



# DISTRICT NEWS

## OKLAHOMA

### Our Refuge and Stay

**God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. — Ps. 46:1**

**Goodbye! Goodbye 2020!** We've heard your final bell!

We've welcomed in a brand new year in which we shall now dwell!

Excitedly as each year ends we welcome in the new

And wonder just what God has planned that's still outside our view.

This year could be a terrible year with sadness, grief or pain,

Or filled with horrible losses that could drive us all insane!

But wait! Our God reminds us that He has the final say,

Affirming in His grace that **He's ... our Refuge and our Stay!**

**So now, with expectation we can enter this new year,**

Assured that God will bless us with His gracious presence near!

Throughout the old year we have seen God's faithfulness so great

That we can trust Him in the **new** — a truth to celebrate!

We've watched Him take those troubled times that for us were so bad

And turn them into blessings that have made our hearts so glad!

He constantly assures us that if something shades our way,

We can trust His promise for **He's ... our Refuge and our Stay!**

**As we look back on the old year** we've walked a toilsome way

It truly shows that God has been **our Refuge and our Stay.**

The COVID-19 pandemic changed our lives — who would have ever thought

But masks and gloves became the norm — much change it truly brought!

Families gathered reluctantly because of COVID fear

With hopes they'd all be "negative" — at least, just for this year!

And even in our Synod plans for conventions may all change

To skip all 2021 and make us rearrange!

**Within our nation** races clashed and caused so much turmoil;

Then prices rose on home products but dropped on gas and oil. Both state and national elections brought concern,

While robo calls from candidates could make our stomachs churn!

But stock exchangers seem quite glad — it's been a good, good year,

Yet earthly props can fail real fast and even disappear.

There still are folks without a job because of work shutdowns;

And homelessness and hungry folk are found in many towns.

And if we stayed real close to home then ice storms came our way

And broke down trees and cut the power — all we could do was pray!

But in the twisted, tangled mess with lives scared and afraid, So many Christian folks reached out with hands and hearts to aid.

**Within our district** we have had some challenges to face,

Since congregations did not meet for worship in their place!

Our budget seems to be quite pinched so budget cuts now loom

So let us pray that gifts from saints will let God's missions bloom!

E'en though the future on ahead may not be very clear,

We know for sure that God's in charge and so we need not fear,

Because no matter what might come along our troubled way,

Our God assures us that **He is our Refuge and our Stay!**

**Some of the saints** that walked with us have claimed Christ's promised crown,



**A BLESSED NEW  
YEAR TO YOU**  
Saints of  
Oklahoma!

See MESSAGE, Page 4



# Lutherans shine in town musical

The hills were alive with the sound of Lutherans as the musical “The Sound of Music” was performed at Ponca Playhouse in Ponca City Sept. 10–20.

Members of First Lutheran Church (FLC), Ponca City, were prominent. Chris Schelp, FLC Music minister, played the male lead of Captain Von Trapp. Schelp is a veteran of many local plays and musicals and has performed with the Tulsa Opera. Jennifer Heitman, FLC Next Generation coordinator, played two parts, Sister Sophia and Baroness Elberfeld. Jaclynn Heitman played a maid and a nun, and Jennifer Hoak played a nun.

In addition, alumni of First Lutheran School also had parts.

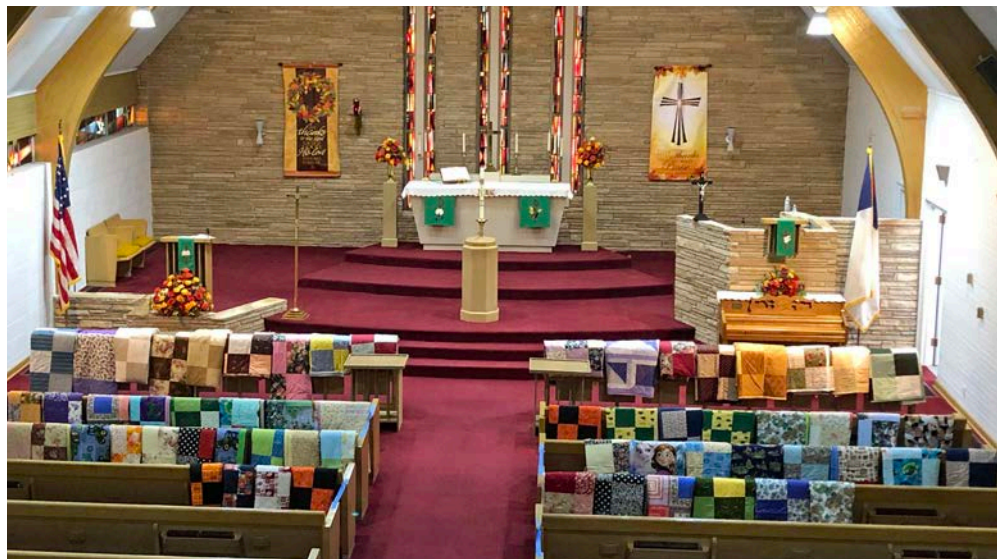
The eight performances were done to a socially-distant packed house in the theatre, which means that about 10 percent of the people in Ponca City attended. The production was the entire three-hour musical, with more songs than the 1965 movie. This included a few convent chants in Latin, and it was noted that the Lutheran “nuns” were not pleased with the need to sing Latin. This caused someone to quip, “How do we solve a problem like the Lutherans?”

— Submitted by David Zimmerman, FLC Council president

## Quilts made with love

Trinity Lutheran Church, Blackwell, held a Quilt Blessing during Divine Service on LWML Sunday, Oct. 4. During this 95th anniversary year of Trinity, the women have worked on quilts for Lutheran World Relief and Children's Rehabilitation Hospital in Oklahoma City. Over 80 quilts have been completed despite the pandemic.

— Submitted by Rachel Kahle





## Family grows in Shattuck

On Oct. 4, Jenni Wiederstein and Homer Thomas were confirmed as members of Christ Lutheran Church, Shattuck. The new members are pictured with Rev. Gary McClellan.



## Baptized into Christ

Julian Raúl Lee Rodriguez was Baptized on Sept. 20 at Trinity, Okmulgee. Pictured are, from left (front row) Rylan Waggoner and Taimen Caywood (brothers); (middle row) Cadence Slater (friend), Macy Horn (mother), Julian, Ava Rodriguez (sister), Rylie Waggoner (sister), Julie Branson (grandmother and sponsor); (back row) Mia Rodriguez (sister), Ripken Caywood (brother) Abraham Rodriguez (father) Rev. Dr. Christian C. Tiews and Becky Kirkbride (sponsor).



## Blessings in Oklahoma City

On Reformation Sunday, Oct. 25, at Cristo Rey, Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City, the congregation celebrated the Baptism of Belen Diaz and the Confirmation of Faith of (pictured) Jonny, José, Jaden and Marixa. We give God the glory! — Rev. Abiut Fajardo

## Celebrate LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

National Lutheran Schools Week (NLSW) — scheduled for Jan. 24–30 in 2021 — offers LCMS schools a yearly opportunity to reflect on and share the blessings of Christian education.

This year, amid many challenges, they will have many blessings to celebrate.

Currently, the LCMS has 1,914 schools across the nation, serving more than 190,000 students. In the past year, these schools have had to make

unexpected adjustments in order to continue their mission and ministry. A testament to their hard work is that enrollment trends are up in many Lutheran schools following the onset of the pandemic.

### 'Sent to Serve'

The 2021 NLSW theme is "Sent to Serve," based on Matt. 20:28: "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

LCMS School Ministry has created several resources to aid schools in celebrating this week, including:

► Devotional resources and themes for

each day of the week written by the Rev. Robert Riggert;

- A proclamation from LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison; and
- A new hymn text, "We Have Been Sent to Serve," by Dr. Jeffrey Burkart.



The 2021 NLSW resources can be viewed and downloaded for free at [lcms.org/](https://lcms.org/)

[lutheranschoolsweek.org](https://lutheranschoolsweek.org).

For more information about LCMS schools, visit [lcms.org/schools](https://lcms.org/schools).

# CELEBRATIONS

## Congrats!

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

### Bartlesville, Redeemer

Jerry and Judie Page  
60 years, Jan. 14

### Breckinridge, Immanuel

Mike and Joan Nicholas  
56 years, Jan. 24

### Broken Arrow, Trinity

Bill and Sue Pahmeier  
61 years, Jan. 1

### Enid, St. Paul's

James and Marilyn Hoeltzel  
57 years, Jan. 26

### Norman, Trinity

Jim and Lois Bollinger  
55 years, Jan. 2

### Jim and Grace Rando

52 years, Jan. 4

### Okarche, St. John's

Gerald and Lucy Beecher  
52 years, Jan. 4

Raymond and Darlene Stover  
70 years, Jan. 28

### Oklahoma City, Messiah

Tim and Marilyn Parker  
66 years, Jan. 29

### Ponca City, First

Glenn and Nancy Hildebrand  
60 years, Jan. 20

### Stillwater, Zion

Frank and Dorothy Kulling  
59 years, Jan. 4

### Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer

Don and Vernice Bersche  
51 years, Jan. 17

### Broken Arrow, Trinity



Bill and Sue Pahmeier  
61 years, Jan. 1

### Blackwell, Trinity



Carl Ray and Joyce Reutter  
51 years, Jan. 17

### Shawnee, Redeemer



David and Carolyn Watson  
58 years, Jan. 11

Share your  
news with us!



Please send submissions to Janice Hedrick at [jhedrickokdistrict@gmail.com](mailto:jhedrickokdistrict@gmail.com). You may also mail your submissions to Janice at P.O. Box 70, Owasso, OK 74055. Questions? Call 918-629-1225.

The deadline for the March 2021 issue is Jan. 15.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

### Covington, St. John's

Martin Carl  
90 years, Jan. 11

### Enid, St. Paul's

Marcella Schroeder  
91 years, Jan. 13

### Fairland, St. Paul's

Adolph Loehr  
96 years, Jan. 4

### Norman, Trinity

Grace Roley  
93 years, Jan. 22

### Okarche, St. John's

Laverne Brandley  
98 years, Jan. 14

### Oklahoma City, Messiah

Quinta Schubkegel  
94 years, Jan. 25

### Loris Wiersig

90 years, Jan. 29

### Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer

Marie Grassman, 90  
years, Jan. 8

### Belated

### Lahoma, Zion

Geneva Hobson  
90 years, Nov. 2

### Guymon, Trinity



Lois Bintz  
90 years, Jan. 9

## MESSAGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Joining saints and angels as they wear their blood-washed gown.

Their voices join the chorus with the heavenly hosts above,

And we can even blend with theirs in praise of Jesus' love!

Yet here on earth we struggle on with heart and lungs and stuff,

While cancer, COVID linger on — with those we've dealt enough!

The Scripture tells us that these things are sin's curse on our life;

And while we're here on earthen sod we'll always have such strife.

However we are hope-filled saints who trust in Jesus' grace

And cling to faith in knowing that we live in His embrace!

Our Christ will bring a special day when pain will go away!

All praise to Jesus Christ for *He's our Refuge and our Stay!*

Throughout the old year we have seen the hand of God so strong,

Empowering us when we were weak, forgiving when so wrong.

We've seen God's hand directing us throughout each passing day!

We give Him thanks for blessing us as *our Refuge and our Stay!*

Throughout the old year, God did work in many mighty ways

To let our Oklahoma saints be His bright shining rays!

His Word reminds us all the time that we are blessed by God,

And with His blessing from on high with Him we'll surely trod

Throughout each day of this new year until our work is through!

So, fellow saints, let's let Him lead; there's lots of work to do!

Whatever changes we might see, whatever comes our way,

Remember that our Savior is *our Refuge and our Stay!*

With joy and confidence in Jesus • Rev. Barrie E. Henke