51 years, Aug. 15

Ron and Cindy Krey
50 years, Aug. 21

Richard and Marilyn Simpson
67 years, Aug. 22

Guthrie, Zion

Leroy and Charlotte Corn
61 years, Aug. 17

Kingfisher, Emmanuel

Chuck and Lois Henderson
60 years, Aug. 19

Norman, Trinity

Rev. Myron and Dorothy Maltz
56 years, Aug. 15

Ken and Pat Ortgies
70 years, Aug. 18

Gene and Claudene Channell
64 years, Aug. 30

Oklahoma City, Messiah

Mike and Sharon Rosser
50 years, Aug. 7

Larry and Marjorie Gaetely
51 years, Aug. 14

Larry and Gail Olson
57 years, Aug. 17

Bill and Michele Ackerman
53 years, Aug. 24

Don and Charlene "Char" Ewing
64 years, Aug. 28

Don and Beverly Davis
52 years, Aug. 30

Okarche, St. John's

George and Mabel Newer
65 years, Aug. 19

Ponca City, First

Gery and Marilyn Pralle
58 years, Aug. 3

Bob and Kathryn Prescott
66 years, Aug. 19

Shawnee, Redeemer

Charles and Marvine Nix
62 years, Aug. 29

Stillwater, Zion

Rev. Carlton and Arlene Riemer
54 years, Aug. 23

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer

Ken and Eva Heim
68 years, Aug. 9

David and Marion Penka
51 years, Aug. 15

Terry and Valarie Kolkman
51 years, Aug. 15

Rev. Virgil and Carolyn Bening
52 years, Aug. 23

Rev. Bruce and Edie Cottrell
51 years, Aug. 29

Dennis and Pat Morris
54 years, Aug. 26

Tom and Judy Kuehnert
58 years, Aug. 30

Tulsa, Our Savior

Rev. Harvey and Pauline Johnson
54 years, Aug. 26

Belated

Claremore, Redeemer

Randy and Kathy Iwanaga
52 years, July 24

Mustang, Christ

George and Linda Danielson
50 years, July 31

Bartlesville, Redeemer

Daryl and Vickie Doughty
54 years, July 7

David and Melanie Boucher
51 years, July 11

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Enid, St. Paul's

Pat Fitzpatrick
91 years, Aug. 8

Opal Gragert
95 years, Aug. 18

Oklahoma City, Messiah

Val Reed
101 years, Aug. 7

Ken Ham
90 years, Aug. 28

Mustang, Christ

Susie Brewster
85 years, Aug. 7

Okarche, St. John's

Marjorie Kremeier
90 years, Aug. 23

Shawnee, Redeemer

Joan Zemke
91 years, Aug. 8

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer

Bob Paulsen
91 years, Aug. 13

Bob Wilson
95 years, Aug. 29

Perry, Christ



Johnnie Kroll
91 years, Aug. 27

Edmond, Holy Trinity



Norman Loeber
100 years, Aug. 14

Newkirk, St. John's



Leila Oestmann
91 years, Aug. 22

Belated

Covington, St. John's

Marie Fischer
95 years, July 7

Oklahoma City, Zion

Olinda Berry
102 years, July 24

Ponca City, First

Dolores Barnhart
91 years, May 2

Darleen Duerr
92 years, May 5

Anne Banks
90 years, May 23

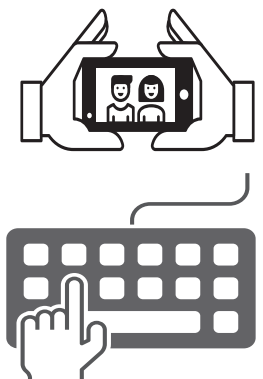
Lila Kizer
93 years, May 23

Share your news with us!

We are always in need of more submissions for the Oklahoma District *Lutheran Witness* insert. Why should you send them in? It helps remind us of what God is doing around the district. It is also a way to share ideas for nurturing those God has already gathered into His church and for reaching those still outside of the flock with the Good News about Jesus. It finally reminds each of us that Christ's church is much larger than just our particular congregation.

Please send submissions to Janice Hedrick at jhedrickokdistrict@gmail.com. You may also mail your submissions to Janice at P.O. Box 70, Owasso, OK 74055 (918-629-1225). Please ensure photos sent electronically are high resolution.

The deadline for the October issue is Aug. 15.



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

A pastor's work of ministry is to equip *you* for doing the work of ministry! In other words, the Holy Spirit puts pastors to work for the purpose of *putting you to work!*

Work Tools

The thought of the pastor putting the parishioners to work seems odd, but that is the work St. Paul is talking about, "to equip the saints." The pastor's work is to guide the saints to the tools needed for the work of ministry and teach them how to use them effectively. Those tools are the Word of God and the Sacraments.

The pastor is called to open the Scripture ... making it understandable ... remembering that:

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2 Tim. 3:16-17

The pastor is charged with directing the focus of the saints to God's purpose of "building up the body of Christ." When I was ordained over 48 years ago, I thought I had to do all the work of ministry by myself — and the "saints" let me! The Holy Spirit gave me the awareness that this was *their* ministry and I was called simply to share in it with them. This awareness opened to me the true joy of ministry!

Perhaps when you gather for a Bible study with fellow saints, you should slip on some work gloves, spit into them, rub them together and then clutch your leather-bound Bible ... or maybe not! It would grab everyone's attention though.

Instead, firmly grip your Bible and get to work — reading, studying, learning and inwardly digesting that life-giving Word of God. My grandfather's spitting ritual was only to get a good grip. We also need a good spiritual grip on God's Word for the "building up of the body of Christ." Firmly gripping the Word and desiring to do kingdom work makes life exciting as we allow the Holy Spirit's power to work in us and through us!

Let the work begin!

LWML

Time to submit grant applications

The Oklahoma District LWML is now accepting mission grant applications for the next biennium (2022-23). Potential recipients shall:

- ▶ Be mission focused, with an emphasis on proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- ▶ Be affiliated with or approved by, and follow the mission of the LCMS.
- ▶ Be current and ready for implementation.
- ▶ Continue as a long-term mission after LWML funding is received
- ▶ Document costs, use of funds, dates needed, administrative funds.
- ▶ Have the approval of the district or partner church in which proposed grant recipient is located (unless the grant application is submitted by an LCMS board or the LCMS Office of International Mission).

Visit oklwml.org for an application and instructions for submission. The deadline for submission is Sept. 30



Thanks be to God — Christ Academy High School was greatly blessed this year! From June 20 through July 3, 39 young men and 26 young women participated in the 22nd annual Christ Academy: Timothy and Phoebe School at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Ind. This is a two-week discernment program on the seminary campus for high-school-aged

men and women who are interested in theology and who are considering pastoral and diaconal work.

These students were immersed in the daily life of the seminary, especially through confessional catechesis in the classroom. They learned from 14 CTSFW professors and a panel of local pastors and deaconesses. Along with daily classes in the study of the Word, the

students worshiped in Kramer Chapel four times a day. They also participated in service projects on campus and around Fort Wayne.

We thank you for your dedication in praying for these students and supporting them as they discern future work in the church. We especially thank and praise God for keeping these young men and women steadfast in the true faith.