



The Messenger

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Minnesota Association of Christian Schools

America's Birth Certificate



By: Alan J. Hodak

On my recent trip to Washington, D.C., Dr. David Barton spoke to us about the incredible blessings we have received as a nation. A few of these blessings are characterized by the following points:

- America only has about 4.5% of the world's population, yet produces about 22% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP).
- Despite America's small percentage of the world's population, she produces well over 90% of the world's creativity (measured in inventions, patents, entertainment, etc.).
- It is stated that Americans eat too well. So abundant is the availability of food, and Americans have so much money to purchase it, that we are seeing an ever increasing rate of obesity - 27.7%, the

(Continued on page 2)

In Memory of Pastor Ed Johnson — 1932 - 2014



Pastor Ed Johnson
1932—2014

Dr. Edwin Johnson became pastor of First Baptist Church in Rosemount, MN on June 7, 1967. He started the church's first Vacation Bible School and witnessed tremendous growth in the church in his first five years as pastor. A new building was erected and dedicated on January 31, 1971 and ground breaking took place in April of 1972 for a new church auditorium. Pastor Johnson was instrumental in starting First Baptist Christian School in 1971 as enrollments were accepted from Kindergarten – 4th grade. The school added K4 and 5/6th grades in 1972 and junior high and high school were completed by 1974. It was in 1974 that Pastor Johnson received his doctorate from Hyles-Anderson College. In 1976, First Baptist School held its first graduation ceremony

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highest so far in our history (McCarthy, 2014, “Gallup”).

If these points of information are any indication of how easy we have it in our nation (in comparison to the rest of the world), our ease has come as a result of something... Was it hard work? Sacrifice? The prosperity of the previous generation? God’s Hand of blessing? What was the source that caused our nation to have unprecedented freedom, stability and prosperity? Barton credited our nation’s success to some simple foundational beliefs that our Founders wrote about in the Declaration of Independence.

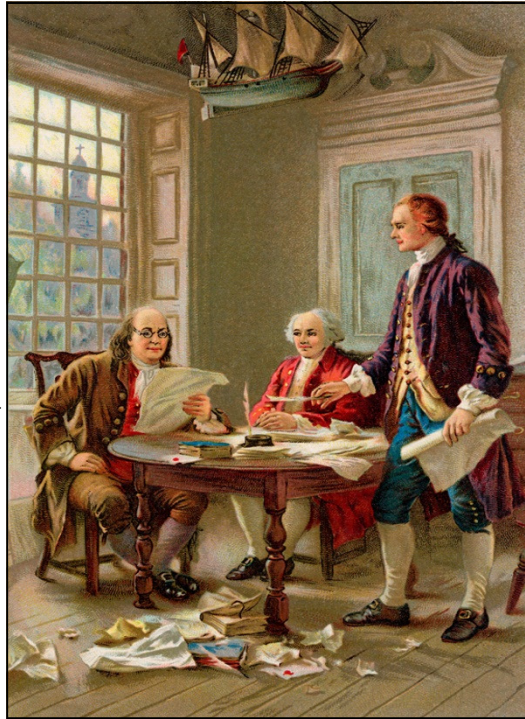
Eleven years prior to the signing of our Constitution, a declaration was made to the nation of Britain to proclaim that a new nation would be formed, a nation that would break away from the mother country and stand on its own. She would become a new nation with a new beginning, a nation whose central focus would be founded upon a number of important principles. This declaration was a government declaration. This was not just a letter to a king, but a statement of intent and purpose from a newly formed government. Once that statement was made public, there would be no turning back. The lives of the fifty-six men who signed that document would forever be changed. These brave men gave our nation a national birth certificate in the form of a declaration to Britain. The message was easy to understand, well-outlined, and clearly communicated. This new national birth certificate would define the new nation’s stand against Britain as well as state a foundation of several points that would set the tone for our nation’s Constitution and Bill of Rights.

The Declaration of Independence was a document for the ages, and it was studied and understood by all our early leaders in the history of our nation. Dr. Barton believed it set the framework for our culture to flourish. So, what were some of the immutable (unchangeable) principles written about that have had such a lasting impact on our nation’s history?

There was a general agreement that there was a sovereign God who was the Creator of the world who ruled over the

affairs of man. The Declaration referred to God several times throughout the document. We first see that “Nature’s God” entitled a people to a “separate and equal station” among the powers of the earth. Second, God created all men to be equal and provided for man inalienable rights (rights given by God that cannot be taken away). Third, as an assembly, the founders appealed to God as the “Supreme Judge of the World” regarding their intentions to be a free and independent nation. Fourth, the founders prayed for and relied on the “protection of divine Providence” regarding the creation of a new nation. So much was their

reliance on God that the closing sentence of the Declaration says, *“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”* If people would read the beginning paragraphs and the final paragraph of the Declaration, they could not deny that the Founders agreed that God was a Sovereign, Creator God who answered prayer and was active in their affairs.



Because the Founders believed in a Sovereign God who also was the Supreme Judge of the World, they acknowledged that God’s power was greater than man’s. Note also that in this government declaration, government

acknowledged that there was a Divine Creator and that this Creator was a higher power than herself. When a government does not acknowledge God, it is saying that she is sovereign over God. But the realization of our founders was that they understood there was a God that man was to serve, and man could not usurp His authority no matter how powerful he became. It was George Washington who said, “It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the Providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly implore His protection and favor.”

God gave man certain inalienable rights. Barton stated, that within the Founder’s writings, there were about two dozen rights identified and recognized. These were rights including the rights of life, liberty and property. These rights, like a fingerprint, should remain unchanged forever. Because these were rights which God gave to man, no inferior power

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(American, Continued from page 2)

should ever be able to take them away. In the mindset of the fifty-six founders, the inferior power was any government who would attempt to take those rights away from the individual.

Our government existed (in part) to protect our original inalienable rights. Government should never usurp, interrupt, redefine, or take those God-given rights away. That principle is one reason why those who serve in positions of government swear an oath on the Bible. The oath states that the government officials will preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and not change, redefine, or compromise it. Those who want to serve in our government should read the Declaration and understand what the Founders believed so that they are then willing to defend those founding beliefs. Those unwilling to swear an oath on the Bible to defend our Constitution should never be allowed to serve in our government.

These four principles teach us something about our Founders' beliefs in God and their personal convictions. I don't know if all of the Founders were men who walked with Christ. History would suggest that many did not; however, fifty-six men agreed with the content of the document and each signed the Declaration. By signing it, they "*mutually pledged to each other, their Lives, their Fortunes, and their sacred Honor.*" They knew that the result of the Declaration would be war, and they knew that they were risking everything to begin a nation that recognized

individual liberties that were God-given and could not be taken away, religious freedom to worship and serve God, and an intense desire to see a new and independent nation which recognized all men as equal in the sight of God.

During my trip to Washington, D.C., I was reminded repeatedly that our heritage is very easy to trace, especially in our nation's Capitol. Our Founding documents are on display; paintings everywhere depict early American history, and there are many statues of men (especially in our Capitol) who made significant contributions to early America. But it is the original birth certificate, the Declaration of Independence, that tells about our origin. It speaks of our parentage and place of birth. The Declaration validates our nation's origin, and it credits a deep love and respect for God as Creator and gives us a heartbeat, a heartbeat driven by freedom and a desire to sustain those freedoms in perpetuity. It credits the Creator of the universe as the One who will sustain it and of a government bound to protect it.

We only have to honestly look at our Declaration to understand the original intent of our Founders.

Italics represent excerpts from the Declaration of Independence.

McCarthy, J. (2014) *In U.S., adult obesity rate now at 27.7%. Washington, D.C.: Gallup World Headquarters.*

MACS 2015 Calendar

- January 23 – Student Leadership Conference at Fourth Baptist
- January 27 – Legislative Breakfast at Kelly Inn in St. Paul
- February 5 – Speech and Bible Festival at Woodcrest
- February 26-28 – MACS State Basketball Tourney at Fourth Baptist
- March 6 – MACS Jr. High Fine Arts Festival at Rosemount
- April 10 – MACS Fine Arts Festival at Fourth Baptist
- April 10 – MACS Annual Meeting at Fourth Baptist
- May 8* – Granite City Baptist Annual Track Meet, St. Cloud **date change*



(Dr. Johnson Memorial, continued from page 1)

with eleven graduates in May of that year. In 1977, Dr. Johnson became associated with MACS as President of the state chapter. Through the years, Dr. Johnson became very interested in legislative issues that impacted our Christian schools. In 1987, Dr. Johnson served on a task force to pass legislation called, "Definition of a School Bill" in the state of Minnesota. That legislation enabled parents to choose private, public or home school options that would meet a fully legal avenue allowing for parenting choice in the education of their children.

Dr. Johnson served on the Board of Directors of the American Association of Christian School for two terms (1991-1995 and 1999-2002). He was honored to be asked to pray in the US House of Representatives as their guest chaplain on September 13, 1993 and was a delegate to the National Republican Convention in 1996. Dr. Johnson served as the Executive Director of the Minnesota Association of Christian Schools, for well over fifteen years.

Dr. Johnson is survived by his wife of fifty-eight years, Ellie. He had two sons, Rick and Mark and two daughters Sara and Lori. Three of his children are involved in Christian education in some capacity. Sara was a teacher at First Baptist in Rosemount. The Johnsons have eleven grandchildren and lived in Florida in the winter as well as Minnesota in the warmer months.

Dr. Johnson served as Pastor Emeritus at First Baptist Church and was active in speaking all around the country.

We are grateful to Dr. Johnson for his service to the cause of Christian education, a cause that we continue to fight for in our generation. May we be found as faithful as Dr. Johnson and may God give us protection, strength, and the freedom to continue to operate our Christian schools as we have in the past.

Dr. Johnson was memorialized at a service at First Baptist Church in Rosemount, Minnesota, on Monday, November 10, 2014. -Alan J. Hodak



NEW Standardized Testing — Coming Spring of 2016

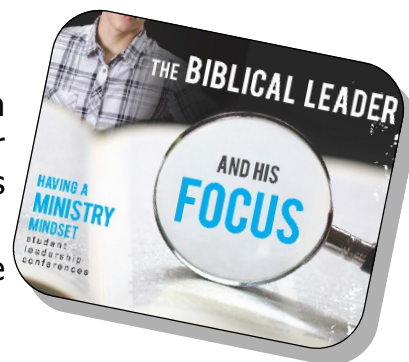
Beginning with the Spring of 2016 testing, the AACCS program will be with Riverside Publishing for the Iowa Assessments and the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test). The Iowa Assessments are a highly respected nationally-normed standardized achievement test series from a company with decades of experience and a proven record of quality. Costs for materials and scoring will be below catalog and comparable to current costs in the AACCS SAT10 program. Schools will need to budget for the changeover in purchasing new testing materials. Paper/pencil administration will be standard, but there will also be new options for schools, including online administration and online reporting. We anticipate sending information about the assessments, including costs for materials and scoring, before Thanksgiving. ♦



STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The conference this year will be held on January 23, 2015 at Fourth Baptist Christian School, 9:00am—3:00pm. We are planning on \$15 per participant (includes lunch). We would love to see as many students participate as possible from grades 7—12.

Contact Mr. Alan Hodak if you are interested in having your school take part this year ahodak@fourthbaptist.org.



MACS Member Schools for 2014-15:	Administrator:	Phone:	Administrator e-mail:
Chisago Lakes Baptist School	Administrator: Michael Elliot	Tel: 651-257-4587	melliott@clbspatriots.org
Coon Rapids Christian School	Administrator: Brian Veth	Tel: 763-755-1278	hookeypook@aol.com
First Baptist Christian School	Pastor: Joshua Hawn	Tel: 218-732-3321	pastor@fbcpr.org
First Baptist School	Administrator: Charlie Graves	Tel: 651-423-2272	Charlie.graves@fbcrosemount.org
Fourth Baptist Christian School	Administrator: Alan Hodak	Tel: 763-417-8240	ahodak@fourthbaptist.org
Grace Christian School	Administrator: Andy Rogers	Tel: 507-388-9355	andyrogers19@gmail.com
Granite City Baptist Academy	Pastor/Administrator: Dennis Campbell	Tel: 320-251-2801	info@granitecitybaptist.org
Heritage Christian School	Administrator: Mark Hanson	Tel: 218-436-2144	mhanson@heritagepatriots.org
Lake Region Christian School	Administrator: Steve Ogren	Tel: 218-828-1226	sogren@lrcsmail.com
New Ulm Christian School	Administrator/Pastor: Robert Fuller, Jr.	Tel: 507-354-3323	drjfr@comcast.net
Owatonna Christian School	Administrator: Pastor David Levy	Tel: 507-451-3495	dlevy@gracebaptistministry.org
Prior Lake Christian Academy	Pastor: Samuel Choi	Tel: 952-447-7527	samuelchoi@priorlakebaptist.org
Redstorn Homeschool Association	Administrator: Aaron Morhart	Tel: 218-885-2002	armorhart@gmail.com
St. Francis Christian School	Administrator: Russ Peterson	Tel: 763-753-1230	rpeterson@fbcsaintfrancis.com
Victory Christian Academy	Administrator: Dan Mohler	Tel: 507-289-2966	dwmohler@gmail.com
Woodcrest Baptist Academy	Administrator: Loren Isaacs	Tel: 763-571-6409	loren.isaacs@woodcrestbaptistacademy.org



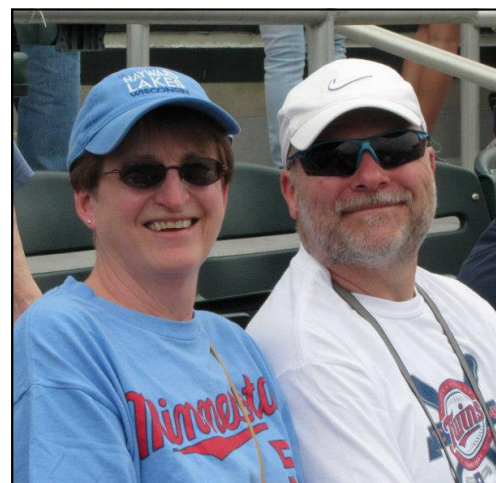
"Teacher of the Year" Awarded at the 2014-15 MN/WI Combined

Mrs. Susann Russell Elementary teacher Fourth Baptist Christian School

Mrs. Sue Russell has taught at Fourth Baptist Christian School since 1974. I was only 14 years old at the time she began teaching! Her longevity as a teacher in our system spanned the old Fourth Fremont site, the transition site and the entire 16 year history of our school at the Plymouth site. Sue taught when enrollments were 600+ and has seen literally close to 1000 students come through her doors in that time period. Planning to continue to teach for several years, news of cancer halted everything last year, near the completion of the 3rd quarter of school. Surgery had to occur, right away. On her last day before surgery, we assembled the entire student body, all 205 of them, to pray. We had asked her husband, Jay, and a number of staff in the church and seminary to come and be a part. Pastor Matt prayed and we sent her off, the only way we could, with prayers and hopes for successful surgery. It was quite an emotional time for Sue as just about all the older students in grades 5-12 had Mrs. Russell as their fourth grade teacher.

When the doctors opened her up to remove the cancer, they closed her up just as quickly – The tumors were too large and too wide-spread, the cancer was throughout her colon. The news was not what we had anticipated, but aggressive chemotherapy gave hope that the tumors could be shrunk and surgery scheduled at a later date.

Sue, as is typical of who she is, didn't want to just sit around at home. "It would drive me crazy," she said. So she asked if she could be the lunchroom monitor and I was happy to have her do that task for us. With four half-hour lunch periods each day, Sue would get a couple of hours in everyday with the students and that would be physically demanding enough as her treatments had gone through the summer. A second surgery was scheduled for October 1. Our students, class to class, continued to pray for her on a daily basis. Our families continued to pray for her daily. The news from the CT scan showed that the tumors had decreased in size, but the caution was still that there was much cancer present. Sue's attitude through all of this was remarkable. She had been an awesome testimony of walking through a trial and trusting the Lord, as best she could, to take her through this. Sue would later testify that God truly gave her grace for the place.



On Wednesday, October 8th, Sue was still recovering from surgery. The news was that the doctors thought that they were able to remove all of the cancer. Recovery would include further chemotherapy, but the prognosis was very favorable and we rejoice with Sue and her husband, Jay. Sue plans to come back and resume her duties as our "Lunch Mom" as soon as she is able.

Sue, we rejoice with you and want you to know we love you. On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Christian Schools, we believe it is only fitting to award you the 2014 MACS Elementary Teacher of the Year Award. Through the years, Mrs. Russell has modeled hard work, a commitment to the philosophy of Christian education, she has expected her students to perform at a high level, and she has been faithful and diligent at her work. And she's a pretty good lunch monitor to boot. Congratulations, Sue Russell we honor you today with this award.

~Alan J. Hodak

to Two Very Deserving Ladies Teacher's Convention in the Dells

Mrs. Tatum Ogren Middle School teacher Lake Region Christian School



Mrs. Tatum Ogren has been a teacher at Lake Region Christian School for fourteen years. She began teaching in preschool and eventually moved to fifth and sixth grades. For the last four years, she has also been the middle school department head. She has a heart for teaching her students and instilling in them godly character. Her love for her students is evident to each one of them as she strived to help each one learn and grow. Mrs. Ogren has also coached volleyball. As the coach, she not only has taught the girls about working together as a team, but she has modeled for them how to live a Christ-like life both on and off the court. Mrs. Ogren shows her servant's heart by being willing to do any task that needs to be done, and often these tasks are behind the scenes.



Mrs. Ogren is an active, faithful part of the ministry of First Baptist Church. She teaches the high school girls' Sunday School class, children's church, and she is also involved in the music ministry. Her Sunday school class is a special ministry for her, and she values the opportunity to be an influence in the lives of the young women. Mrs. Ogren is also willing to help fill-in wherever a need arises.

Some words that come to mind when we consider Mrs. Ogren are faithful, dependable, and a servant. We are blessed to have her be a part of our ministry.

~Pastor David Grotzke

We congratulate both ladies on their accomplishments and thank them for their years of service to the Lord in our Christian Schools.

"And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season, we shall reap, if we faint not." - Galatians 6:9

Guest Conductor Mixes Music With Humor at MACS Band Festival

The MACS Band Festival was held on Friday, November 7, 2014 at Fourth Baptist. Mr. John Herlihy from the University of Northwestern, St. Paul was our guest conductor. 85 Students from Chisago Lakes Baptist School, Chisago City; Fourth Baptist Christian School, Plymouth; First Baptist School, Rosemount; Owatonna Christian School; and Woodcrest Baptist Academy, Fridley participated in our Festival. The students participated in masterclasses in the morning taught by local professional musicians and had 3 full group rehearsals throughout the day. The students especially enjoyed the humor their guest conductor employed throughout the practice sessions, and many gave comments that they thought he was just great and really funny.

The day ended with a concert featuring 4 band selections and 1 percussion ensemble song. The repertoire performed was: *Fanfare Prelude: And Can It Be* arranged by Timothy Johnson; *Irish Tune from County Derry* by Percy Grainger; *Miniature Overture* by Jack Stamp; *Black Horse Troop* by John Philip Sousa; and a percussion ensemble called *Christmas Presence* by Chris Brooks. The students accomplished much throughout the day and we hope the instrumental music programs in our schools will be strengthened because of our festival. The concert video can be viewed online at <http://vimeo.com/channels/796146>.



2014 MACS State Soccer & Volleyball Tourney Results



Boys' Soccer

Champion: Lake Region Hornets

Second Place: Chisago Patriots

Third Place: Heritage Patriots

Consolation: Fourth Baptist Warriors

Girls' Volleyball

Champion: Fourth Baptist Warriors

Second Place: Woodcrest Warriors

Third Place: First Baptist Crusaders—Rosemount

Consolation: St. Francis Lady Patriots



ABOVE: All Tournament Volleyball Team L to R: Moore, Klopp, Van Luyk, Webster (MVP), Graves, Tutt.

2014 All Tournament Teams

Boys Soccer:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. MVP: Tyler Ogren—LRCS | 7. Aaron Trott—Heritage |
| 2. Ryan Christenson—LRCS | 8. John Yeom—Rosemount |
| 3. Joe Beltran—LRCS | 9. Jae Kim—Rosemount |
| 4. Jin Yeop—Chisago | 10. Blake Main—Fourth Baptist |
| 5. Austin Hraba—Chisago | 11. Kevin Malwitz—Owatonna |
| 6. Bryton Hanson—Heritage | |

Girls Volleyball:

1. MVP: Jayden Webster—Fourth Baptist
2. Julia Van Luyk—Fourth Baptist
3. Allison Tutt—Woodcrest
4. Christy Graves—Rosemount
5. Marlee Moore—Lake Region



ABOVE: All Tournament Soccer Team

L to R: Yeop, Trott, Hanson, Malwitz, Kim, Yeom, Hraba, Main, Beltran, Christenson, Ogren (MVP).

MACS 2014 Soccer Champion Lake Region Christian School Hornets—Brainerd/Baxter



**Soccer Second Place Team -
Chisago Patriots from Chisago Lakes**
(pictured at left)



ABOVE: All Conference First Team L to R: Kim, Yeom, Ward, Schultz, Hanson, Wikstrom, Christenson, Beltran, Tomsche, Main, Brink, Neilson.

MACS 2014 Volleyball Champion Fourth Baptist Christian School Warriors—Plymouth



**Volleyball Second Place Team -
Woodcrest Baptist Academy from Fridley
(pictured at right)**



**LEFT: All Conference First Team
L to R: Horner, Webster, Ureke, Douglas,
Snow, Greiner.**

2014 All-Conference Selections

First Team - Soccer

1. Alex Brink—Chisago
2. Luke Nielson—Chisago
3. Blake Main—Fourth Baptist
4. Paul Tomsche—Fourth Baptist
5. Joey Beltran—Lake Region
6. Ryan Christenson—Lake Region
7. Bryton Hanson—Heritage
8. Ethan Schultz—Owatonna/Mankato
9. Jacob Ward—Owatonna/Mankato
10. John Yeom—Rosemount
11. Jae Kim—Rosemount
12. Devin Wikstrom—Lake Region

Second Team - Soccer

1. Seth Murphy—Rosemount
2. Aaron Russell—Heritage
3. Mike Steien—Heritage
4. Kaleb Walters—Woodcrest
5. Luke Hraba—Chisago
6. Jin Yeop—Chisago
7. Ben King—Fourth Baptist
8. Weston King—Fourth Baptist
9. Tanner Wikstrom—Lake Region
10. Kevin Malwitz—Owatonna/Mankato
11. Andrew Johnson—Rosemount

Honorable Mention - Soccer

1. Andy Fruetel—Rosemount
2. Alex Wilson—Owatonna/Mankato
3. Ian Medicraft—Heritage
4. Morese Chatman—Granite City/Twin Ports
5. Tyler Hugg—Granite City/Twin Ports
6. Jared Leith—Fourth Baptist
7. Michael Graves—Rosemount
8. Josiah Helwig—Heritage
9. Logan Piccott—Chisago
10. Kevin Penner—Woodcrest
11. Tyler Ogren—Lake Region
12. Levi Jensen—Lake Region
13. Tim Afsanyev—Rosemount



First Team – Volleyball

1. Jayden Webster—Fourth Baptist
2. Jessica Ureke—Woodcrest
3. Cassie Douglas—Rosemount
4. Taylor Snow—Lake Region
5. Natalie Greiner—Owatonna
6. Mara Horner—St. Francis

Second Team – Volleyball

1. Rhea Wikstrom—Heritage
2. Julia Van Luyk—Fourth Baptist
3. Allison Tutt—Woodcrest
4. Catie Pierson—Rosemount
5. Abby Grider—Lake Region
6. Alicia Smith—Owatonna
7. Lea Boring—St. Francis
8. Morgan Klopp—Heritage
9. Jessica Keck—Chisago
10. Mariesa Hennessey—Grace Mankato

Honorable Mention – Volleyball

1. Emily Kolacz—Fourth Baptist
2. Alaura DeMaris—Woodcrest
3. Christy Graves—Rosemount
4. Bethany Roberts—Owatonna
5. Amanda Anderson—St. Francis
6. Sarah Wilson—Heritage
7. Rachel Kirkwold—Chisago
8. Lilly Schultz—Grace-Mankato