

November 2020

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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



HEALTHY WORKERS

An Attitude of Gratitude

by Darryl Andrzejewski

Dr. Shawn Achor, a Harvard psychologist and professor, suggests that we can train our brains to become more grateful by setting aside just five minutes a day for practicing gratitude. He cites a one-week study in which people were asked to take five minutes a day, at the same time every day, to write down three things for which they were thankful. They

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IN TOUCH

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... the journey of a deeper gratitude begins with a single moment of thankfulness.

didn't have to be big things, but they had to be concrete and specific, such as, "I'm thankful for the delicious Thai take-out dinner I had last night." Or, "I'm thankful that my daughter gave me a hug." The participants simply expressed thanks for three specific things at the same time every day.

At the end of one month, the researchers followed up and found that those who practiced gratitude—including those who stopped the exercise after one week—were happier and less depressed. Remarkably, after three months, the participants who had been part of the one-week experiment were still more joyful and content. Incredibly, after the six-month mark, they were still happier, less anxious, and less depressed. The researchers hypothesized that the simple practice of writing down three thanksgivings a day over the course of a week primed the participants' minds to search for the good in their lives.

This seems like it used to be easier to do, doesn't it? I'm thinking about things like our country. We are more of a melting pot today than perhaps at any other time in our history. We have two distinctly different political parties. We have radically dissimilar views on how to live, how to love, how to learn, how to lead. And yet for hundreds of years, despite our wide contrasts, we still live free. This has led most of us for most of our lives to be thankful. And we'd sing about it ... highlighting our "spacious skies", "amber waves of grains," and this glorious lyrics that seems to be fading rather fast: "Who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life." Can we be thankful for our mercy?

Write it Down

What if we all wrote it down? What if we wrote three things, things for which we are thankful in this country? Maybe I can't change the growing distance in the world, but what if I could begin by changing me? My thankfulness. My attitude of mercy. "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" (Lao Tzu) and the journey of a deeper gratitude begins with a single moment of thankfulness. And then, another. And then, another.

St. Paul says, *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances ..."* (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18). Words to live by. I'd like you to journey with me for a moment to a most sacred moment. Go with me to the middle of the sea. The winds are whipping. The waves are crashing. And Peter steps out of the boat in the midst of a great storm just to be near Jesus. And for a few glorious moments, there he was, walking on the water. I'd like to pick up the story in a very familiar place: *"When (Peter) saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me.'"*

I'm thankful for these moments. I don't like sinking. Neither do you. Failure to stay on top of life when the wind blows is discouraging at best, terrifying at worst. But as we walk out in godly confidence, as we come to those leaps of faith—like

Peter—“*Lord, save me,*” our grateful hearts will see that there’s no greater place to be than passionately counting on the Lord to step in when the world crashes down.

Here’s how this moment ends: “*Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of (Peter)*” (Matthew 14:30–31). Is there ever—dear children of God—any greater place to be than in the hands of Jesus?

Filled With Good Things

A friend tells the story of his then-six-year-old son Liam. They were visiting a market, and Liam was standing near his mother who was making a purchase. There was a giant jar of candy sitting next to the register, so the shopkeeper told Liam to help himself to a handful. Liam hid behind his mother and played shy. Which was odd, because this simply was not in his character.

“Don’t you like candy?” the shopkeeper asked.

“Yes” Liam replied ... rather sheepishly.

“Well, go ahead and take some.”

He didn’t. So as Liam’s mom was leaving, the shop owner reached into the jar, pulled out a handful of goodies, and stuck them in Liam’s coat. When they left

the shop, his mother asked, “Why didn’t you take the candy yourself?” Liam answered, “Because his hand is much bigger than mine.”

Now hear this wonderful verse in Psalm 104:28 about the size of our God’s blessings: “*When you open your hand, they are filled with good things.*”

Many of you gather around your family tables and say a prayer, inviting the Lord to bless and to be with ... and you begin, “Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest ...” So, if you wouldn’t mind, I would like you to see in your mind’s eye the Lord as a guest at your table, but this time He is opening His hand. And as you look, you see that His hand is filled with good things.

Now, what are the first three things you see?

Whatever it is, big or small, give thanks to the Lord for the blessings that come your way from His mighty big hands. Write it down. Repeat it. Rejoice in it. And maybe if you do practice this attitude of gratitude long enough ... it may just very well change your life. ■

Rev. Darryl L. Andrzejewski is the Senior Pastor at Historic Trinity, Detroit.





Being a *Whole Person* in an *Age of Zoom Haircuts*

by Justin Rossow

I just got my first professional haircut in 38 weeks. I hadn't been counting, but the salon's computer was keeping track. As the stylist cut my hair, we talked through our masks.

Mostly, she said, people have just been growing their hair long. Some are coming in with really uneven buzz cuts or a few holes in the back. She's even seen a couple of mullets: "They were ugly when I was a kid; they are ugly now."

Then she mentioned how many "Zoom haircuts" she has seen in the last few weeks. It seems people are only concerned with what they look like from the front, as they speak into a computer camera, with the result that a whole segment of the population is coming back to professional haircuts with the backs of their heads grown unkempt and wild. Who knew?

But when the only thing anyone ever sees is the front of your head, who needs more than a Zoom cut?

I wonder how often I live my life like that: only taking

care of what I show other people. I wonder how often I have settled for a Zoom cut, when being a whole or complete person would have taken more work or more energy or more time. I wonder how often my heart has grown unkempt and wild while on the outside I looked professionally acceptable.

Have you seen the cardboard cutouts in the stands at sports stadiums this fall? They look like real people from one angle, but they have no depth, no substance.

I want to be a person of substance.

So how do I do that? How do I move beyond living like a cardboard cutout with a Zoom haircut?

Time and time again, when God reaches into the lives of real people, the message comes with the command "Fear not!" and the blessing "Peace be with you!" As the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), Jesus came to bring peace by restoring our broken relationships. In Jesus, we now have peace with God (Romans 5:1) and with each other (Ephesians 2:14–15).

Peace, as a biblical concept, is related to the idea of wholeness. More than merely the absence of war, *Shalom* is about being complete, being whole, having depth and substance and lacking nothing. To have peace is to be a whole person or a whole community. Peace extends your view and expands your horizon.

Fear, I think, must do the opposite. Fear flattens. Fear makes us less of who we are and narrows our experience. Fear turns us into cardboard cutouts, there just for show. Fear makes us cut the front and sides of our hair, so people can't tell how much we are struggling off-camera. Fear shrinks. Peace makes whole.

So how do I listen to the "Fear not!" of the Christmas angels? How do I hold onto and put myself under the Easter evening words "Peace be with you!" spoken by the risen Savior? How do I move beyond living like a cardboard cutout with a Zoom haircut?

1. Be Whole With Jesus

If you are going to be real with anybody, start by being real with Jesus. He already knows you and loves you. You can be the real you, the whole you, the complete you as you spend time with Jesus in His Word and in prayer.

Being wholly you means being broken, too. Sharing with Jesus what you are really thinking and feeling isn't as easy or pious as it sounds. What if you don't feel like praying right now? (You can tell Jesus that.) What if your faith feels distant or small? (You can tell Jesus that.) What if your life off-camera is a total mess? (Jesus already knows that, so talking to Him about it can be a relief.)

Sometimes I wonder if I am not afraid of being more than a Flat

Stanley version of myself because the Whole Me is so much more complicated and sinful and frustrating and confusing than the 2D version I put out for the world to see.

Don't be afraid. You come to a risen Savior who freely gives peace.

Trust Jesus with all of who you are. That's one small step toward living as a more complete person.

2. Be Whole With Others

We follow Jesus better when we follow Him together. The shepherds who first heard the "Fear not!" outside Bethlehem were keeping watch over their flocks by night ... together. The disciples who first heard the risen Jesus say "Peace be with you" were gathered in the Upper Room ... together. In fact, Jesus shows up in that gathering while two disciples are in the middle of sharing what happened to them on the road to Emmaus ... together.

Fear flattens. And fear isolates. All alone, your world shrinks until your family and friends get a cardboard cutout version of you, and your work only sees the Zoom cut.

It's hard to be whole with others in an age of social distancing. I've tried some Facebook group Bible studies that have helped, but they aren't a silver bullet. Texting a prayer or encouragement is good; but it's not all.

I think we will always struggle to find, cultivate, and nurture relationships that help us follow Jesus. That's OK. Keep fighting for that kind of friendship forged by the

Spirit. Finding time, being open, staying connected—all of that is always hard, and even harder during COVID. Don't give up.

You need someone else to speak the "Fear nots" and the "Peace be with yous" into your life. You need

You can't be a whole person, a person of peace, without recognizing how broken and empty the "real you" actually is.

someone to look for Jesus active in your life when you can't see clearly. You need someone to cut the back of your hair, because that mullet just isn't working.

We need other people as we follow Jesus. And that's a good thing. Practice being a little more of your whole (but broken) self with someone else. Living like that is dangerous—other people will see what you have hidden behind the facade—but other people can also help you to bring even what's behind the facade into the light.

3. Rest Wholly on God's Grace

If you want to be a whole person in a fallen and sinful world, your own fallen, sinful life will be part of the equation. To live in 3D, you will have to bump into things you don't like about yourself. Your failures will be clear to you. What you hide off-camera will sometimes seem like more of a reality than the face you show the world.

That's a good thing.

You can't be a whole person, a

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A recently burned house in the Franklin Ave neighborhood

Photo by Jeff Heisner/Michigan District, LCMS

Volunteers Step up at Franklin Avenue Mission

by Jeff Heisner

As the Coronavirus first hit, Rev. Christian Jones of Franklin Avenue Mission was worried that most of his volunteers would be unable to help. To his surprise, the exact opposite happened: the mission church on Flint's east side has seen **more** volunteers pitching in to help the people in need. They are now serving even more meals to their members and community. Where they once served 170-220 meals on a Tuesday or Thursday, they are now feeding 250-275 people.

While that has been a blessing, Pastor Jones still gets disappointed that he cannot sit down and enjoy a meal with his members. Now he catches up with them while they are waiting in line for food or through their car windows. *"It's incredibly frustrating,"* Jones admits.

Pat Adams is one of the volunteers who makes sure things are running smoothly. Pat is a member at St. Mark, Flint and has been coming to the mission for the past 5 years. It is a ministry that is near and dear to her heart. *"I had a wagon, no phone and three children and I was a single mom right in this neighborhood, so this is especially special to me,"* said Adams.

Because not everyone can make it to Franklin Avenue, the church decided to go out to the community. Volunteer Laura Weiss has been helping members who cannot get to the church by delivering meals directly to them. *"I just drop off meals and talk to them and hear about their day,"* said Weiss. *"It's nice when*

you're trapped just to have somebody come and say, 'This is your Bible verse for today.'"

Even those inside the church are stepping up. The church now has its first Elder, Michael Spight, who has taken on a leadership role. Spight is looking forward to a return to normalcy from the pandemic. *"I can't wait for this to get over with, so I can get back to the church,"* he said.

A former veteran, William Mills is another example of the need. He rides to Franklin Avenue on his electric wheelchair to pick up 2 meals—one for him and another for his wife. His wife is sick and cannot make the trip, but William is also sick. He is fighting stage 4 colon cancer, and he is so thankful to be able to come to the mission for a couple of dinners. Mills said, *"I really appreciate this place, because they are really a lot of help to a lot of people."*

The need is still great in this area and people in Flint are hurting. The neighborhood has seen four houses go up in flames in recent months, and the church recently lost a member due to a house fire.

To find out more about Franklin Avenue Mission, visit franklinavemission.com. To volunteer, go to michigandistrict.org/joinaministry. ■

Jeff Heisner is the video journalist and digital media director for the Michigan District, LCMS.

Midland Flood Clean-up Continues

by Jeff Heisner

“Oh my goodness,” whispers Pastor Ed Doerner of Messiah, Midland in awe of the destruction and amount of trash lining the streets in Sanford, Mich. It was shocking. Some piles are as high as the buildings and homes in the neighborhoods. Even months after the May 21 disaster, when the dams broke and flood waters rushed through so many areas, there are still homes that need to be cleaned out and structures that need to be fortified.

Michigan District, LCMS churches were right in the middle of the relief efforts. Messiah, Midland sent teams out into areas hit the hardest. Ray Pratt Jr., from Trinity, Utica was there digging out people’s belongings and getting them ready for the next phase of reconstruction. Pratt slept on the floor at Messiah during the cleanup.

Shepherd’s Gate, Shelby Township sent groups of volunteers up to Midland numerous times. In June, the church gave Messiah a \$5,000 check to help with the relief efforts. The group also helped clean out Jon Rogers’ beautiful lakefront home on Wixom Lake. In one day, they filled up two dumpsters and made Rogers’ cleanup job ready for a contractor. Rogers was filled with gratitude and told the group, *“They say out of bad comes good all the time, but this is like the best thing that’s ever happened to me. It’s like a miracle.”*

Pastor Doerner checked out the dam that broke at Sanford Lake. It wrecked the downtown area. The rushing waters tore apart the main street into town, filled businesses and homes, and washed away baseball and softball fields at the park. The flood forced many evacuations including that of a man named Paul, who Doerner

bumped into in Sanford. Paul was forced to grab his family and drive his camper out of town when the floods hit. He is unemployed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and unemployment checks stopped coming in weeks ago. He told Doerner he and his family were staying in the camper at a parking lot in Mt. Pleasant. Their nightly dinner consisted of canned tuna.

After building a relationship with Paul, Doerner convinced the former Sanford resident to meet him at The Bridge Food Center, a grocery store and mission owned by Messiah. Doerner was able to give the man a \$500 gift card, along with another gift card to buy groceries at The Bridge. *“Way overwhelmed,”* is how Paul described his reaction to Doerner’s generosity.

Jackie Maxwell has been organizing much of the relief effort for Messiah. She has also seen the devastation the floods have caused, but she remains hopeful with every act of kindness that happens to all the people in this area. Currently, she could put teams and individuals to work immediately with drywalling, painting, cleaning, organizing, and getting folks back into their homes. The Messiah congregation is helping with some larger items and was able to hire a contractor and a plumber, but financial assistance is always appreciated.

If you want to help the continued relief effort in the Midland area, email Maxwell at flood@messiahbc.org or call 989.631.5200. ■

Jeff Heisner is the video journalist and digital media director for the Michigan District, LCMS.



Photo courtesy of Messiah, Midland



Photo by Jeff Heisner/Michigan District, LCMS



Photo courtesy of Messiah, Midland

November 2020

Who Makes Our Ministry Go? It's the Volunteers Representing CEF Statewide



Church Extension Representatives are the people that help make the partnership between congregations, investors and CEF so solid. They encourage stewardship that will benefit both individual church members and the congregation overall.



“Some CEF representatives have been volunteering for over 35 years! That’s an extraordinary commitment. It shows how important the volunteer role is to our ministry.”

Andy Sohn

Vice President – Marketing & Relations
Church Extension Fund

For over 35 years, Church Extension Fund has relied upon a dedicated and faithful group of volunteers to help spread the word about CEF throughout the state. “We have over 350 LCMS congregations in Michigan,” notes Andy Sohn, CEF’s Vice President of Marketing and Relations. “Michigan is the largest LCMS district. CEF simply doesn’t have enough people on-staff to be able to visit every congregation as often as we’d like.”

This makes the job of CEF’s volunteers, known as Church

Extension Representatives, so important. It’s CERs who act as CEF’s “boots on the ground,” taking on much of the task of sharing information about CEF with their congregation. “Without our CERs,” says Sohn, “the effective and helpful partnerships we’ve formed between congregations, investors, and CEF could not be as strong as they are today.”

A Valued Ministry Position

CERs not only make updated information about CEF available at their churches, they also encourage

congregations to take advantage of CEF's services, and encourage stewardship that will benefit both individual church members and the congregation overall.

"This is a ministry position," Sohn says, "and it's a great way to get more involved in your church. No worries about being a financial wiz—it's not required. And being a CER doesn't need to take up a lot of your time. The average commitment is only a few hours a month."

Lessons Learned from Saving

There's another way to volunteer for CEF: as a Stamp Representative. CEF offers a savings stamps program designed to help teach children the importance of saving. Stamp Representatives are tasked with selling stamps at church or in a Lutheran day school. Sohn recalls his own childhood experience with CEF Savings Stamps:

"When I was about eight years old, at Our Savior Lutheran in Lansing, my mother would give me a quarter every Tuesday and ask me to purchase a CEF Savings Stamp for my savings account. As a good kid, I almost always did what she asked. Almost always. One Tuesday, I spent the quarter on a hot pretzel at lunch. My mom was not happy with me that day. I learned two valuable lessons: one, always do what your mom asks, and two, saving is important!"



CEF offers a savings stamps program designed to help teach children the importance of saving. Stamp Representatives are tasked with selling stamps at church or in a Lutheran day school.

Fall Conference, Free to Reps

All CEF volunteers, CERs as well as Stamp Representatives, are invited to CEF's Annual Fall Conference. "We encourage every CEF volunteer to attend," Sohn says. "Coming to the conference helps reps hone their understanding of CEF, what we do, and how we serve. There are great speakers and entertainment, and attendees enjoy fellowship with other CEF reps from around the state."

Plus, notes Sohn, "There's no cost for a rep to attend. Everything for the entire conference weekend—all food, lodging, and entertainment—is paid for by CEF."

A Great Way to Serve

It's our CERs and Stamp Representatives who help make CEF what we are today: a healthy,

well-respected, and highly valued ministry partner to all in the Michigan District. Either volunteer position is a great way to serve your church, serve CEF, and serve other people in your congregation.

As Sohn notes: "Some CEF representatives have been volunteering for over 35 years! That's an extraordinary commitment. It shows how important the volunteer role is to our ministry."

Does your congregation have a Church Extension Representative? Does your school have a CEF Stamp Representative? Can you see yourself helping to build God's Kingdom in either of these ways? Contact Bill Burmeister at 734-242-3944 or Andy Sohn at 734-213-3242 to learn more about representing CEF.



Church Extension Fund

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A Pile of Screws and Some Things you “Always Know” by Robert Appold

Recently I came across my father’s toolbox. My Dad passed away last January, and the toolbox needed a new home. My father grew up on a Bay City family farm during the Great Depression, so hanging on to a bolt or screw “because you just never know when you’ll need one,” was part of his M.O. And yes, one of the drawers of the tool chest was full of random nuts, bolts, washers, screws, and cotter pins. I also found an old dime and pen from a bank that went out of business many decades ago. Eureka!

“You just never know” might be a good sub-theme for the ***Here We Stand*** campaign and the four initiatives.

“You just never know” which student in this year’s confirmation class might be your next pastor, or the one to baptize your granddaughter, or be your nephew’s 5th grade teacher. Adding funding to the Church Worker Scholarship Program might be a good idea for you.

“You just never know” when the Michigan District will begin a new ministry that needs to be jump-started with resources. Contributing to the District

Endowment Fund is similar to Joseph storing up grain in good times for times of uncertainty in the future. It’s just a wise thing to do.

“You just never know” when a school or church will need to start something new in an always-changing world. The Innovative Mission Ministry initiative is designed to encourage development of new ways to reach new people. Everyone needs Jesus!

“You just never know” which people group who never heard God’s Word might warmly welcome the Gospel or which person might confess the name of Jesus in a country you personally never could go to. But supporting the International Ministry Fund lets your dollars go to work where you never could.

The “You just never know” way of thinking about life caused my father to prepare for life changes. Therefore, stocking up on reusable items was a value to him.

But while we “never know” about life, we also “always know” some things about God. God is always faithful and just (1 John 1:8–9). He always works in all things to bring about Good (Romans 8:28). He

always is slow to anger but abounding in steadfast love (Exodus 34:6). Jesus is always the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of world (John 1:29). He promises to bless those who hear and carry out His words (Luke 11:28). So, for my father, those “always know” promises of God caused him to go to church, sing in the choir, and serve as an elder, along with talking to his children and grandchildren about engaging with their church. But that was because he did know everyone needs the Savior God so graciously gave us in Christ.

When the initial idea of a District fundraising endeavor that would coincide with the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation was introduced to me, I was excited to think of the possibility of our generation participating in a work that would outlast any of the people involved. When Pastor Chris Bodley suggested the theme verse—proclaiming God’s goodness to the next generation and those still to come (Psalm 71:17–18)—I could see the campaign was emphasizing endeavors God would promise to bless. I knew I wanted my congregation to participate. And I wanted to contribute as well.

As we see the finish line of the completion of the campaign, I’d like to invite on board any who have not

yet started. The latest report shows 45% of our congregations have participated to date. Could you ask all churches in your circuit to participate in some way in the ***Here We Stand*** campaign? I would ask that you stand with us by participating however you or your congregation can. I’ve got a drawer full of bolts to share too.

Rev. Robert Appold currently serves St. Matthew, Grand Rapids.

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

(through October 1, 2020)

\$7,089,600.98	Total campaign gifts, pledges, and goals
\$6,809,774.81	Cash received which includes \$600,000 CEF Matching Funds
\$218,774.81	Outstanding commitments (pledges)
1,499	Total Contributors
1,336	Individual Contributors
163	Congregations Contributing
45.3%	% of Michigan District Congregations currently participating
\$1,353,138.61	Total given/pledged for Professional Church Worker Scholarships
\$3,025,794.61	Total given/pledged for Innovative Missional Ministry
\$1,030,086.05	Total given/pledged for Michigan District Endowment
\$1,618,901.48	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



LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

LHM Resources for Children and Families

Share the Gospel with Kids Around the World

May is 15 years old and has grown up in a non-Christian background. She and her family are currently homeless and she is not able to attend school. May is often invited to attend puppet shows and children's programs hosted by the Lutheran Hour Ministries Myanmar staff and volunteers. She pays very close attention during these events. May first heard about God's love and salvation at a puppet show and saw how the staff and volunteers showed the love of God through their actions. After attending several events and reading the materials provided by LHM, May was led to trust in Jesus by the power of God's Word. While her parents still don't believe, she has recently begun bringing her younger brother and sister to participate in the LHM activities.

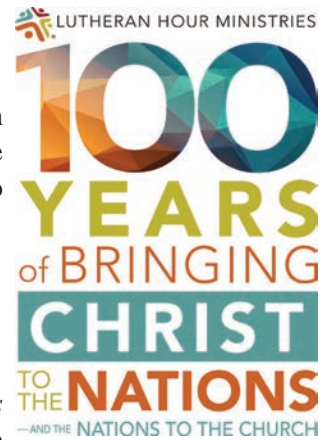
LHM has established a Global Kids Fund to directly support children like May in regions all over the globe. From puppet shows to youth gatherings, and from sports activities to music performances to workshops offering biblically-based guidance, LHM provides age-appropriate programming to reach children far and wide with the everlasting hope of the Gospel message. Your gifts help

fuel culturally relevant youth programs designed to share the Gospel with those who have not yet heard it.

The Vibrant Conversations Card Deck & The Household Magnet

The *Spiritual Conversations Deck* is not your average set of playing cards. Each *Vibrant Conversations Deck* is equipped with 52 thought-provoking questions with each suit being a different category. Not only can these cards be used to play your favorite card game, but they can be used to spark spiritual conversations wherever your household is gathered. While your household is gathered around playing cards, you can use *The Household Magnet* to write your household's goal. This magnetic notepad says, "As for me and my household we will..." allowing you and your household to identify an area of focus as you work together to nurture the faith in your household.

Contact lhm.org for more information.



LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

GET YOUR SCHOLARSHIP!



If you are a Female Student studying to be a Deaconess or Professional Church Worker then **THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY!**

Earn money for your tuition by applying at:

lwmlmichigan.org/scholarship

ACT FAST!

Applications are due by
November 30th, 2020 !



Iowa Storm Recovery Efforts

Early in the afternoon of August 10, 2020, a line of thick, dark clouds formed. What was thought to be simply another large midwestern summer storm turned into a derecho, a land-based hurricane. It was the equivalent of a category 3 hurricane with sustained winds of 110 mph and gusts of up to 140. These unexpected winds lasted nearly an hour over an area about 45 miles wide and over most of eastern Iowa into Illinois. Sadly, three lives were lost. The storm destroyed the new construction at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Sixty-seven percent of the tree cover in the greater Cedar Rapids area was destroyed. As of September, only 22% of the wreckage had been cleared.

Farmers lost 46% of their crops and a drought was declared. King of Kings' full-time farm families lost all of their crops, most of their buildings and, in one case, their home. The crops that did survive dried up and were littered with building debris, which made it virtually impossible to operate combines for the fall harvest. Damage estimates were in the four-billion-dollar range.

The disaster response has now moved to recovery. Estimates are that it will take up to a year for clean-up to be completed. What kind of help is needed? Gift cards are most welcome for gas (BP), grocery (Walmart), as well as Home Depot, Lowes, and Menards. King of Kings plans to plant 5,000 trees in the spring, something else people



Photo courtesy of King of Kings Lutheran Church, Cedar Rapids, IA

can support financially.

To learn more about how you can help, visit michigandistrict.org/disasterresponse or contact Travis Grulke, the Michigan District LERT coordinator at 734.665.3791 ext. 258.

St. Paul Community Parish Nurse

St. Paul Community, Pontiac is located in an impoverished area. The church seeks to serve its neighbors and every day there is someone in need. According to their pastor, Rev. Chris Jung, *"they come to our door every day ... we just try to help them in any way we can."*

It's not easy, but Rev. Jung is blessed to have some help in Mary McColeman, a member at St. John, Rochester who spends a lot of time at St. Paul. She and her husband, Mike, take care of the food pantry and spend hours organizing and making the meals for the community. McColeman has become the church's Parish Nurse and already has plans in mind for her new position: *"We're talking about some basic things like first-aid boxes and defibrillators, first-aid classes, vaccination clinics, health care classes, blood pressure checks."* In early October, they held a free flu vaccination clinic at St. Paul Community.

McColeman says she is so glad that God has placed her in this spot and at this time: *"God uses each of us in different ways. Everybody's got something they should be*

doing, and I just think right now this is maybe something I can do."

The ministry at St. Paul Community, Pontiac is part of the A2E initiative supported by the Michigan District's **Here We Stand** Campaign (michigandistrict.org/herewestand). To read the full story, visit michigandistrict.org/blog. For more information regarding Parish Nursing, contact Christie Hansard at churchworkercare@michigandistrict.org.



Photo by Jeff Hulsner/Michigan District, LCMS

Hope-Full Living/Worship Anew

Worship Anew is pleased to announce the acquisition of Hope-Full Living, the much-loved daily devotional that has been given out to donors of Worship Anew over the past four years.

Worship Anew will continue the publication, starting with the fourth quarter edition of 2020, with a similar format and hope-filled messages that will be shared each day from God's precious Word.



Hope-Full Living was created and launched in 2011 by Creative Communications for the Parish. Under the leadership of Worship Anew, the publication will continue to be a daily devotional, written by older adults for older adults, that addresses the issues, concerns, and experiences that mean the most to the faith life of seniors. Hope-Full Living has been a blessing to the Worship Anew community as it shares the hope of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

To learn more, visit hopefulliving.org.

Special Recognition

Ferry Concludes Service to CUAA/CUW in June 2021

Photo courtesy of Concordia University Ann Arbor



In September, Rev. Patrick T. Ferry, PhD, announced that he will conclude three decades of distinguished service to Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor in June 2021. The Board of Regents will plan a national search for his successor.

During Ferry's tenure, Concordia University Wisconsin has been widely recognized for its excellence in Christian faith and learning, student outcomes, robust program growth in the areas of health science, business, and education, and the successful merger with a sister campus, Concordia University Ann Arbor, in 2013.

Ferry came to Concordia University Wisconsin in 1991 from St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Laramie, Wyo., where he served as campus pastor for students at the University of Wyoming. He began his Concordia career as a professor of history. Ferry was inaugurated as the university's 8th president in August of 1997. He is one of the longest-serving presidents in the institution's 172-year history, overseeing decades of tremendous student, program, and campus growth and Concordia's designation as a top-tier, nationally ranked university.

Ferry will lead Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor through the current academic year. While the days ahead are ones filled with great challenges, the university is in an excellent position to move forward.

During Ferry's tenure,



Photo courtesy of Pilgrim, Burton

Rev. Mark Matheny was installed as pastor at Pilgrim, Burton on August 26, 2020. He is pictured here with (l-r) his son Nathan and daughter-in-law Kaitlyn, his wife Debra, his mother Janette, and son Ryan.



Photo courtesy of NewLife Community, Swartz Creek

Pastor Matthew Hein was installed at NewLife Community, Swartz Creek on Sunday, August 16, 2020. Pictured are: front row (l-r) Reverends Justin Rossow, Matthew Hein, Todd Biermann, William Winter, and back row (l-r) Christian Jones, David Rossow, and Richard Rossow.

Being a Whole Person ... *continued from page 5*

person of peace, without recognizing how broken and empty the “real you” actually is. (We show our Zoom persona to ourselves at least as often as we show it to others.) Taking a 360-degree look at our hearts and lives can drive us to despair. That’s one reason we so seldom look behind the curtain.

That kind of a total mess needs a total Savior. Your Jesus knows the whole you, the you with all the failures and holes and broken pieces. And your Jesus delights in who you are now, and who you are going to be when you are finally made complete; when you also pass from death to resurrection life, just like He did; when you are finally whole because the beautiful creation that is you, the real you, will have finally been made new.

That resurrection, New Creation life starts already now. Your whole person, steeped in God’s grace, is both an abject failure and a shining beauty.

Whenever you want to run and hide behind that flat version of you, because it feels safe, remember that no cardboard cutout can give life. When you don’t feel safe, run to Jesus instead. When your off-camera reality is overwhelming, run to Jesus. When the real you is really messed up, run to Jesus.

Jesus says to you again today, “Fear not; it is I.” Jesus



© ferlistockphoto/iStock

shows up in your Upper Room, shut and locked as it is, and says, “Peace be with you.” Jesus holds the broken pieces of your life and makes you whole.

If you want to be a whole person in an age of Zoom haircuts, be whole with Jesus. He can handle the whole you; and He loves the whole you! Then risk being whole with someone who can point you back to Jesus; we need each other on this journey of faith. Finally, rest wholly on God’s grace. Of course the real you is a real, sinful mess; throw yourself on God’s mercy and ask the Spirit to forgive you, renew you, and lead you, so that you may delight in God’s will and walk in God’s ways to the glory of God’s holy name. That’s living as a whole person.

Living as whole person like that is not easy or comfortable, but it is joyful and full of adventure! And it sure beats living as a cardboard cutout. ■

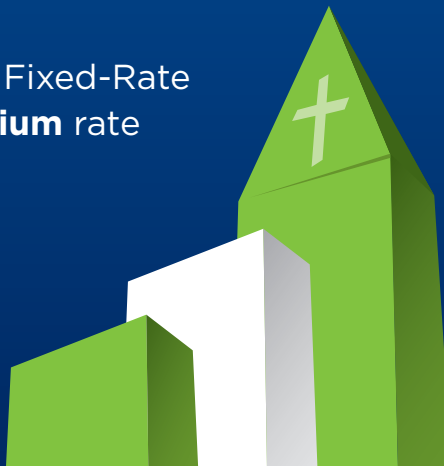
Rev. Dr. Justin Rossow writes, presents, teaches, and preaches at the intersection of Scripture, culture, and metaphor theory. Justin is the founder of Next Step Press and The Next Step Community, both designed to help people delight in taking a next step following Jesus. Read more at [community.FindMyNextStep.org](https://community.findmynextstep.org).

First published at <https://community.findmynextstep.org/2020/09/16/be-a-whole-person-in-an-age-of-zoom-haircuts/>. Used by permission.

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Calls and Roster Update

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. Bradley Hubbard to St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
Rev. Timothy Storck to Good Shepherd, Chesterfield

Change of Status

Rev. Daniel Howard (Warren) SMP to General Pastor
Rev. Daniel Jansen (Alger) to Candidate
Rev. W. Roger Stauffer (Sanford) to Emeritus

Transferred Into District

Rev. Timothy Storck from Rocky Mountain District
Rev. Paul Yanke from Eastern District

Resigned From the Roster

Rev. John Kral (Romeo)
Rev. Richard Tino (Ypsilanti)

COMMISSIONED

Calls Accepted

Neumeyer, Dennis (Emeritus) to Immanuel, Saginaw

Change of Status

Farney, Hillary (Shepherd of the Lakes, Brighton) to Candidate
Noelker, James (LHSA, Rochester Hills (Westland)) to Candidate
Scheske, Melissa (Trinity, Sturgis) to Candidate

Transferred Out of District

Kelso, Corey (Candidate) to Pacific Southwest District
Kelso, Nicole (Candidate) to Pacific Southwest District
Klausmeier, Veronica (Candidate) to Southeastern District

Transferred Into District

Corker, Lynn (Northern Illinois District) as Candidate

Resigned From the Roster

Gross, Lisabeth

School Closings

Armada, Noah's Ark Preschool

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

Calendar of Events

Please check the District website for the latest updates and detailed information as COVID-19 concerns continue.
michigandistrict.org/events.

NOVEMBER 2020

- 1 All Saints' Day
- 3 Election Day
- 11 Veterans' Day
- 12 New Worker Zoom Conference
- 26 Thanksgiving Day
- 26-27 District Office Closed

DECEMBER 2020

- 24 Christmas Eve
District Office Closed
- 25 Christmas Day
District Office Closed
- 31 New Year's Eve

JANUARY 2021

- 1 New Year's Day
District Office Closed
- 31 Deadline for Circuit Forums

FEBRUARY 2021

- 27 Deadline for Convention Nominations, reports, and overtures

APRIL 2021

- 16-18 The Katie
DoubleTree by Hilton, Bay City
- 18-20 Office Personnel Conference
DoubleTree by Hilton, Bay City

MAY 2021

- 3-5 North & East Pastors' Conference
Tawas Bay Beach Resort
- 8 Michigan District Convention Floor Committees
Michigan District Office
- 11-12 South & East Pastors' Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 12-13 Circuit Visitors' Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 17-18 West Pastors' Conference
The Inn at Harbor Shores, St. Joseph
- 26-27 Intentional Interim Spring Conference
Michindoh Conference Center, Hillsdale

