

Making Christ Known in the

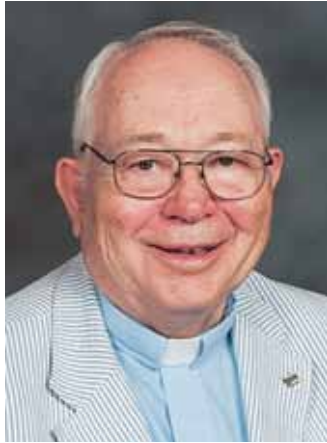


Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

January/February 2018 • Volume 31 • Issue 1

Rev. Gordon Carls: a Legacy of Ministry in Word, Wood, and Deed

Bishop Gary Erickson, Assistant to the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM)



Gordon Carls was born November 2, 1927 in South Dakota. In May 1952, he graduated from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN. He served congregations in Minnesota and Iowa before being called as chaplain at Pleasant View Lutheran Home, Ottawa, IL. He retired from full-time ministry in 1993.

In his own words Pastor Carls said, "I've been told that pastors should retire early and often. I've tried that, early from parish ministry at 54, chaplaincy at 66, visitation pastor at 84, lumber cutting at 85, wood carving at 86, writing..." Gordon published a book of his poems in 2016, shortly before his death on February 21, 2017.

In a poem titled, "On meeting a friend," Gordon wrote:

It occurs to me
That human respect
Demands
Greetings when we meet:
"Auf wiedersehen"
When we part.

In short this brief poem:
"Hi"
"Bye"

Pastor Carls' legacy of ministry in word lives on through his poems. His ministry in wood is a legacy shared here

and abroad. You might be familiar with the large cross in the conference room at the Synod office in Rockford – a gift from Gordon Carls! Over the years Gordon made many smaller replicas of that cross. One stands at the stage at our Synod Assembly each year. Small crosses were carried to Tanzania and India by travelers from Northern Illinois!

In addition to the many people touched by God's grace through Gordon's

ministry of word, wood, and deed, his memory is cherished by his wife Donna, 6 children, 11 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and 27 nieces and nephews. †



Feed My Sheep

Judy Taylor, member First, Galesburg

It's easy to become complacent in our lives as Christians, but this is not what Jesus wants from us. Sometimes it takes a series of events to change things. When our

congregation at First Lutheran Church, Galesburg, got a new pastor, she encouraged us to look at our assets rather than our needs. We brainstormed ways to help our community and came up with several.

We have a large building that is under-utilized much of the time. Pastor Pam Marolla found out that the local Habitat for Humanity group needed new office space so we voted to rent them part of our building and built a wheelchair ramp so that

continued on p. 2

The Augustana College Campus Kitchen

from ELCA World Hunger

Witticisms about college students surviving on cheap noodles and coffee abound, but hunger on campus and off campus is no laughing matter. Just ask the student leaders at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois.

With support from an ELCA World Hunger Education and Networking grant, students at Augustana, an ELCA-affiliated institution, launched a new effort to address hunger on campus and in the surrounding community in 2016. The Augustana College Campus Kitchen is affiliated with The Campus Kitchens Project (CKP), a national nonprofit and partner of ELCA World Hunger. CKP facilitates student-led initiatives on campuses across the country to target food waste and hunger. Students provide a way for excess food from dining services and other on-campus

sources to be distributed to people in need.

At Augustana, the Campus Kitchen student leadership team saw early on that hunger is not just a problem off-campus. Many students themselves face food insecurity and often find it difficult to access the nutritious food they need to get through school and work. In fact, a 2016 study by the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness found 48 percent of respondents reported being food insecure in the 30 days prior to being surveyed.

The Augustana College Campus Kitchen began their work by hosting community meals for fellow students. But they didn't stop there. Lauren



Clapp, a member of the leadership team, details some of the great work they have been doing the past year:

Hello from the Augustana College Campus Kitchen!

The meals we offer have been a great success so far and have made a big impact on campus. We have heard from some

continued on p. 4

Feed My Sheep... continued from front page people coming to the Habitat office that needed one could have access. We also have several members who serve on the Habitat board and even more that volunteer at the builds. Pastor Pam and several members even did a Habitat build in El Salvador.

When the local teachers were negotiating a new contract and needed a place to meet and have meetings with the public our building was volunteered and used. Sadly, a teacher's strike occurred and the place for meeting was used even more. In return, the teachers brought in donations for our food pantry that were badly needed. We provided food baskets for many of the non-certified staff who were adversely affected by the strike.

We've had a food pantry to provide food for the poor in our city for quite some time. Our members have been very generous in donating food



and money and staffing the pantry. With the closing of a couple of local factories the need became even greater. Our church is also located in an area that would be considered a "food desert," especially when the closest grocery store closed in order to open a new store several miles away. We have three low-income housing projects for seniors and the

disabled close by. Many residents of these apartment buildings have no transportation, but we're within walking distance for them. We really know that there's a desperate need when some of these people walk to get food from us in below freezing weather, in summer heat, and in rainstorms. We've expanded our giving, and in the last year, we

provided food for over 800 people.

A few years ago our city began the "Great Galesburg Shake." This is a program designed to teach social skills that will help our students comport themselves well in the work world. They are taught to look the person who is speaking to them in the eye, to shake hands and use polite manners, and to express themselves well when speaking to adults. One young boy when interviewed by a community

leader was asked what he would do if someone gave him \$1,000. The boy thought for a minute and then said, "I'd keep a quarter of it and donate the rest to charity." The adult pressed the boy a little more and asked, "What

charity would you donate the money to?" The boy thought a bit and then answered, "I'd give it to the First Lutheran Church food pantry." The adult asked, "Why would you give the money to them? Do you belong to that church?" The boy replied, "No, but I live across the street and I see people getting food there." The community leader was so impressed that he gave the boy the \$1,000. The boy and his parents then donated \$750 anonymously to our food pantry. This boy's parents are commendable in the way they've raised him to be compassionate to those in need and we are very grateful for his donation.

Another project we've been involved in has been to bake birthday and graduation cakes for the students at a local alternative high school. The principal of the school came to talk to us about the needs of the students at his school. He said that some of his students are homeless, either living in a car or "couch surfing".

Some have to raise younger siblings because the parents are either in prison, using drugs, or otherwise not doing the parenting. He said that for some of these kids even getting a birthday cake would be a new experience. That gave us the idea of baking a birthday cake for each student. We got a grant to start buying disposable pans, cake mixes, and frosting and our members took it from there. Every student got a birthday cake this year. For



those with summer birthdays we gave them cakes on their half birthdays. When we found out that some of the students would graduate in December we decided that this was too important an accomplishment not to celebrate.

These students got a cake to celebrate their graduation. At the end of the year there were 48 students graduating from high school. Many of these students would probably not have accomplished this goal were it not for the loving environment they have at this school. We made and delivered 48 cakes to their graduation ceremony. In all 47 volunteers from our church were involved in making cakes, shopping and putting together the materials needed, making birthday and graduation cards, making

reminder calls to the cake bakers, and delivering the cakes. A total of 132 cakes were made for these students. One student reportedly told one of the school staff members that the biggest reason he'd

come to school that day was so that he could get his cake. While we'd all prefer that he come to school to learn, if the cake added an incentive, we're glad. When one of the staff members attended a national conference on alternative schools she mentioned this project. Many people came up to her to find out more about it and said that they were going to try to get this for their schools.

Another activity we've begun in the last few years is our "Calling and Caring" ministry. Some of our members "adopt" a shut-in and visit with them on a regular basis. We take them communion, small treats, copies of devotion booklets, CDs of Sunday sermons, and generally make sure they know that their church family hasn't forgotten them and that we care.

We have also reached out to the community by hosting several concerts, a group traveling by bicycle from Canada to do a Habitat for Humanity build in New Orleans, and by having a yearly pet blessing for all who love their pets (A pair of pet turkeys were blessed one year.) with the offering going to the local animal shelter.

We have learned that our church's mission is far more than bringing people into church on Sunday morning. We're here to be Christ's hands on Earth today. †



The Augustana College Campus Kitchen... continued from p. 2
students that these meals are one of the few times they have access to healthy, sufficient food. We have had two already this year and are amping up for a third very soon. During our second meal we served a record number of 233 meals to students on campus, bringing our total number of meals served to 888 meals since our launch November 2016. Of those 888 meals served, 830 pounds of the food was recovered from our campus dining center! This next meal we are looking forward to hopefully breaking our previous record of 233 meals!

This past term the student leadership team at Augustana launched our Campus Cupboard in collaboration with another organization on campus. So far the Cupboard has received 3,611 of pounds in food donations and given out 2,290 pounds. The cupboard is open 4 hours a week and averages about 36 students per week. As the cupboard's presence on campus continues to grow we are excited to see what the future will look like!

We also know that the stigma about hunger on campus is significant, so we launched a #starvethestigma Sticker Program to help raise awareness and reduce stigma. The sticker program is a 45-minute training program for faculty and staff of Augustana College. The program addresses what food insecurity is, what it looks like in the community and on campus, how to address the issue among students, and how to be a

resource for those seeking help. Upon completion of the program the faculty or staff member receives a sticker to put on the outside of their office space to let students

know they have been through the training and are dedicated to addressing the issue of food insecurity on campus.

In terms of the future, the Augustana College Campus Kitchens will be presenting the Sticker Program two more times this year to educate our faculty and staff on what food insecurity is, what it looks like on our campus and how they can be resources for the students. We are also looking into attending CKP's Food Waste and Hunger Summit again this year in March and are hoping to send more than one of our leadership team members. After attending last year with ELCA World Hunger, I returned with enough enthusiasm and information that our entire leadership team is hoping to go and experience the fun!

Thanks to Lauren for sharing this update, and to the team at Augustana for their hard work in ending hunger! Follow the Augustana College Campus Kitchen on Facebook! [facebook.com/CampusKitchenatAugustana](https://www.facebook.com/CampusKitchenatAugustana). †



Making Christ Known

is a bimonthly electronic newsletter of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

The Rev. Jeffrey Clements, Bishop

Northern Illinois Synod
 103 W. State St.
 Rockford, IL 61101

815-964-9934

www.nisynod.org
[facebook.com/nisynod](https://www.facebook.com/nisynod)
twitter.com/nisynod

Congregations are encouraged to reprint articles for congregational use.

Send submissions to Karin Graddy, AiM Communication Director
karin@nisynod.org