

September 2024

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IN TOUCH

A publication of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
The Lutheran Witness Michigan District, LCMS Supplement



FROM THE PRESIDENT

What If?

 by Rev. David A. Davis

Life is filled with “what ifs.” Think of those chances or directions not taken where you ask, “What if?” There is that famous nursery rhyme, which actually goes back to the 1600’s, about “ifs” and wishes and horses and beggars. Then there is Rudyard Kipling’s famous poem that was filled with a string of “ifs.”

Here’s one for us Christians to contemplate. “What if the Bible is true?” And this is not in a theoretical sense—that it is accurate. Rather, what if the Bible is “true true”—true and authoritative for real life and everyday living, practical and

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Kingdom living?

For instance, what if the Bible is “true true” when it comes to prayer? Jesus makes some whopping promises about prayer. Prayer is at the heart of much of the biblical action. Think about the prophets and their prayer lives. Luther lived out such teaching, even claiming in his Large Catechism that the whole Reformation advancement was connected to prayer.

What if your life lived out the biblical truths about prayer? What would it look like day by day? Does it?

Or what about salvation itself? What if it is really “true true” that our sins are forgiven, we are reconciled to God, all this is a complete gift, and we will live forever with Him in glory? Does that impact our gratitude-to-grumbling ratio? Would that change what is or is not on our bucket list, or even whether or not we have one? In what ways does greater clarity of eternal life touch today’s life?

Then there is the topic of love. What if the Bible is “true true” when it comes to love? God loves us. We love God. We love neighbors. Neighbors include family. Neighbors include enemies. The Bible does not speak to, or at least never commends, falling out of love with someone.

And so on. You pick the topic: mercy, justice, money, sexual purity, politics, child rearing, language, life itself. What if the Bible is “true true” about such things? Not “true true” for everyone else, but “true true” for you?

Of course, such clarity on this would drive us ever more to reading and knowing the Bible. We read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Scriptures not for theological information, but to live in relationship with Jesus as The Truth and with the “true true” wisdom He provides.

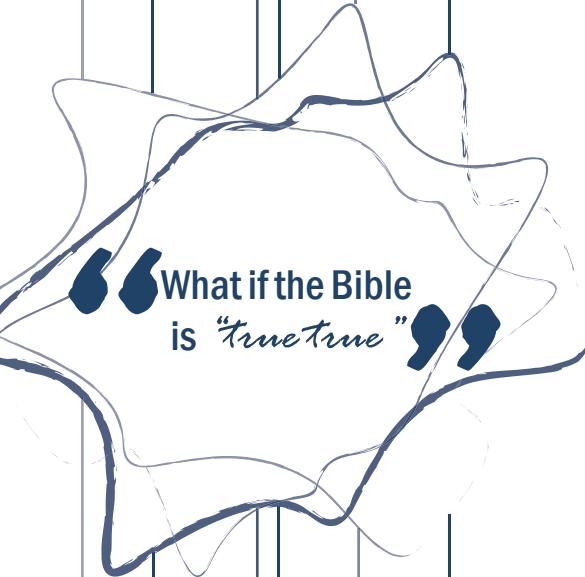
All of this may seem obvious or somewhat irrelevant for us to consider. But as one church leader says, “Too often we Christians live as functional atheists.” We are tempted to live as if the Bible is not really “true true.” Such living leads not only to an impoverished walk with Jesus, but it also takes the legitimacy and the inclination out of witnesses. We need to listen in on Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer, “*Sanctify them by Your truth. Your Word is truth*” (John 17:17 NIV).

Jesus invites us into His Word. Reading the Bible is not a new work anymore than receiving Baptism or Holy Communion. Take His invitation. Take His invitation gladly, daily.

The Bible. What if it is true? ■



Rev. David A. Davis serves the Michigan District, LCMS as its president.





Photos by Elisa Schulz/Michigan District, LCMS and courtesy of The Vine, Walker

Summer Camps

Blaze a Trail

“I was jumping and then I made it,” exclaimed the young boy, Mylon, with a huge sense of pride. He started on the Double Dutch jump ropes with the traditional two-footed jumps, then went to one foot. He even turned around and turned back without missing a beat. When asked how much fun his long and impressive run on the Double Dutch was, he yelled out, “cool!”

Mylon was one of a large group of kids on the Southeast side of Detroit to participate in the annual Acts 2 Enterprise Sports Camp. Rev. Christopher Bodley, the Executive Director for A2E, not only brings kids together to teach them sports skills, but also incorporates lessons from the Bible throughout the weeklong summer camp.

Children from ages 4 all the way up to teenagers learned new skills in various sports at Corrigan Park. The sports and coaches Rev. Bodley brought in this year included flag football, golf, cheer, lacrosse, archery, karate, and Mylon’s favorite, Double Dutch.

The overall theme for this year’s Sports Camp was based on John 14:6. “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” Each day the children learn a different Bible lesson. “We keep raising them up to understand that in life you will have to endure through some things. Sometimes those

things are not pleasant and yet we are very excited about what they are going to learn,” said Rev. Bodley.

Mylon loved the sports activities. He was also enthused to not only hear, but share what he learned about Jesus. “He helped people,” said Mylon. “And he [did] a ton of stuff.”

Elements of Trust

The Vine shared Jesus’ love with its NW Grand Rapids community of Walker through a STEM-themed summer camp. The children and volunteers walked through the first five chapters of the book of Acts and worked their way through the acronym TRUST (Trust, Repent, Understand, Share, Trials). Daily themes

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One Hope

by Elisa L. Schulz

Photos courtesy of Lisa Jansen, Josh Britton, and Michael Connelly

On Sunday, July 21, six churches got together to hold a Circuit Convocation in Macomb County. A convocation is a larger gathering of members from circuit congregations during a year in which there is no national or district convention of the LCMS.

The One Hope Worship & Community Gathering took place at Knights Park and Pavilion in Shelby Twp. There were 2,185 people in attendance. The churches represented there were Shepherd’s Gate, Shelby Twp.; Trinity, Utica; Immanuel, Macomb; Peace, Shelby Twp.; Our Redeemer, Washington; and Grace Lutheran Fellowship, Romeo.

There were approximately 140 volunteers. Jim Jensen, Executive Director at Shepherd’s Gate Church, was helping to organize them all: *“We have a parking team, food team, usher team, safety team, kids’ activity team, and of course the worship team, so lots of moving parts here to make this work.”*

Attendees were greeted at the entrance of the park with smiles and signs. The parking team directed traffic and ushers greeted everyone and distributed bulletins. As people settled down in their chairs and/or blankets, music was playing. There was a first aid tent manned by Trinity, Utica, and the Wave Project (waveproject.org) bus was there so people could get to know their ministry of providing showers and hygiene supplies to homeless people. Attendees were encouraged to donate to support this ministry.

Jen Long, Guest Services Team Leader from Shepherd’s Gate, was very excited to be at the event: *“God has blessed us with amazing weather and a beautiful park with pavilion. The worship team is amazing, the kitchen team is hard at work getting things set up for lunch afterwards, and then we have kids’ activities with bounce houses.”*

Marceles Moore from Shepherd’s Gate said, *“It’s an amazing experience to be able to see all these churches grouped together for one big event. It’s absolutely amazing to see and I hope that more come along the way.”*

After the event, people enjoyed a picnic lunch and fellowship, while kids played in several inflatable structures.

The response to the event has been nothing short of enthusiastic. Even the neighbors appreciated it. One child brought up a thank you note to one of the volunteers (see photo above). Joyce Ellies commented on Facebook: *“It was a beautiful day and a beautiful event. Hope it becomes an annual one! There were so many posts about it on Facebook. People saying it was better waking up to Christian music than to dogs barking or lawn services. No complaints, just compliments!”*

Rev. Tim Bollinger, pastor of Shepherd’s Gate, Shelby Twp. summarizes: *“It was incredible to see six LCMS churches from Macomb County come together for one combined outdoor worship service in the park. Close to 2,200 people gathered to sing, pray, hear a message, and enjoy time together after the service with food and activities. We are grateful to the Michigan District and Church Extension Fund for providing the Circuit Convocation Grant for us to make this a memorable day. There are already talks of how we can continue bringing our churches together to share Jesus in our communities.”*

Rev. Justin Krupsky, pastor of Trinity, Utica, reflects: *“The ONE HOPE worship service sponsored by Church Extension Fund and the Michigan District—what a blessing! This is only the beginning in the partnering to have unity together. God is up to something different and so we’re ready for it and we’re priming the Macomb county to continue to work together more than we have ever worked in the past, so this is good.”*

In 2024, Michigan District circuits were encouraged to hold convocations. Grants are available to all circuits. To learn more and apply for a grant, visit michigandistrict.org/grants. ■

Mrs. Elisa L. Schulz is a staff writer, copy editor, and photographer for the Michigan District, LCMS.

Hope and Salvation

by Farrukh M. Khan

In John 11:25–26, Jesus said to Mary, the sister of Lazarus, *“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.”*

Every faithful Christian doesn’t fear what will happen to them after they die because the Risen Savior Jesus is our hope, our trust, and our resurrection. Jesus goes ahead of us and stays behind us. In fact, this is the most powerful message of hope, assurance, and salvation for a person searching for hope and assurance of entering heaven.

During POBLO’s over 30 years of ministry, several people from various religions and beliefs confessed their faith in Christ and were baptized. We are assured heaven if we believe: Jesus is mine, and heaven is mine, not because of what I do on this earth as a human but because of what Jesus did on the cross of Calvary. He defeated death; we die and rise with Him in Baptism. Ephesians 2:8–9 is so comforting for the one who is searching: *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.”*

This message of hope and salvation resonates powerfully with those searching for an assurance of going to heaven. We want to thank you as our partners in missions. You are empowering and enabling POBLO missionaries to boldly share this great news of hope and assurance with Muslims and others. We want to thank our faithful partners who

have trusted in POBLO and have faithfully supported this great work of God in our day and age.

I want to share some exciting news with you: on February 25 we had the opportunity to baptize an ex-Iraqi Air Force pilot (Colonel) who helped our forces. He was baptized during the Sunday worship at All Nations Lutheran Church in Clinton Twp. (POBLO-planted since 1996). What a joy it was. There were celebrations on earth and in heaven to welcome Nabil (name changed for security) into the family of our Lord. He had tears falling from his eyes while he was being baptized. All glory goes to our Lord Jesus Christ. His message of hope and assurance led Nabil to the baptismal font.

On April 28 we had four Arabs baptized at Atonement in Columbus, Ohio. The fruits of the Spirit are visible at all POBLO locations in several districts. ■

Rev. Farrukh M. Khan serves as Development Director for POBLO.

Can you help?

POBLO is in need of a car or a van for the new missionary couple arriving from Nepal soon. Neeraj is an M.Div. from Sydney, Australia and Manju (wife) worked for World Vision in Nepal. He will serve at Cross Point Lutheran Church in Clinton Twp. Please contact Rev. Farrukh Khan at 586.477.1530 to donate.



Photo by Elisa Schulz/Michigan District, LCMS



Photo courtesy of Lutheran World Relief

What Would You Take?

The Importance of the Lutheran World Relief Organization

by Hannah M. MacAfee

If you were stuck on a desert island, what would you bring with you?

Such a silly question is meant to act as an ice breaker, letting the questioner know what it is the other person values most. Many of us might answer a good book, or the logical might say food or clean water. But what if we change the question up a little:

If you lived in a war-torn or developing country, what would you need?

The image of palm trees and coconut cups likely evaporates and is replaced with a rougher scene of confusion, fear, and maybe even sickness. Answers to this question go beyond logical into survival territory because living in such a place is not just the individual. Whole families and communities are impacted.

So, what would you need? Many would answer their Bible, others would point towards items used to clean or educate themselves in order to keep both health and mind clear, but few would think about the many uses for something as simple as a well-made quilt.

The Lutheran World Relief Organization (LWR) knows about the multiple uses for quilts. How they provide warmth in the cold, shelter from both rain and intense heat, and swaddling over infant and young children's

bodies as a means to provide comfort and close proximity between parent and child.

LWR also collects the other items needed for survival today. Personal care kits, baby care kits, and school kits are all collected along with quilts during ingatherings. The boxes are then transported to one of the organization's warehouses (located in Minnesota and Maryland), where they are sorted and shipped out to places in need around the world.

The Michigan District participates in three large ingatherings for LWR every year. This year's main collections will be held in Saginaw on Monday, October 14; Westland, Tuesday, October 15; and Grand Rapids, Saturday, October 19. Locations and times for these large ingatherings, smaller site ingatherings, as well as instructions on how you can put together your own kits can be found at michigandistrict.org/lwrgathering.

To end, I would like to ask one final question: There are places in need of Christian kindness. How will you help them? ■

Mrs. Hannah M. MacAfee serves as Administrative Support / Receptionist / Lutheran World Relief Coordinator for the Michigan District.

A Summer of Hope

by Penny Armbruster

Meet Cherish, a determined criminal justice student with a dream of attending law school and becoming a lawyer. She was on the brink of graduation, with only four classes remaining, when life took an unexpected turn. She discovered she was pregnant.

She works two jobs at the same time as she is taking college classes. When she applied for Medicaid, she was told her income was too high to qualify. She had no idea where to turn for support and medical care, and she was unsure if she could afford to keep her baby. She attended her first prenatal appointment at a local doctor's office and was charged \$2,800 for her blood work, ultrasound, and doctor's visit. She had no choice but to pay the bill with a credit card.

She was so close to graduation that she questioned if now was the time to have a child. She was not ready, had no resources, and certainly could not maintain the cost of prenatal care throughout her pregnancy. Abortion

seemed her only option. She was unsure of her next steps, so she continued her pregnancy in denial.

Her mom started calling various doctors' offices, asking if they would offer discounted services to a young mother without insurance. No one wanted to help. As a grandma, she wanted to help her daughter keep her baby, but their options were limited.

Cherish looked into abortion options. She was devastated that she might have to make this choice, knowing she would never forgive herself.

Finally, her mother heard about The Luke Clinic, and Cherish made the call to schedule an appointment. As Cherish listened to the nurse on the other end of the phone, she began to realize there might be another way to keep her baby. Grandma cried out, "Praise you, Jesus!" in the background while Cherish answered questions about her health history.

The first time they visited The Luke Clinic, Cherish went straight to get an ultrasound before seeing a doctor. She could not believe that she might be able to keep this baby. As the ultrasound tech scanned her, she began to see beautiful, clear 3D images of her child. She and her mother wept, thanking Jesus for His mercy and grace. They both said that, looking back, that was the moment they knew everything would be alright.

Cherish is now looking forward to meeting her precious daughter for the first time. Every time she comes to the clinic, she gets an ultrasound and never gets tired of seeing her daughter's face. She has quite the collection of ultrasound pictures and thanks God for His provision for her when she thought she was alone and had no choice

but to go through with an abortion.

Cherish's story is a powerful testament to the challenges and decisions many expectant mothers face, particularly those in difficult financial and personal circumstances. Her journey highlights several critical issues:

- Access to life-affirming christian care
- Healthcare access and affordability
- Support systems
- Educational and career aspirations
- Mental and emotional strain
- Resources and information

For more information on The Luke Clinic and how you can support this organization that addresses all of these critical issues, visit thelukeclinic.org. ■

Penny Armbruster is the Executive Director of The Luke Clinic.



SEPTEMBER 2024

Ministry Workers Take Wellness Seriously

Throughout 2023, CEF encouraged ministries across the Michigan District to look after their workers wellness with a grant of up \$2500. This grant, made possible by a partnership with the Mighty Fortress Foundation, allowed ministries to get creative in how they spent the grant money.

In addition to the \$2500 grant, a special challenge was levied – get creative! Three \$10,000 bonus grants were up for grabs and would be given to the ministries who put these grant funds to the most creative use.

The winners of the \$10,000 grants are Trinity Lutheran Church in Fenton, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Birmingham, and New Life Community in Swartz Creek! These three ministries showed a deep appreciation for their employees wellness by making especially creative use of the funds.

Trinity used the Ministry Worker Wellness grant to spend time together, overcome fear, and to see their mission field from a new perspective – taking their entire team on a hot air balloon ride!

Redeemer split their staff into two teams for a “Saints vs. Sinners” cooking challenge. Like television competition cooking shows, these two teams faced off to prepare delicious meals using secret ingredients for the judges. The staff had a fun experience learning new techniques and sharing the fruits of their labor together (and with a fun video, too!)



New Life Community night out

Over the term of the grant, Church Extension Fund and Mighty Fortress Foundation granted over \$250,000! There were so many great stories that came from the various ministries who took

advantage of the grant. From rest and relaxation, to connecting with co-workers, to visiting family members in places near and far, the grant paid dividends much greater than the dollars given.

After a few stops and starts with finding the right way to use the grant, **New Life Community** landed on a great way to bring their staff together. On a special night out this spring, they threw axes, they went curling, and had a fantastic meal together. This creativity really made a difference for the staff in being together in community, which is the approach they take in their ministry.

These three churches demonstrated that there is not just one way to take care of ministry workers. Everyone who took advantage of the Ministry Worker Wellness Grant was able to gain something from these events. These workers pour their hearts and souls into their jobs of spreading the gospel. What better way to reward their efforts than through creative events that allow them to spend time together in fellowship?

CEF is so thankful for the work done in our churches schools and other ministries! CEF can't do what we do without you!



Trinity Lutheran Church hot air balloon ride



Lutheran Church of the Redeemer cooking challenge



“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

1 Corinthians 15:58



Church Extension Fund

3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-3098

www.mi-cef.org ■ Offices: 800-242-3944

LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

Michigan District Lutheran Laymen's League News

SEEKING LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRY AMBASSADORS

Lutheran Hour has committed to raising \$353 million for the purpose of connecting with the 3 billion people who still don't know Jesus. The Michigan District of the Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL) is looking to add Ambassadors who will receive regular information on how that will work. Ambassadors will also have the opportunity to become significant participants in rejuvenating the membership of the LLL at the local, zone, and district level. To learn more, contact Dennis Engelhard at dennisengelhard59@gmail.com or call 989.670.8028.

LISTEN TO THE LUTHERAN HOUR

The Lutheran Hour is heard locally on WLEW 1340AM Bad Axe at 11:10 a.m. and WMIC 660AM Sandusky at 10:05 a.m. on Sundays, or anytime via *The Lutheran Hour Devotions* app on your phone. Download the app and click on sermons. You can also find the Lutheran Hour sermons at lhm.org. You can also dial 800.944.3450 and follow the recorded instructions.

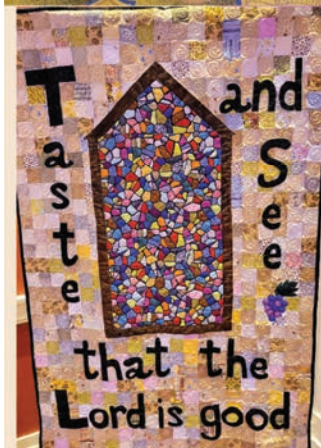
ARCADIA RETREAT

The 78th annual LLL men's retreat will be held on Sept 5–8 at Camp Arcadia with the theme *Go and Tell*. The retreat speaker is Rev. Dr. Jamison J. Hardy, president of Concordia University System and President and Bishop of the English District, LCMS.



LUTHERAN HOUR
MINISTRIES
www.lhm.org

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE



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Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

Psalm 34:8

LWML Michigan District 2024



June 28–30
Grand Rapids



The Language of Missions

An evening of poetry and Music with Tanner Olson and Blake Flattley

The Language of Missions is a benefit concert to raise awareness of the rich history and support for mission efforts in the Michigan District. Join us for an inspirational evening of music, poetry, and storytelling with Christian performers Tanner Olson and Blake Flattley on October 5, 2024 at St. Luke, Ann Arbor. Listen to the exciting opportunities to share the Gospel that both MOST Ministries and the Michigan District are developing and consider how you might be part of the plan.

**Sponsored in part by
Church Extension Fund; Christ Our Savior, Livonia; Redeemer, Jackson;
St. John, Adrian; St. Luke, Ann Arbor; and St. Paul, Hamburg**

**For more information and to make your reservation, go to
www.michigandistrict.org/missionconcert**

**St. Luke, Ann Arbor | October 5, 2024
Doors open at 6:15 p.m. | Concert at 7 p.m. | Afterglow at 9 p.m.
Admission - \$35 per person
\$45 at the door if seating is available**



Convention

NOURISHED for the JOURNEY: Remember, Renew, Return 2025 Michigan District Convention | June 22–24, 2025

The 104th Regular Convention of the Michigan District, LCMS will be held June 22–24, 2025, at Concordia University Ann Arbor. The convention theme, *Nourished for the Journey: Remember, Renew, Return*, was inspired by 1 Kings 19—remembering all that God has done and is currently doing despite our faithfulness and unfaithfulness; being renewed through Word and Sacrament in our callings and continued mission; and returning for service in our congregations and communities. In all, we are *People of Hope* prepared, rejuvenated, and blessed with faithful laity in this journey of the Church.

Delegates will gather in convention to celebrate God's work among the District's congregations and schools, including the blessings of Concordia University Ann Arbor. During the convention, delegates will be encouraged through worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, reports from partner ministries, and vision for greater service.

If your circuit has not held its circuit forum to select a circuit visitor or to conduct other official business, this must be scheduled before January 31, 2025. Please check with your circuit visitor if you have questions regarding the circuit forum or circuit visitor nominations.

A Call for Nominations mailing will be mailed out this month to all congregations. It contains official nomination forms for submitting President and Vice President nominations which are to be mailed to Rev. Derek Riddle; 1007 W Washington Ave; Jackson MI 49203-1629. This mailing also includes official nomination forms for submitting Secretary, Board of Directors, Church Extension Fund Board of Directors, and District Nominating Committee nominations which are to be mailed to Rev. Eric Majeski; 6532 Westridge; Washington Township MI 48094-2112.

If extra forms are needed, contact Laurie Brown at 888.225.2111 ext. 233 or download at michigandistrict.org/convention. The deadline to submit nominations is February 22, 2025.

Overtures may be submitted only by a member congregation, the Board of Directors, an official district conference of ordained/commissioned ministers, a committee established by a prior convention, or a circuit forum. Overtures must be submitted using the overture template which can be



downloaded from the Michigan District website. The deadline to submit overtures is February 22, 2025. No overture received after that date shall be accepted for convention consideration unless a committee consisting of the District President, the First Vice President, and the District Secretary adjudge it to be a matter of overriding importance and urgency which is not adequately covered by documents already before the convention.

For more information, visit michigandistrict.org/convention.

Important Deadlines

Circuit Forums - January 31, 2025

Nominations - February 22, 2025

Overtures - February 22, 2025

**For forms and additional information visit:
michigandistrict.org/convention**

VBS During Vacancy

The members of St. John, Au Gres completed a very successful Vacation Bible School this summer while going through the call process. Rev. Ted Voll and Rev. Bill Winter are serving as vacancy pastors until a call is extended and accepted. The congregation continues to function well and carry out its ministries and mission “to make the love of Christ known within the church, the community, and the world through preaching, teaching, reaching out to the community and spreading the Word of God to all people.”



Photo courtesy of St. John, Au Gres

Free Onsite, Online, and on-Demand Bible Study

Community Light School of Discipleship, in partnership with Concordia University St. Paul and the Minnesota South District, invites you to share its 2024–25 series with your members. Beginning September 11, Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing and Rev. Dr. Dean Nadasdy will present *Jonah: The Survivor Series and Threads: Celebrating the Biblical Tapestry*. For more information or to see archived studies, visit communitylight.net.

Lutherfest Concert

The Lutheran Center Association (LCA) of Detroit is hosting its annual Lutherfest Concert at Guardian, Dearborn on Sunday, November 3, at 3 p.m. This year’s concert, under the direction of LCA Board member Jacob Ferns, will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the first Lutheran hymnals and highlight hymnody from over the past 500 years.



Photo courtesy of St. John, Fraser

Pictured front row left is Michigan District, LCMS President, Rev. David A. Davis. He was the guest speaker at St. John, Fraser’s men’s monthly Bible Study this past summer.

Lutheran World Relief Ingathering October 2024

A postcard with dates and locations
was mailed in August.

More information can be found at:
michigandistrict.org/lwrgathering



Special Recognition

Bourassa Retires

In June, Mrs. Betsy Bourassa was honored during a special worship service and at a family-friendly celebration upon her retirement as a Parish Assistant and Director of Christian Education. A tremendous, almost overwhelming turnout was a testament to the incredible impact of Betsy's evident love for Jesus and children all throughout her ministry at Immanuel, Bay City.

She planned and served her last VBS the week of June 24 with over 100 participants and workers. These VBS programs created lifelong lasting memories of excitement that comes from knowing, loving, and serving Jesus.

Mrs. Bourassa retired on August 1, after 26 years of faithful service.



Photo courtesy of Immanuel, Bay City

Wright Installed

Rev. Dr. James F. Wright (pictured center first row) was installed as pastor at Trinity, Berrien Springs. He formerly served congregations in Nebraska and Illinois before coming to Michigan. He graduated from Concordia University Ann Arbor and attended Seminary at Concordia St. Louis, Mo. He later did his post-graduate work at Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, Ind.

He and his wife, Lisa, have one daughter, Lillian, and reside in Niles.

SMP Students Recognized for Calls and Program Completion

In June, 31 students accomplished two distinct milestones of the Specific Ministry Pastor Program (SMP) and were recognized in the Chapel of St. Timothy and Titus on the campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Out of the 31, six were from the Michigan District. They are as follows:

- Patrick Brooks, Christ the King, Southgate
- Benjamin Marsh, Shepherd's Gate, Shelby Township
- David Schultz, St. Paul, Bay City
- Bryan Varblow, St. Mark's, Brooklyn
- Keith Dwyer, Shepherd of the Lakes, Brighton
- James Greenwalt, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Birmingham

"Specific ministry pastors are used by our Lord for the holy ministry of God's Word and Sacraments in their congregations and specific ministries. At this time, we rejoice with the SMP students celebrating new calls and receiving theological diplomas, as well as those now completing the program," said Dr. W. Mart Thompson, associate professor of Practical Theology and director of the SMP Program. *"We give thanks to our Lord for their faithful dedication, their families' support, their congregations' commitment, their mentors' and supervising pastors' wise guidance and their professors' faithful instruction in God's Word. All are used by the Lord to equip and call these men into the pastoral ministry!"*



Photo courtesy of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.



Photo courtesy of Randy Johnson



Photo courtesy of Lutheran Church of the Messiah, Saginaw

Rev. Christian Q. Mundorf (pictured front row center) was ordained into the ministry and installed as sole pastor of Lutheran Church of the Messiah, Saginaw on June 22, 2024. He and his wife, Dr. Abigail Mundorf, have one daughter, Magdalena, and reside in Saginaw.

Summer Camps

and Bible verses were explored and reinforced with experiments in science and physics. The marvels and miracles of God's physical world and salvation of it were on full display.



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The Vine chartered with the Michigan District as an LCMS congregation this past June. As a “little one” in the Kingdom, The Vine continues to learn the Church's desperate need for God's help and the importance of prayer in her mission. Pastor Jim Richter shared, *“The day before Summer Camp was to begin there were only 15 kids registered and about 20 adults were signed up to serve. It was wonderful to have this many volunteers signed up to serve, but we wondered where the kids were. In the past, we've had higher enrollment than this. We marched forward, trusting that Jesus would bring the good news to whoever came and that would be more than enough to make our summer camp worth it. We prayed together as a congregation in our Sunday worship service very specifically and invited everyone to continue to intercede. The Father heard our prayers as He always does. Families brought families and kids brought kids and many people that weren't signed up SHOWED UP.”*

Many families that weren't previously known by The

Vine came and heard the Gospel. By the end of the week, over 25 volunteers had faithfully served and over 42 children attended. 88% of the children weren't part of The Vine, and many of them have no church home at all.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! He is gracious and on the move through His people, seeking to save the lost! These summer camps are underwritten, in part, through Acts 2 Enterprise—an urban mission outreach ministry of the Michigan District. For more information, visit michigandistrict.org/a2e. ■



Church Extension Fund

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Calls and Roster Update

A complete up-to-date listing of Calls and Vacancies can be found at michigandistrict.org.

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. Gary Bender (Bay City, MI) to IIM, St. John, Napoleon, OH
Rev. Antonio Boos (Sterling Heights, MI) to Chaplain, Lutheran Senior Services Meridian Village, Glen Carbon, IL
Rev. Kurt Brandon (Higginsville, MO) to Sole, Holy Cross, Saginaw
Rev. Tyler Carter (Belmont, MI) to Associate, St. Peter's, Big Rapids
Rev. James Chinery (Frankenmuth, MI) to Sole, Faith, Bay City
Rev. Gerald Corbett, SMP (Macomb, MI) to SMP, St. Paul Community, Pontiac
Rev. Dennis Dufon (Drummond Island, MI) to Sole, Drummond Island Lutheran Church, Drummond Island, MI
Rev. Dr. Theodore Hopkins (Saline, MI) to Sr., St. Paul, Ann Arbor
Rev. Gregory Hyatt (Melcher-Dallas, IA) to Sole, St. John, Pinconning
Rev. Anthony Keilani (Sidney, OH) to Lutheran High School Association of Greater Detroit, Rochester Hills, MI
Rev. Joseph Liss, SMP (Niles, MI) to SMP, Trinity, St. Joseph
Mr. Benjamin Marsh (Chesterfield, MI) to SMP, Shepherds Gate, Shelby Twp.
Rev. David Mews (Dearborn, MI) to Associate, Trinity, Billings, MT
Rev. Phillip Phifer (Lawton, MI) to Sole, Peace, Groves, TX
Rev. James Richter (Walker, MI) to Sole, The Vine, Walker, MI
Rev. David Rutter (Shelby Twp, MI) to Assistant, Trinity, St. Joseph
Mr. David Schultz (Bay City, MI) to SMP, St. Paul, Bay City
Rev. Carl Trosien (Hemlock, MI) to Sole, Lord of New Life, Midland
Rev. Kyle Weeks (Placerville, CA) to Sole, St. Luke, Ann Arbor

Status & Title Changes

Rev. John Bookshaw (Big Rapids, MI) to Candidate
Rev. Richard Gizynski (Oak Park, MI) to Candidate
Rev. Calvin Kolzow (Sturgis, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Mitchell Vogeli (Chesaning, MI) to Emeritus

Transferred Into District

Rev. Kurt Brandon (Higginsville, MO) from Missouri District
Rev. Greg Hyatt (Melcher-Dallas, IA) from Iowa East District
Rev. Anthony Keilani (Sidney, OH) from Ohio District
Rev. James Wright (St. Joseph, MI) from Central Illinois District

Transferred Out of District

Rev. Gary Bender (Bay City, MI) to Ohio District
Rev. Antonio Boos (Sterling Heights, MI) to Missouri District
Rev. Timothy Kade (Surprise, AZ) to Pacific Southwest District
Rev. David Mews (Dearborn, MI) to Montana District
Rev. Phillip Phifer (Lawton, MI) to Texas District
Rev. Dr. Charles Schulz (Dexter, MI) to Northern Illinois District
Rev. Kenneth Spence (Monongahela, PA) to Eastern District
Rev. Dr. Ryan Tinetti (Arcadia, MI) to Missouri District
Rev. Jeffrey Wilhelm (Leesburg, FL) to Florida/Georgia District

Resigned from the Roster

Rev. Michael Wentzel (Brighton, MI)

COMMISSIONED

Calls Accepted

Brenner, Mark (Immanuel, Saginaw) to Racine HS, Racine, WI
Brenner, Renee (Valley HS, Saginaw) to Racine HS, Racine, WI
Davis, Stephanie (Concordia, Ann Arbor) to Trinity, Utica
Ebel, Hannah (LHSA, Cleveland, OH) to LHSA, Rochester Hills (Northwest)
Elliott, David (Faith, Las Vegas, NV) to LHSA, Rochester Hills (Westland)
Guse, Paul (St. John, Bay City) to St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
Leapley, Elizabeth (Concordia, Seward, NE) to Saginaw Valley HS, Saginaw
Schmidt, Kurt (St. Paul, Northville) to St. Paul, Royal Oak
Steffens, Heather (Trinity, Saint Joseph) to Christ, Stevensville
Weaver, Hannah (Trinity, Reese) to St. Paul, Fairmont, MN
Winston, Valerie (Immanuel, Hillside, IL) to St. Peter's, Eastpointe
Simon, Zane (Shepherd's Gate, Shelby Township) to St. Paul, Caro
Zieschang, Zachary (Zion, Omaha, NE) to Emmanuel, Dearborn

Change of Status

Drinan, Lori (Peace, Saginaw) to Emeritus
Heck, Zonna (St. Peter's, Big Rapids) to Emeritus
Holtzen, Richard (Trinity, Monroe) to Emeritus
O'Boyle, Sharilyn (Trinity, Utica) to Emeritus
Rogner, Andrea (Immanuel, Macomb) to Candidate
Schultz, Mark (Emmanuel, Dearborn) to Emeritus
Sohn, Kristine (Our Savior, Lansing) to Emeritus
Stathakis, Carol (Our Shepherd, Birmingham) to Emeritus
Topel, Timothy (LHSA, Rochester Hills) to Emeritus
Washburn, Debra (St. Peter, Macomb) to Emeritus
Weber, Karlton (LHSA, Rochester Hills) to Emeritus
Weisenbach, Janice (Concordia, Ann Arbor) to Emeritus
Weiss, Jeffery (Trinity, Saint Joseph) to Candidate

Transferred Out of District

Heins, Joseph (Immanuel, Sebawaing) to Texas District
Lahrman, Sherri (Trinity, Sturgis) to Indiana District
Massey, Madison (St. Peter, Macomb) to Florida-Georgia District
Schroeder, Lydia (St. Paul, Ann Arbor) to Ohio District
Stanley, Lisa (St. Paul, Bay City) to Ohio District
Tschudy, Joy (Candidate) to South Wisconsin District
Tschudy, Matthew (LHSA, Rochester Hills) to South Wisconsin District
Weaver, Hannah (Trinity, Reese) to Minnesota South District

Transferred Into District

Korte, Faith (Indiana District) to Our Savior, Lansing
Pfeiffer, Linda (South Wisconsin District) to St. Peter's, Eastpointe
Winston, Valerie (Northern Illinois District) to St. Peter's, Eastpointe

Resigned From the Roster

Loucks, Autumn

Called Home

Wallace, Shirley

School Closings

Redford, Concordia

Calendar of Events

For more information about these and other events visit:
michigandistrict.org/events

SEPTEMBER 2024

- 2 Labor Day
District Office Closed
- 4-5 Circuit Visitors Conference
Peace, Ann Arbor
- 8-10 Deacons Conference
Camp Arcadia, Arcadia
- 14 Community Worship Network Gathering
Faith, Grand Blanc
- 17 Beyond the Breakwater
Messiah, Midland
- 17 New Church Worker Conference
DoubleTree by Hilton - Riverfront, Bay City
- 23-26 Intentional Interim Ministry Conference
Michindoh Conference Center, Hillsdale
- 27-29 Church Extension Fund Conference
Auburn Hills, Mich.