

June/July 2019

# michigan

## IN TOUCH

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



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### HEALTHY WORKERS

## Balance vs. Harmony by Travis Grulke

I've heard many people say they need to do a better job of balancing the different areas of their life that are constantly pulling them in different directions. The trouble with the word balance is that it implies things need to consistently be even on all sides. However, we all know there are times when our work life may need to take priority for a while, and finding an 'even balance' with the other areas of our life is impossible. A different season of life may have our personal health taking precedence and other aspects may be neglected. We all know managing the time God has given us is a tension that never goes away.

So, instead of thinking in terms of balance, I'd like to challenge you to look at your life in terms of harmony. Harmony is defined as "the quality of forming a pleasing and consistent whole." How do we make sure all the things we know are important in this life continue to work

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in harmony with one another and we don't find ourselves in a constant state of mixed-up priorities? If I have to be honest, I don't have a perfect answer. And, despite the many books written on this topic, neither does anyone else! But I am going to look at five areas (Faith, Finances, Relationships, Health, and Work) that we are all juggling on a daily/weekly basis and how we should be making sure they are in harmony with one another no matter our stage of life. We could all write several pages for each of these; however, I'm only going to focus on one aspect, drawing from the wisdom of individuals much smarter than me!

## FAITH

We better talk about this one first, and the reason for that can be summed up by what Jeff Iorg shares in his book, *The Painful Side of Leadership: Moving Forward Even When It Hurts*: “When you and I rely on anyone else besides Jesus to satisfy our deepest needs, we are always disappointed. Our relationship with Him must be our ultimate satisfaction” (2009). I hope you said a loud “Amen!” We, as Christians, know this to be true, but our sinful self tells us to rely on our spouse, children, possessions, or work for our fulfillment. We can't have a life of harmony when Christ is not the foundation and source of our joy. And if we are getting this truth wrong, the rest of our lives will never be in harmony.

I've found that the best way to keep me in tune to what God desires for my walk with Him is to have people who hold me accountable. We need individuals to remind us when we are not keeping our relationship with Jesus at the center of our lives. If you don't have a spiritual accountability partner (your spouse and other relatives shouldn't serve in this role), I encourage you to ask God for someone He could use to have this significant influence in your life.

**We can't have a life of harmony when *Christ* is not the foundation and source of our joy.**

## FINANCES

Over the years, I've heard several different leaders talk about the following little nugget of knowledge: “It is much better to say ‘I Want’ instead of ‘I Owe.’” After giving our first fruits back to the Good Lord, this may be the most valuable principle when it comes to managing our finances. Yet, why are so many of us burdened with debt? Jesus understood how much we struggle with properly managing the gifts our heavenly Father has given us; He spoke about it throughout His ministry. Christ knew how quickly the stuff of this world can get a hold of us. When we have a significant amount of debt, we are no longer in control of our finances; they control us instead.

I'm a firm believer in Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace. It should be a prerequisite for all young adults. It has been a huge blessing for me and my wife and helped us become better stewards. I would recommend you go through the course and host it at your congregation and school. My three daughters aren't old enough yet, but before they head off to college, they will be spending some time learning from Dave!\*

## RELATIONSHIPS

This is the most fragile of the five. Dismissing the importance of nurturing the relationships with our family and friends can have long-lasting and sometimes irrevocable consequences. I need to be confronted on this as much as possible and I'm grateful for a little phrase Andy Stanley (Senior Pastor of North Point Community Church in Alpharetta, GA) has repeated several times in his podcasts. This serves as a great reminder for me: “Don't trade what is unique to you for what someone else will eventually do.”

Someone replaced me when I left my first call as a 7th-grade teacher; another individual sits in the principal's office I once occupied; and a gifted educator has taken the role of Superintendent of the Ohio District after I moved here to Michigan. But no one is replacing me as husband to Lori, as dad to my three favorite daughters, as son to Galen and Patti, and as friend to Matt. However, many times I still find myself with an unhealthy obsession with work that has a negative effect on my relationships. Grant permission to those you love to give you a little kick in the rear when you allow your relationships to suffer because you have forgotten what is unique to you.

## HEALTH

The guy who is twenty-five pounds overweight probably shouldn't be speaking about this one! Don't worry; we are going to be looking at another huge factor in our overall health—stress.

Adam Grant, in his book *Give and Take*, discusses his research findings of individuals who perceive their job as having a lasting impact. Those

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# Prayers Answered

by Laurie Brown

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What does prayer look like? If you watch movies, like I do, you see Hollywood's version of prayer. There are funny attempts at prayer and serious prayer in *The Apostle*, in which Robert Duvall cries his heart out to Jesus. There's also a prayer scene from *War Room* in which a woman prays for the Lord to raise up Christians. In both of these movies the emotion is real and raw.

I didn't grow up in a Christian home, so prayer was not something I was exposed to, except on Christmas Eve or during dinners at a neighbor's house. I've never really thought about my prayer life now that I'm a Christian—I just know that, when I pray, I literally talk to God like He's right there.

It is humbling when the Lord answers your prayers. Years ago, our small group kept a prayer journal. We would write our prayers down and go back, each week, and ask if the prayer requests from the week before had been answered. In those weekly moments, I took those small answered prayers for granted. I found it very powerful when we looked back at the journal, years later, and realized not only how many of those prayers were answered but also how the Lord was present, every step of the way, in our lives.

## PRAYING CONSTANTLY

One thing that I've prayed for was that the relationship between my brother Mike and our entire family would be healed. There were many tearful prayers about how I missed him terribly. There were many prayers of anger and frustration in which I shouted at God for allowing a woman to come into Mike's life who led him to abandon our family. There were also prayers in which I asked for forgiveness for being angry at this woman and many prayers for my heart to be changed towards her. I believe that nothing is stronger and more powerful than praying for someone towards whom you hold resentment. In my opinion, the Lord uses those moments to soften our heart and draw us closer to Him. He didn't allow me to harbor resentment and anger towards her after I prayed for my heart to be changed. I have prayed for my brother Mike and his new family for many years.

The Lord answered those prayers two summers ago—after fourteen years. That's a long time! Did I stop? No. Did I give up hope? Yes, sometimes. But, in the Lord's perfect timing,

I received a phone call from Mike. The phone call brought on happiness and a peace that I can't begin to explain. We met later that summer and we hugged and cried together. It felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. Then, the Lord allowed me to meet my niece and nephew for the first time. Seeing them face to face, and hearing their voices, was like nothing I can describe.

Now, years later, many phone conversations, several visits and vacations to meet them, and texts in which he asks me to pray for them or someone they know, are treasured like gems.

## ANOTHER PRAYER ANSWERED

We were on our way home from vacation right after my relationship was mended by the Lord. I texted my brother to wish him well on a court hearing he was a part of. He quickly texted back and it was obvious that he was upset. I texted back these words: *"We can come and be your support team."* His reply: *"Third floor lobby, yes, please come."* Fourteen years of praying ... and waiting ... and the Lord put me in a place where I could be there to support him. So we waited in the lobby as the lawyers met and made arrangements. I prayed quietly; my brother paced and talked and paced some more. The lawyers came out and said that he received everything he had hoped for. Another prayer answered.

What's on your prayer list today? Have you given up hope? If so, I plead with you that God is there listening. It could take years to know His answer to your prayer. But isn't it worth it to reach out and know that He listens and His plan is WAY bigger than ours could ever be? Trust Him.

Challenge: Start a prayer journal and write down your prayers. Check in weekly, monthly, yearly, and see how God has answered them. Go one step further and log those answers next to your original request in a different color ink.

*"Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer" (Romans 12:12, HCSB)*

*"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV). ■*

*Laurie Brown serves as the Executive Assistant to the President for the Michigan District, LCMS.*

# Independence Day

by Erik Schmidt

It's an awesome thing, to celebrate freedom. But the truth is, freedom is an awesome responsibility.

Because true freedom is not limitless; true freedom is only freedom within limits.

Have you ever gone swimming by yourself in a lake—the water feels good, you feel really peaceful, until suddenly you look up and you are a long way from shore? Not only that, but you can't figure out where on shore you came from and need to get back to? Suddenly, the freedom you felt a moment before turns into a fear that makes you feel lost, alone, and very, very vulnerable.

The same thing can happen when you're alone in a field and you lose sight of the house, or when you're alone in the woods and you suddenly feel like someone—or something—is out there with you. That's when you realize that you would feel a whole lot more comfortable, a whole lot safer, a whole lot freer to relax ... if you were protected by a fence, or four walls and a door with a deadbolt.

Freedom requires safety. And safety requires limits.

And sure, we think of limits as bad because, well, they are limiting, after all.

We feel trapped within limits, like prisoners, subject to someone else. This is the very reason so many people resent and reject God—the very idea that there is someone or something greater than themselves who knows better and places limits on them is galling.

## FALSE FREEDOM

But the freedom we think we want—freedom without responsibility—in actuality becomes a prison for us.

Cheating on your husband or wife isn't freedom from a boring marriage; it's a complicated web of lies and deception and guilt and shame and resentment.

A life addicted to prescription drugs is not freedom from pain; it's an intricately complicated system of fooling doctors and family as your body and mind and spirit break down and the meds become too familiar to have the same effect they had at first.

Lying to your parents isn't freedom and independence; it's a lonely and pointless existence filled with bitterness and hurt because you've put up a wall between yourself and the only people who truly want what's best for you.

And living a life that denies God and denies the reality of sin isn't a life without religion and rules; it's a life with a hole in it—a life that desperately seeks to feel accepted and to be known by a loving God.

Without Jesus Christ, we are enslaved to our fickle ideas and desires and tastes that are always changing, constantly contradicting each other, and never giving any satisfaction.

## FREEDOM IN CHRIST

But freedom in Christ means that we are free to be the people we were called to be.

No matter how much I may want it, I am not free to be a billionaire televangelist with a private jet—any more than I am free to be Justin Verlander. I am also not free to be anyone else I might be jealous of, or to have what they have.

But when I live according to my calling and not someone else's—when I learn to be content with the limits God has placed on me—then I experience the freedom of being me! I can stop worrying about what everyone else has, or what I don't have, and start seeing clearly all of the many wonderful things I do have.

And then, maybe, if I live in God's Word, I can stop hating myself and start seeing myself as He sees me in

*Freedom* is knowing that someone truly greater than you ... holds your life in *His* hands!



Christ—and maybe I can even start loving myself. And the same is true for you.

Freedom is knowing that you are not God! Freedom is knowing that someone truly greater than you—someone all-knowing, all-powerful, unchanging, and perfectly good—holds your life in His hands! Freedom is knowing that all of your pain, all of your hurts, all of your wounds, and all of your scars will not last forever.

Freedom is knowing that all the hurts you've caused, all the mistakes you've made, all the shameful things you've said and done have been washed away by the blood of Christ.

One of my absolute favorite passages in all of Scripture is this: *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life has set you free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:1–2).*

Our freedom—true freedom—comes in knowing God in and through Christ, studying His Word, and living by His commands—trusting that He wants what is best for us and knowing we are forgiven when we fail.

*“So Jesus said to the Jews who believed him, ‘If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and truth will set you free. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed’” (John 8:31–32, 36). □*

*Rev. Erik R. Schmidt is the senior pastor at Peace, Saginaw. This article was first published at [reverik.com](http://reverik.com) where you can read more of Pastor Schmidt's writings.*

# Bold Faith: Sharing Jesus with Our Families and the World

by Ashleigh Leeds



I recently started seeing a chiropractor for back and hip pain. During my first visit, my doctor and I were having a conversation, getting to know each other and talking about family, work, and my ministry path. I often get asked by doctors what I do for a living, but my response of “a Family Life Education degree and a career in church ministry” is not often met with understanding, but more typically, rather, a vague response, presumably signifying that they don’t know what that means. Her understanding peaked my interest. Later in the conversation, she mentioned that she sees what she does as a ministry as well. Now, that could mean any number of things, and any range of commitment and sincerity. People often say that but don’t *truly live* it. I later came to find that was not the case here: I could not have fathomed at the time how strongly she had meant it. Knowing the consistency of my pain and how much help I needed, and snippets of my bleak financial situation, she showed Jesus to me in ways I could never have imagined; in ways that I would never have expected a doctor, whom I had met just one month prior, to have shown. She cared for me as a *person*, not just a patient. Without divulging more information than may be sanctioned, she showed me mercy and grace amidst my financial hardships because she wanted to care for *me*. She demonstrated Jesus to me in a time of desperation and hardship that she didn’t even know the half of.

But she proved she didn’t need to know.

She didn’t need the breakdown of my life story or the details of my present situation to offer help and care to someone in need. She didn’t need more information to know that I had a struggle, and she had a way to help. She wasn’t even asked (by me, anyway . . .) to help in the capacity in which she chose, but she did. And she didn’t even hesitate. To whatever measure God will continue to use this, she greatly impacted my life that day.

In like manner, my family and boyfriend are also individuals through whom I have repeatedly experienced Jesus’ love, grace, forgiveness, and generous, giving nature. It was exhibited to me and practiced in my home growing up, and is intentionally (though maybe imperfectly) at the center of those relationships today.

## FROM THE HOME TO THE WORLD

Arguably, as faith formation is most easily and prevalently learned and nurtured in the home, the act of living that faith and acting as Jesus’ love and grace to one another is most strongly communicated within the home as well. God instituted it as such. Because of the nature of the relationships and intimacy within a home, the family

**If you have an opportunity to help someone, *help*. If you have an opportunity to give grace, *give it*. If you have an opportunity to forgive, *forgive*. When you have an opportunity to love, *love*.**

unit is the greatest engine by which children learn who Jesus is and learn to live in His ways. Marriage relationships and parent-child relationships should always be exhibiting His nurturing love, His sincere forgiveness, and His abundant grace and mercy. Once we understand and see Jesus within our closest relationships, we will be more easily and naturally able to spill that out into the world to others—which is the mission to which Jesus has called each one of us.

We are to love one another and love our neighbor, showing Jesus to everyone we encounter, at all times and everywhere. John writes of Jesus’ command, “*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another*” (John 13:34–35), and “*If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth*” (1 John 3:17–18). If you have an opportunity to help someone, *help*. If you have an opportunity to give grace, *give it*. If you have an opportunity to forgive, *forgive*. When you have an opportunity to love, *love*.

Do this especially within your families, your marriages, and your intimate relationships, but let that love also spill out into the world. Allow others to see and experience Jesus through you. You may give someone an opportunity to see something they’ve never seen before, or you may give someone an opportunity to praise their God who allowed them to see a glimpse of His love through you, as was done for me through my chiropractor. God often blesses us through other people. Step out in faith, allow Him to use you, and dare to be the vehicle for one of those blessings. ■

*Ashleigh has been working in congregational ministry as a DFLM for seven years. She has also served with Concordia Center for the Family in various capacities and roles for the last three years. She has a passion for teaching the Gospel, writing, photography, and painting.*

JUNE/JULY 2019

## With the Help of CEF, St. Paul's Milan Builds on the Cornerstone with "More Than Bricks"



Rendering of St. Paul's renovation project that features the new bell tower and large learning center. Construction is slated to be completed in the fall of 2019.

*“Church Extension Fund has been there every step of the way ... They told us that they saw no problem with funding our project, and then they helped us get the paperwork pulled together to make it happen ”*

– Chuck Goerlitz  
Congregational Chairman  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Milan

When St. Paul's Lutheran in Milan decided to embark on an exciting renovation and expansion project, they turned to Church Extension Fund (CEF) to help turn their dreams into reality.

Originally built in 1949, the church grounds had a sanctuary and parsonage next door. Through the years, the parsonage served the congregation's need for meeting rooms and classroom space, but had begun to show the effects of time.

When church leaders looked at options for the aging structure, they saw little choice but to start fresh.

“The further we went in time, the more it was falling into disrepair,” explains Chuck Goerlitz, who serves as the congregational chairman. “We realized that even if we refurbished it, which would be costly, it would still be a house with little rooms that were inadequate for our current needs. We felt that it was better to build a new structure.”

Once that decision was made, and the old building was razed in 2016, the team at St. Paul's looked for unique ways to incorporate a new structure into the existing architecture.

“We knew we wanted to have a pastoral office, meeting rooms and a learning center that was separate from the church structure. We also



**Above:** The project will add much needed improvements like an elevator, which will replace the old, narrow staircase that led to the church.

**Right:** St. Paul's chose the theme, "More Than Bricks" to help drive the campaign.

needed to stay within the footprint of the original house because of limited space on the property," Goerlitz says.

What they came up with was nothing short of genius.

"We found a way to tie the two buildings together and create a bell tower in the process," Goerlitz notes. "The bell tower will house an elevator and stairwell, which allowed us to eliminate the old, narrow stairwell leading to the church. Not only did this give us better access to the church, but it also gave us the opportunity to expand the narthex."

St. Paul's had a good starting point for the project. Back in the 1990s, the congregation had considered building a new sanctuary on a separate parcel of land they owned. A capital campaign raised considerable funds before that project was ultimately tabled. The funds so generously given were wisely kept at CEF and served as seed money for the new building.

Honoring that effort, as well as the church founders' original vision, St. Paul's launched a capital campaign for the new building and bell tower entitled: "More than Bricks, Building on the Cornerstone."

The theme was ideal, as it recognized the commitment of the church pioneers and kept alive their vision for a

congregation brought together by building not just by bricks and mortar, but also, by faith in Jesus Christ.

"It's not just a building," Goerlitz emphasizes. "It's what's going on inside that is important."

That sense of mission was clearly felt by the congregation — every vote taken on the project resulted in unanimous approval.

When original bids came in too high, the congregation sharpened their pencils and found ways to cut the \$1.4 million price tag to a more realistic \$800,000. The reserves from the 1990s project were combined with the new capital campaign to create a good starting point. CEF then stepped up to provide the needed financing to move forward.

Contractors broke ground in January and expect to complete the renovation this fall. Throughout the duration of the project, CEF has been there every step of the way.

"They have been outstanding," says Goerlitz. "We had held the old funds at CEF, and they were very encouraging on the new project. They told us that they saw no problem with funding our project, and then they helped us get the paperwork pulled together to make it happen."



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### Working Together for the Lord by Bonnie Mann

*“And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved” (Acts 2:44–47 ESV).*

Oh, the amazing things God does in, with, and through His Church as His people work together! That’s the reason my husband, Dennis, and I joyfully support the *Here We Stand* campaign. Individually, we would love to provide monetary support to a Concordia University or Seminary student studying to become a Professional Church Worker. Individually, we would love to support Innovative Ministries such as Hope in St. Ignace, Elli’s House, Luke Project 52 Clinic, and others. Individually, we would love to support International Ministries spreading Jesus’ love to people in South Africa and other areas around the world. Individually, we would love to grow the Michigan District’s Endowment Fund to provide funding for God’s mission in the future. And we can—in *small* ways.

BUT all of us in the Michigan District, individuals and congregations alike, working together can support God’s work in BIG ways. To Dennis and I, that is the opportunity we have through the *Here We Stand* campaign. Together with you, we can support the various initiatives of the campaign in BIG ways.

I am privileged to serve as Treasurer of the Michigan District and as such, have the opportunity to see and hear details of God’s work being done throughout the District. I hear the excitement of those who are implementing and growing Innovative Ministries and, most importantly, reaching people with the love of Jesus. I see generous scholarships provided to Michigan District students at Concordia Universities and Seminaries (in 2018, \$260,000 to 101 students!) I witness the Endowment Fund growing through additional gifts, being responsibly managed, and distributing funds to ministries annually. And I hear of International Ministries being funded in mighty ways. All to the glory of God and to reach more and more people with His great Love.

Thank you for joining us, and many others, in this great effort. And, if you’ve not yet become a part of the *Here We Stand* campaign, I encourage you to join the fun of working together for the Lord.

### A “By the Numbers” look at the *Here We Stand* Campaign

(through May 9, 2019)

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| \$6,017,107.17 | Total campaign gifts, pledges, and goals                                 |
| \$5,388,497.80 | Cash received which includes \$400,000 CEF Matching Funds                |
| \$508,883.88   | Outstanding commitments (pledges)  |
| 1,358          | Total Contributors   |
| 1,210          | Individual Contributors  |
| 148            | Congregations Contributing   |
| 40.4%          | % of Michigan District Congregations currently participating             |
| 10,640         | Participants in the “Crafted By Truth” Bible Reading Program             |
| 1,551          | Participants who have completed the Bible Reading Program                |
| 13,300         | Attendees at the 500th Anniversary Worship Service at the Breslin Center |
| \$1,210,340.31 | Total given/pledged for Professional Church Worker Scholarships          |
| \$2,389,166.56 | Total given/pledged for Innovative Missional Ministry                    |
| \$ 894,450.11  | Total given/pledged for Michigan District Endowment                      |
| \$1,403,424.70 | Total given/pledged for International Ministries                         |

#### Bible verse: **Psalm 71:17–18**

*“O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.”*

[herewestand.michigandistrict.org](http://herewestand.michigandistrict.org)



**Here We Stand**

## LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

Lutheran Hour Ministries was front and center presenting its outreach tools to thousands of pastors and church leaders during the Best Practices for Ministry Conference in Phoenix, Ariz. in February. The conference serves as a place where ministries gather to share ideas, resources, and information that helps participants grow.

This year's conference began with a large mainstage session in which multiple experts briefly covered the topic of their choosing to a large and excited audience. Rev. Dr. Tony Cook, LHM's vice president of Global Ministries, discussed the findings from our joint project with Barna Group on *Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age* and shared the resources that were produced and driven by this research. These resources include Project Connect's *Sharing Jesus* bundle, the upcoming novel from Don Everts titled *The Reluctant Witness*, and the *Spiritual Conversation Curve* found in our LHM Learncourse *Prepared to Respond*.

LHM staff also presented during breakout sessions. Topics included *Spiritual Conversation Curve*, the *EAGER Conversationalist* profile, and *Spiritually Vibrant Households*. In addition, Everts and Rachel Legoute presented *Witnessing to Nones and Dones*,

discussing ways in which LHM's THRED reaches those who have never been to church or those who have chosen to leave the organized church. Legoute and Sarah Cooksey spoke on topics regarding social media audiences and fundraising.

*"Between sessions, many individuals approached our table with enthusiasm and praise towards our resources,"* says Broge, LHM's director of design and development for Global Ministries. *"They were especially excited about the Spiritual Conversation Curve and the positive impact that our recently-released 'Gospel Adventures: Passport to Peru' has on children across the country."*

The three-day Best Practices for Ministry is free and takes place each February on the campus of Christ Lutheran Church and School in Phoenix (the conference is repeated in the fall in Indiana). This year, nearly 3,000 registrants attended and a wide variety of ministries were present. For more information on Best Practices, visit [cclphoenix.org](http://cclphoenix.org). For LHM resources, visit [lhm.org](http://lhm.org).



## LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

### In-State Mission Trip July 25-27, 2019

*You say you want to go on a mission trip?  
You say you don't have thousands of dollars to go?  
You say you don't like to fly on an airplane?  
You say you don't have a passport?*

**WELL, cheer up! Do we have the trip for you!**

It's less than one day's journey to the location! You choose the job you'd like to do! Restoring hope and a future to the people of Detroit.

**THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO GO ON A  
SHORT TERM MISSION TRIP – ALL FOR  
ONLY \$40 PER DAY!!**

***Hope to see you this summer.***



### Camp Restore Detroit Restoring Hope

#### PICTURE THE POSSIBILITIES:

- ✦ Build relationships with others through service
- ✦ Paint and/or spruce up facilities and landscapes
- ✦ Garden with area residents
- ✦ Read to children and/or do art projects
- ✦ Restore houses
- ✦ Volunteer 1 or all 3 days @ Camp Restore, Detroit – July 25-27, 2019
- ✦ Stay in your own home if you live close by
- ✦ Have a tremendous opportunity to witness your faith and share the love of **Jesus!**

Promo content by Kathy Mundt & updated by Nancy Shimek.

Please contact your zone president for application forms.  
Visit [www.camprestore.org](http://www.camprestore.org) for more information.

Visit the LWML Michigan District web site for information about us.  
<https://lwmlmichigan.org/>

## Workshop Launched Operation Barnabas in the Michigan District

In April, Operation Barnabas was kicked off in the Michigan District at Christ Our King, Saline. Rev. Dr. Colonel (retired) Gary Danielsen was the presenter from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Ministry to the Armed Forces. He gave a wonderful look into this great and much needed ministry.

Operation Barnabas is a network of care to our nation’s military members, both active and retired, and their families and extended families. Barnabas was St. Paul’s companion, who helped him in his missionary journey. Barnabas means “son of encouragement.” Called by Christ’s love, Operation Barnabas engages, empowers, and equips LCMS faith communities to provide hope, healing, and support to military-connected persons.

Approximately 40 people from at least six different congregations attended the workshop. There were several local businesses that came and showed great interest in assisting with this ministry as well. Col. Danielsen imparted a lot of information on how congregations can participate by becoming Operation Barnabas chapters. Through this wonderful care ministry, relationships can be built with active, reserve, and retired military men and women, their immediate families, and their extended



Photo courtesy of Christ the King, Saline

families. Operation Barnabas chapters bring ways of assisting with both physical and spiritual needs of these individuals. Becoming an Operation Barnabas chapter is a wonderful way for congregations to reach out into their communities and make a difference in the lives of people for the kingdom of God.

For more information, or if your congregation is interested in hosting a workshop, contact Rev. Randy Johnson, Michigan District Congregation Mission & Ministry Facilitator – North Zone, at 313.522.6424.

## Servants of Christ Meeting the Community’s Needs by Tracie Berghaus

Trinity, St. Joseph supports a variety of social ministries, compassionately meeting the needs of God’s people. Our Community Dinner team of volunteers feeds 50–125 people a well-balanced, healthy meal for free once a month. At our dinner, we take referrals for our Sort and Share program. Sort and Share volunteers sort through donations twice a week and fill requests for clothing and small household goods which are delivered each month to 20–40 needy families. Our soup kitchen volunteer team gathers once a month at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen to prepare and serve a meal to 100-200 people. Our Plarn ladies meet twice a month to turn plastic grocery bags into sleeping mats for the homeless. The mats provide a protective barrier from the cold, damp ground. Our Mobile Food Pantry serves 124–160 families each month. Our guests gather for refreshments before the food distribution begins. Once the truck arrives, 6,000–9,000 pounds of food is distributed by a stalwart group of volunteers in less than 2 hours.

Trinity is blessed to have servants of Christ ranging in ages from 12–82. In March, we were blessed to serve alongside the next generation of faithful workers—students from Trinity Lutheran School and West

Michigan Lutheran High School (WELS). Praise God for His many blessings and the opportunity to glorify Him with our service.



Photos courtesy of Trinity, St. Joseph

## Piece by Peace

In the early 2000s, Michelle (Schlaefke) Klein and Pam Price gathered a group of women to form the *Piece by Peace Quilt Club* at Peace, Saginaw. One of their first projects resulted in more than 40 quilts for an orphanage in Jamaica.

Sadly, Michelle has since passed, and Pam now lives in Davison. But the Quilt Club lives on.

The fact it helps others is what drew Peace member Joann Paluck to the club in 2005, not long after it formed. Her favorite project is the club's yearly donation to Lutheran World Relief, which assists people in third-world countries. Quilts are also given locally to the Old Town Baby Pantry in Saginaw. Six quilts were given to the pantry at the end of 2018.

When Peace's Pastor Matthew Hauser's own daughter, Miriam, was hospitalized right after birth with a heart defect, the Peace Quilt Club made a quilt for her and for others at Mott Children's Hospital. Quilts are also given to Habitat for Humanity, and to Peace church members in need, as well as seniors in nursing homes and shut-ins.

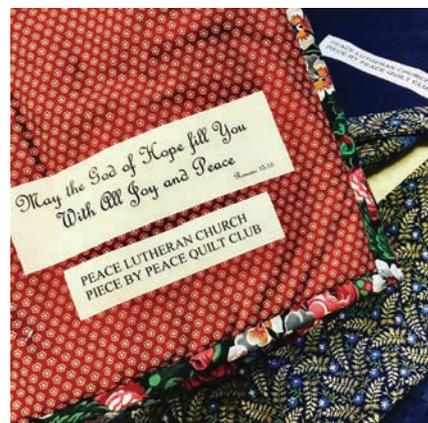


Photo courtesy of Peace, Saginaw

## Outreach Through Lutheran Braille Workers

Many churches offer hearing assistance technology on their websites or in the pews. Very few churches advertise support for people who struggle with their vision, even though there are approximately 300 million people in the world who are moderately or severely visually impaired, 95 percent of whom are unchurched.

While there are many resources available within urban areas, rural communities can struggle to serve individuals who are losing their vision. This is especially true within rural areas with large numbers of senior living communities. It is in these small towns that Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW) can provide a significant amount of free assistance and outreach support.

LBW offers free specialized large print, braille, and audio materials for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including the Bible, Lutheran Service Book, Small Catechism, devotionals, and other Christian materials. Churches and other organizations are invited to order these materials for free! These materials can be a great benefit to members of a church who are getting older, losing their vision, home-bound, or otherwise not able to enjoy the same connection with the Word that they used to. Pastors can use these resources to make house calls or hospital visits. Members of rural communities can use these materials during inclement weather when getting to church may not be a possibility.

For more information on Blind Ministries in Michigan, contact Barbara Hoffmeier, Michigan Mission Associate, at [barbara@lbwinc.org](mailto:barbara@lbwinc.org). You can find a complete listing of LBW's free resources at [lbwinc.org](http://lbwinc.org).

## Light the Way

Would your congregation rather spend money on energy or on the things that matter most?

Since 2015, faith communities across Michigan have participated in *Light the Way*, a free program from Michigan Interfaith Power & Light (Michigan IPL) and Consumers Energy that helps congregations save money on utility bills.

To date, 65 Michigan LCMS congregations have participated and have saved enough energy each year to power over 30 homes for a year. The Michigan IPL estimates that, collectively, these congregations will save about \$400,000 over the life of the equipment (conservatively assuming the lighting and other upgrades last for 15 years). This real savings can go back into their vital missions and ministries.

Saving energy is a great way for congregations to put their faith into action—to become better stewards of God's creation while also being good stewards of their own financial resources.

The *Light the Way* program is available for a limited time and on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information and to sign up, please visit [michiganipl.org](http://michiganipl.org) or contact Jennifer Young with Michigan Interfaith Power & Light at 248.463.8811 or [projectmanager@miipl.org](mailto:projectmanager@miipl.org).





Pictured here are new members who committed their lives to Jesus as they completed an Adult Information Class at Resurrection, Sand Lake in March 2019

## Special Recognition

### Kremkow, Lutheran Layman of the Year

Mr. Gregory Kremkow was honored as the 2019 Lutheran Layman of the Year at a banquet sponsored by the Lutheran Luncheon Club of Metro Detroit in May. This honor is annually bestowed upon a layman who has excelled in leadership and service to the church and community.

Kremkow grew up in Dearborn and graduated from Lutheran High West in 1968. After high school, he served his country in the US Army during the Vietnam War. Upon completion of his military service, Kremkow returned to civilian life in Dearborn where he spent his career working in the auto industry.

Kremkow is a lifelong member of Guardian, Dearborn where he is an active and willing servant-leader. He is



Kremkow (center) is pictured here with fellow LLL members

also an active volunteer with the Lutheran Laymen's League where he promotes the work of Lutheran Hour Ministries as an exhibitor and speaker.



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## Balance vs. Harmony continued from page 2

that do were protected against stress. It doesn't mean they didn't have stress in their lives, but their sense of making a difference in the lives of other people created a buffer against stress and enabled them to avoid burnout.



Where in your life are you having a lasting impact? If your job is a place where you feel you are making a difference in the lives of others, what a blessing! I hope our church workers see themselves in this way. For all of you, I pray that you also find an identity outside of your calling as a pastor, teacher, DCE, etc. I believe stress becomes overwhelming when you are unable to separate yourself from your professional church worker role and your whole identity is wrapped up in your position serving the church.

Others may be working in a position where you don't feel you are making a lasting impact. Are there other places, separate from your job, where you can serve and see yourself being a positive influence on others? God wired us to be givers of our time, talents, and treasures so His kingdom on earth can continue to grow and thrive. Serving those around us for kingdom impact is a natural stress reliever as we are fulfilling our purpose here on earth. My prayer for you is that you find a way for God to use you to be a blessing ... no matter how great or how small.

### WORK

I saved this one for last. If you are like me, this is where we have the most issues. I'm going to steal a thought that many authors have written about over the years, but I really like Rob Bell's paraphrase from a Nooma Video he recorded in 2008 (this series of videos was recorded before Rob's theology went so extreme we can't even recognize it anymore; but we can still take some of his words and Lutheranize them!): *"The enemy of the best isn't always the worst, many times it is the good."*

We get trapped in thinking the devil, the world, and our sinful nature uses all sorts of ghastly and despicable ways to keep us distracted from what God desires for our life. But the opposite is true, and it is especially evident at work. Our calendars and to-do lists can get so full of good things that we no longer have the time to do the handful of things we are truly called to do. None of these tasks are sinful in themselves, but they distract us from accomplishing and focusing on the things that make us our very best. We need to recognize when we fall into this trap.

So, what are the things you are best at handling at work that need your attention? Take a look at your calendar, your inbox, requests from your colleagues, and the stack of notes you have left yourself. When those 'good' things pile up and keep us from the things we should be focused on, that is the time when our work begins to spill over into other areas of our life because we need that time to get everything done. I encourage you to begin each day with an understanding of the two to three things you need to attack so you are doing what your company, congregation, or family needs you to do best.

As I finish writing this article, I can see the sinister smile from my wife as she reads it for the first time. She knows better than anyone that I battle against the tension of keeping faith, finances, relationships, health, and work in harmony with one another. Thankfully, our Risen Savior is there to walk beside us and offer His grace and forgiveness when we fail. May all of us look to Him every minute of the day and pray for wisdom as we strive to maintain harmony in our life. ■

*Travis Grulke is the Assistant to the President – Superintendent of Schools for the Michigan District, LCMS.*

*\*If you or your congregation would like further information and discounted rates for Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, visit [michigandistrict.org/churchworkercare](http://michigandistrict.org/churchworkercare).*

*Serving*

those around us for *kingdom impact*

is a natural stress reliever as we are fulfilling our

*purpose* here on earth.

# Calls and Roster Update

## ORDAINED

### Calls Accepted

Rev. Paul Kruse (Roscommon) to St. John, Houghton Lake  
Rev. Brian West (Mount Clemens) to Holy Cross, Jenison

### Change of Status

Rev. Michael Martin (East Lansing) to Emeritus  
Rev. James Schroeder (Scottville) to Emeritus  
Rev. Theodore Voll (West Branch) to Emeritus  
Rev. Paul Young (Midland) to Emeritus

\*Correction: Rev. Larry Loree Sr. (Pigeon) to Active still called to St. Peter, Kinde

### Transferred Out of District

Rev. Mark Bowditch (Warner Robins, GA) to California Nevada Hawaii District  
Rev. Joel Holls (Emeritus) to English District

### Called Home

Rev. Rodger Williams (Ann Arbor)

## COMMISSIONED

### Calls Accepted

Brooks, Jacquelin (St. Paul, Royal Oak) to Christ The King, Southgate  
Chaveriat, Charles (St. Michael's, Richville) to St. Michael's, Richville  
Hecht, Jessica (Concordia, Ann Arbor) to Trinity, Utica  
Holzer, Katie (Christ The King, Southgate) to Christ The King, Southgate  
Lanning, Chantal (Peace, Shelby Township) to Immanuel, Macomb  
Longmire, Sarah (Trinity, Traverse City) to Lord of Life, Chesterfield, MO  
Witt, Sylvia (Candidate, Minnesota South) to Lutheran Special Education Ministries, Farmington Hills

### Change of Status

Massey, Elizabeth (Zion, Auburn) to Candidate

### Transferred Into District

Witt, Sylvia (Minnesota South District) to Lutheran Special Education Min, Farmington Hills

### Removed From Roster

Bean, Christina



# Calendar of Events

## JUNE

- 1 State Track Meet  
Frankenmuth High School
- 9 **Here We Stand** Worship Service  
Michigan International Speedway, Brooklyn
- 13–14 Teacher Supervision Training  
Concordia University Ann Arbor
- 15 Synod Pre-Convention Delegate Meeting  
St. Luke, Haslett
- 16 Fathers' Day
- 17–19 Future Lutheran Administrators -- Midwest Educators  
Concordia University Ann Arbor
- 23–29 THE BIG WEEK at Camp Restore - Detroit  
Mount Calvary, Detroit
- 24–28 A2E Sports Camp East  
Messmer Park, Detroit

## JULY

- 4–5 Independence Day  
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 11–14 National Youth Gathering  
Minneapolis, Minn.
- 20–25 LCMS Synodical Convention  
Tampa, Florida
- 21–25 Special Friends Camp  
Camp Copneconic, Fenton
- 24–26 The Summit Worship Arts Conference  
Shepherd of the Lakes, Brighton

## AUGUST

- 3 **Here We Ride** Bike Riding Event  
Zion, Bay City/Bay City Rail Trail Loop
- 5–7 Principals' Conference  
Higgins Lake
- 14 Early Childhood Conference  
Martin Luther High School, Lansing
- 18–20 Board of Directors' Retreat  
Traverse City
- 30 DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED

## SEPTEMBER

- 2 Labor Day  
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 3–4 Emeriti Conference  
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 8–10 Deacon Conference  
Camp Arcadia
- 16 Urban Ministry Conference  
Camp Restore Detroit
- 24–26 IIM Discernment & Continuing Education Conference  
Michindoh, Hillsdale
- 27–29 Church Extension Fund Conference  
Auburn Hills Marriott, Pontiac

For more detailed information, visit [michigandistrict.org/events](http://michigandistrict.org/events).