



Here We Stand

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

Psalm 71:17-18

HAVE QUESTIONS or need to meet to discuss participation? Would you like to have a presentation at your church? Call Ray or Linda at 888.225.2111.



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Michigan District, LCMS Here We Stand Update

November 2020

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.

Campaign Progress

Over \$7.12 million in gifts, pledges, and congregational goals to date.

Congregation Highlights

We would like to thank Cross of Christ, Bloomfield Hills; St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth; Zion, Holland; Bethlehem, Lewiston; and Trinity, Muskegon for their most recent gifts to the campaign.