



Martin Luther Sunday
November 17, 2024
Celebrating God's Presence
with Us
for 42 School Years!



Vision Statement



Martin Luther JR./SR. High School
is:

Partnered with Families and Congregations

Empowered by the Gospel

Academically Accredited

Christ-Centered and Cross-Curricular

Engaged in Excellence

2024 Recap

Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School, est. 1983

Honoring Christ...Welcoming All

After many years of prayer, study, and planning, the first classes of Martin Luther High School, Northrop began in 1983 in a rented store-front in downtown Northrop with 19 students in grades 9-10.

Over the decades, the prayers, time, energy, and countless resources devoted to the development, growth and sustenance of the Martin Luther High School Ministry have been phenomenal. Every prayer raised up on behalf of this ministry, every act of volunteerism, every meeting, every hour of planning, every block laid, every word of support, every penny given, every child attending MLHS, is a gift from God and an integral part of His intricate plan for mankind.

For the past 42 years Martin Luther High School (MLHS), Northrop has been serving our community by ***“Preparing students for discipleship until Christ’s return.”*** The MLHS Ministry has impacted the lives of 550 young men and women who have gone out into the world making a difference in whatever career they choose. Teens flourish in the nurturing atmosphere and individualized academic standards offered at MLHS. The opportunity for teens to reach their fullest potential guided by God’s love has made a real difference in their lives.

Mission Statement



**Preparing students
for discipleship
until
Christ's return**

An education at MLHS is uniquely different from other schools in the area. Christ is our leader. God’s Word is the basis for all that is taught. We are free to love teens just as Christ loves us—and we get to repeat that message to teens daily! Teens are taught to be critical thinkers and Christian leaders with servant hearts. Faith-filled adults strive daily to feed, nurture, and strengthen students’ faith and

character. They are prepared to defend their faith and be God’s witnesses in this broken world.

The MLHS Mission statement (above) aligns with that of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Mission Statement (below). www.lcms.org/about



Our Mission Statement:

In grateful response to God’s grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world.

The support for this Ministry is unparalleled. Sixteen Lutheran churches throughout southern Minnesota make up the Martin Luther High School Association which operates and supports MLHS. **We thank Trinity Lutheran Church, Trimont for increasing their membership support to Full Membership level, and we welcome St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Blue Earth as a new Supporting Level Member Congregation.**

Full Member Churches are Immanuel Lutheran, Fairmont; Salem Lutheran, Madelia; St. James Lutheran, Northrop; St. John's Lutheran, South Branch; St. John's Lutheran, Willow Creek; St. Paul Lutheran, Fairmont; St. Paul's Lutheran, Truman; St. Paul's Lutheran, Wilbert; Trinity Lutheran, Fieldon; Trinity Lutheran, Trimont; and Zion Lutheran, Fraser.

Associate Member Churches are Immanuel Lutheran, Galena; Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Winnebago; St. John's Lutheran, Antrim; St. John's Lutheran, Good Thunder; and St Paul's Lutheran Church, Blue Earth. All member churches are committed to providing spiritual and financial support. Congregations are represented by delegates which comprise the governing body. All churches are to encourage student

enrollment and promote MLHS as an extension of their ministry.

Full Member congregations commit that they will:

- encourage members to enroll their students at Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School
- participate in Association capital fund campaigns
- pray regularly during their worship service(s) for Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School
- view and promote Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School as an extension of the congregational ministry.
- forward financial support to the Association on a

preferred monthly basis according to a long term support plan.

To be a full member of the Association, a congregation will support Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School at a rate of at least 6% of its budget/income. Each congregation with a school will support MLHS at a rate of at least 4% of the congregation's budget/income.

Supporting Member congregations in the Association commit that they will:

- encourage members to enroll their students at Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School.
- participate in Association capital fund campaigns.
- pray regularly during their worship service(s) for Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School
- view and promote Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School as an extension of the congregational ministry.
- commit to regular financial support on a preferred monthly basis to the level of 1-3% of the congregation's budget/income.

Regular financial support also comes from faithful friends nationwide. It is by God's grace and through the support of individuals and businesses that MLHS can continue to impact the lives of teens in a way that only a Christian school can. Because God's Word is present in everything we do and say, MLHS receives minimal government funding. The school relies on tuition, donations, and grants to sustain



the excellent educational services provided. Today's culture has made it harder to operate efficiently and still maintain our high standard of excellence.

God has blessed us with an committed Board of Directors. They are: **Kerrie Bennett**, teacher at St Paul's Lutheran School, Truman and member of St John's, Willow Creek; **Scott Becker**, works in the Park Department for the city of Fairmont and member of St John's, Willow Creek; **Rev Timothy Chase**, Board Chairman, Pastor/Teacher at St Paul's, Truman and MLHS; **Jason Meinert, (1995)** Shift Leader at KWIK Trip and member at St Paul's, Truman; **Jeremy Sailor, (1995)** Board Trustee, owner of J & M Plumbing and member of St John's, Antrim; **Shannon Singleton**, Board Vice-president, Food Service at St Paul, Fairmont and works at Compass Group & Baywood Home Healthcare, member of St Paul, Fairmont; **Greg Sokolowski**, Board Treasurer, works as Production Manager at Ametek EMC and is a member of Immanuel, Fairmont; **Corey Wiederhoeft, (2010)** Grain Marketing Advisor at CFS and a member of St John's, Antrim; **Stephanie Zellmer, (2011)** Board Secretary, Physical Therapist at UHD and a member of Zion, Fraser.

Last year MLHS had 59 students in grades 7-12 and this year we have 64. In May of 2023 Principal Paul Steinhaus informed us that the 23-24 school year would be his last with us as he wanted to get back to Wisconsin to be near his aging mother. We had a whole year to Call a new principal.

It is so true that the need is great but the workers are few. Sean Martens of MN South District LCMS was instrumental in guiding us through the Call process. The Call Committee reviewed many names and Zoomed with multiple candidates. After Calling three experienced men who considered us, visited us, but declined; we were at a loss. It was April and we had exhausted our list of good candidates. So the Call Committee removed all the parameters and left one parameter: Are you open to a Call? That search came up with 211 names that we weeded through. One young man by the name of David Stuckwisch from Carson City, NV stood out to us. He was interested in a change, loved the Lord and loved teenagers. He had no experience as an administrator but was a trained DCE. Our thoughts



were, "If your heart is in the right place, everything else can be learned." We emailed him asking if he was interested in a Zoom meeting with the Call Committee. He said "Yes!" That meeting went very well. He wanted to come and visit. He and his wife Makenzi and two little girls took 2 flights and rented a car to get to Northrop for a whirlwind 24 hours. They attended our Dinner Auction and connected with everyone they met. The next day they went house shopping! It was truly an answer to our prayers.

Principal David Stuckwisch jumped right in and hit the ground running in June—before he was to begin officially in July. The students connect with him, and the atmosphere in the school is "festive" in the mornings before school. So far he is doing everything necessary to carry out the mission of MLHS.

At the end of May, Guidance Director, Lisa Kube, and her husband, took a dual Call to an elementary Lutheran school in northern Minnesota. The search began again. Again the Lord was with us! He brought us Amber Diekmann, who also has a deep love for kids. She has a Master's Degree in Social Work and has stepped right in, endearing herself with the staff and students. She also serves as National Honor Society and Empower Advisor.

Honoring Christ...Welcoming All

The MLHS Ministry is far-reaching. Students do not have to be Lutheran to attend. Being a part of the MLHS family is worth the drive! Students come from eight Minnesota or Iowa school districts, many traveling over an hour each morning and night. In the past students have come from Amboy, Blue Earth, Ceylon, Elmore, Fairmont, Hanska, Jackson, Lake Crystal, Lakefield, Madelia, Mapleton, Northrop, St. James, Truman, Vernon Center, Welcome, Winnebago, Truman, and Estherville and Milford, Iowa and places in-between! Several students have come to us from outside of our four Lutheran feeder schools. Fairmont Christian School, which goes up to grade six, has made connections with us and is encouraging their students to choose MLHS for grade seven. They are aligning their curriculum and calendar with us. We also have a seventh grader who attended St Mary's Catholic School in Madelia and students coming from the Blue Earth and Winnebago areas.

All of the Lutheran elementary schools have strong numbers in pre-school and the lower elementary grades. It appears that the pendulum has swung and raising your children in a safe, rural area is now the preferred choice. We have many alumni who have young children and are very supportive of MLHS and want to see it succeed and grow. It is our prayer that parents will look at MLHS as the best next choice for their child as they prepare for adulthood.

Over the summer five pastors re-wrote the religion curriculum. They teach the classes every day. They are enthusiastic and add much to our school. We thank Pastor Chase of St Paul's, Truman; Pastors Daul and Goodwin from Immanuel, Fairmont; Pastor Henry from St James, Northrop and Zion, Fraser; and Pastor Volbrecht from Salem, Madelia. Recently we had a Pastor's Appreciation lunch. Twelve of 14 invited pastors came. They had school lunch with the students and talked a little bit about why they became a pastor and encouraged our students to consider church work.

At the MN South LWML Convention this summer, MLHS was awarded an \$18,000 grant for student tuition aid which will be distributed over the next two years. The Allen C. Berndt Foundation awarded us a \$10,000 grant to be used for "school extras." It paid to take the entire student body for an Enrichment Day Trip to Camp Omega, to purchase twenty swing-arm chairs for Religion classes to be held in the Music Room and to purchase four security cameras for the school.

Cody (03) and Kaleena Weins of Weins Outdoor Service, Truman donated their time, equipment and skills to take down the dead ash trees on the campus. Many volunteers assisted with the project, which was completed in a few hours in July.

Jeremy Sailor (95) of J&M Plumbing, Vernon Center, replaced plumbing in the Science Room. He has given of his time and expertise in many areas at the school serving as Trustee on the Board of Directors.

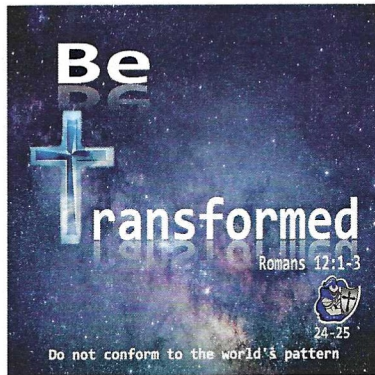
New carpeting was installed in three classrooms. Thank you to the PTL and the family of Mary Arndt for funding this project. Thank you to Joe and Nanci Oskerson for saving us thousands of dollars by removing the old carpet and installing the new.

The Fall Rummage and Bake Sale was a success, bringing in over \$19,500. Thank you to all volunteers, donors and shoppers! Proceeds provide special items for the school.

The MLHS Endowment Fund distributed over \$14,000 in income over the summer. The balance is growing due to generous donations and an improved market. We sincerely thank those who remember MLHS in their estate plans.

In April of 2023 we received several Thrivent and LCEF gifts from the estate of Allen Zeitz totaling \$115,763.62. They were all directed to the General Operating Budget. This summer we were notified that we still had money coming from Thrivent. which totaled \$22,437.90. Allan was a generous man while he was alive also. He was a substantial Exit Basket Challenge donor as well as an enthusiastic dinner auction bidder. A Lutheran school teacher, this is what Allen said: *“God’s ministries (schools, churches and missionaries) wouldn’t exist if it weren’t for those of us who can give. When I was younger, my pastor talked to me about being generous and giving. I thought, ‘How can I give very much? I can barely make ends meet as it is.’ Then I started giving and I was surprised—the money was always there! My pastor said, ‘God’s math isn’t our math.’ He was right! I never dreamed that I would be so blessed to be in a position to give so much. It is just a matter of heart and gives me great joy.”* Please consider remembering the MLHS in your estate plans.

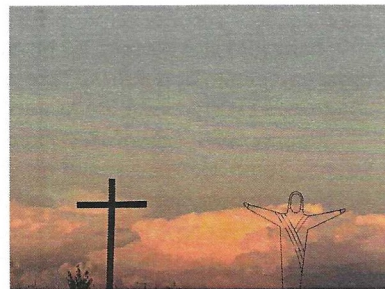
The **“On Christ, the Solid Rock, Parking Lot Project”** was launched on April 22, 2023 and is now fully completed and completely paid for. We give thanks to the community for responding so miraculously to this project.



The 2024-2025 school year theme is **“Be Transformed.”** It truly illustrates what God has done for us since the school began. The Lord has constantly created, directed, and upheld our plans during the past 40+ years. From the beginning, He has orchestrated and blessed this Ministry, providing all of our needs.

The 2024 Advent Devotions is entitled **“Immanuel—God With Us.”** This theme also exemplifies that God is in our midst, caring for us, blessing us, and edifying us—if only we observe and follow Him.

A student who recently transferred here wrote this for an assignment, *“There is more to it! MLHS is more than just a school. It is not only a school but a place for kids to look forward to going to and, for some, possibly even a safe place for some to come to. We have people here that care and look forward to making sure everyone is okay. Not only is Martin Luther a place that brings us closer as human beings, but it also brings us closer with our Lord Jesus Christ. Many people don't go to church because their parents don't wake up early enough to take them or they can't drive, so as a student at Martin Luther you can grow closer to Jesus by having Religion everyday and Chapel Monday, Wednesday and Friday.”*



Thank you for being a **“doer”** in sustaining the MLHS Ministry. Please keep your Lutheran high school as a priority in your prayers, involvement, topic of conversation, and giving that we may continue to **“prepare student for discipleship until Christ’s return.”** *There is more to it!*

Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School, est. 1983
A Ministry for Future Generations
Honoring Christ...Welcoming All

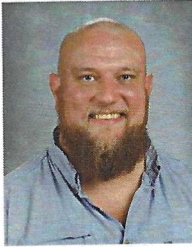


Spot Light on the KNIGHTS

-Romans 13:12

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www.martinlutherhs.com



The Grind

As we get into the grind of the season, it starts to feel like everything is coming at us all at once. The time change throws us off-kilter. Everything gets darker sooner. Thanksgiving and Christmas are coming. We had another excellent Rummage Sale put on by our PTL. The Theater club put on phenomenal performances. Volleyball and Football have ended or are close to ending. Soon winter sports will spring into action. We just had the Mission Possible Benefit Dinner, which is an amazing opportunity for the community to come out and show their support for the mission of Martin Luther Jr/Sr High School.

Our mission statement reads, *"Preparing Students for discipleship until Christ's return."* Our goal is not just to prepare students academically or to prepare them to enter a world and culture that disagrees with their values; but for them to embrace the great commission and to go, baptize, and teach to obey. Our objective is to prepare students to be in the world—but not of the world. Our aim is that for the rest of their lives students will be able to stand firm in their faith and values in the face of temptation and worldly desires.

At MLHS we stand firm in our Lutheran doctrine and identity while providing an exceptional, well-rounded high school education. MLHS is the only high school in the area that can freely share God's Word and prayer in the classroom. What a joy and privilege that is!

Paul writes to the Church in Ephesus, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* We are preparing our students to seize the opportunities that God has already placed before them to show the light of Christ through their words and actions. We keep re-emphasizing that kindness is free and that we need to love everyone as Christ loved us.

Please keep Martin Luther Junior/Senior High School in your prayers as we strive to shine the light of Christ throughout our community and beyond. I love you all.

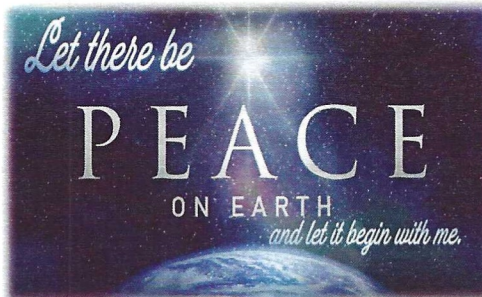
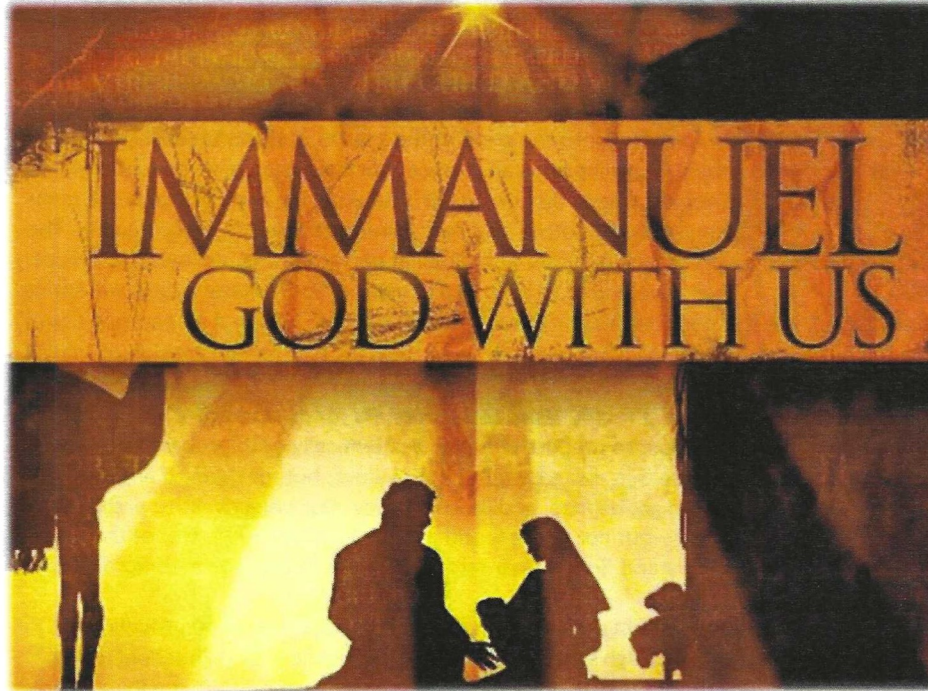
Jesus loves you. I love you.

Your partner in Christ's service,

David Stuckwisch, Principal
Director of Christian Education
Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod

Thank You

SOLIDEO
GLORIA



“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”

Matthew 5:8-9

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Wishing you a happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.
May God be with you and yours in 2025.