



Michigan District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

People of Hope ... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

Transforming Spirits, Stories, and Cities
A2E Initiative

Spring 2021

My Dear Friends in Christ,

The LORD is risen! HE is risen INDEED! Alleluia!

What a heaven-sent joy that so many of our churches were celebrating Easter in person (socially distanced)! Come death or the brutalities of life ... the Good News of Jesus Christ—making full payment before the courts of heaven for the world’s sins and rising three days later, demonstrating that with the acceptance of that payment also came the defeat of mankind’s final, great enemy: death—was proclaimed and praised! This was a foretaste of heaven, an almost indescribable opportunity, to sing and recount the work of the Son of God, Jesus, the world’s Redeemer TOGETHER and to hear the proclamation of the Gospel TOGETHER! May our worship TOGETHER continue with boldness and determined resolve!

Undoubtedly, these past 14 months have significantly challenged and/or changed our lives. Many adjustments were made, are still being made, and might be for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, our faith and confidence is in Jesus Christ, who is “*the same yesterday and today and forever*” (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus is our comfort, our strength, and our hope for time and eternity!

Even with the reality of more and more people receiving their vaccinations for COVID-19, the Michigan District also—because of venue and planning restrictions and fiscal responsibility—has made many adjustments. Our Spring Pastors’ in-person conferences and The Katie (pastor’s wives) conference were all replaced with virtual conferences, and the Office Personnel Conference, as well as the Junior High Youth Gathering, were again postponed until 2022.

As much as it pains me to see such events canceled, changed, or postponed in 2021, it is the cancellation of our annual **Urban Sports Camps/VBS programs** for the second straight year that truly grieves me the most. I know how important these camps are to the hundreds of young people from Detroit, Flint, Pontiac, and Benton Harbor who have attended them over the years. As much as I wish we could hold camps this summer, with so much uncertainty the planning and implementation of the camps proved impossible.

Please know, however, that ministry in our urban centers continues and, by the grace of God, thrives. During the summers when the camps have taken place, it was your generosity and the generosity of many others that made them possible. So, dear friends, although the camps are vacant this summer, will you please join me in financially supporting and strengthening

Continued on reverse side



Photo courtesy of Elisa Schulz Photography

Yes, President Maier, I would like to support the *Here We Stand* Campaign!

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of : \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other _____

Please designate my gift to: Innovative Missional Ministry (A2E)

The **Here We Stand** Campaign also has three other initiatives that would benefit from your support.

Professional Church Workers Scholarships Endowment Fund International Ministry

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Congregation/City _____

Please make checks payable to Michigan District, LCMS or provide credit card information below. Return completed form and check (if applicable) in the enclosed envelope.

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____
(MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express, Diners Club)

Billing Address (if different from above) _____

Cardholder’s Name (as it appears on the card) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

By signing this form, the card holder is authorizing the Michigan District, LCMS to debit their card.

Return to: Attn: Development Department
Michigan District, LCMS
3773 Geddes Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105



Megan Schultz, Family Life Minister at Large - Detroit (pictured top right) and Rev. Robert Mikkelson stand with 6 of the 7 children who were baptized at Peace, Detroit on March 28, 2021.

numerous other urban ministries through our **Acts 2 Enterprise (A2E)** outreach initiatives? As one ministry opportunity is temporarily halted, God is opening others so that even more lives can be touched.

Here's some great news to consider: The annual budget for A2E has grown by approximately \$71,000. This is a blessing! Why? Because as ministry grows and lives are changed, so do ministry costs. We are grateful that ministry is growing. We are thankful for the opportunity to trust our Lord all the more to meet this significant annual increase even in these challenging times. He continues to demonstrate that through His people—through you and through your past generous financial support—urban ministry will be abundantly supported.

Friends, recently a very generous donor blessed our A2E Ministries with a gift of \$71,000, which addresses our annual increase. Thus, my plea to you is to help us raise a portion of the remaining \$719,000 budget so that some of our state's most vulnerable people of God—including many, many children—continue to receive the

services they need, all while hearing the life-saving Good News of the Gospel.

Here are some of our ongoing urban ministries:

- Several congregations in Detroit provide direct services to their communities including Saint Philip, Peace, Family of God, and Pan de Vida (Hispanic congregation). Rev. Christopher Bodley continues to serve at Bethany and provides outstanding leadership to the many A2E ministries. Bethany recently began an outdoor PE outreach fitness class which includes a faith component, as well as an online grief support program in partnership with the Ronald Brown Academy. In addition, Megan Schultz was installed as Family Life Minister at Large for the City of Detroit and has begun work with several metro Detroit congregations to create new and exciting ways to connect with members and the community through a partnership with Gifts for All God's Children.
- Rev. Dietrick Gladden has returned to the Michigan District to serve as pastor of Charity and Mt. Calvary Lutheran Churches in Detroit. He also serves on the board of Camp Restore Detroit. Elli's House and the pre-natal clinic ministry continue serving and reaching out to urban communities in Detroit, and GreatStart Preschool programs operate out of Mt. Hope, Allen Park and St. Thomas, Eastpointe.
- Rev. Christian Jones oversees the multiple ministries of Franklin Avenue Mission in Flint. They have continued to provide 200-300 meals every Tuesday and Thursday to the community, as well as hygiene items, diapers and wipes, and clothing. Mercy House has also continued to provide transitional housing for mothers and their families.
- Rev. Christopher Jung continues to make significant in-roads in the city of Pontiac through St. Paul Community Lutheran Church. They have continued to serve many through their food pantry, weekly community dinners, and health classes offered by their parish nurse, Mary McColeman.
- In the southwest part of the state, Benton Harbor Lutheran Outreach continues to provide food distribution services for that community and beyond.



Volunteers through Camp Restore clean up a home in the neighborhood.

I recognize that I've not given mention of ALL the various and abundant ministries that are currently in our urban areas—or those which are being planned—but I am hopeful that you can begin to understand the impact our many ministries are making in individual lives and in communities. Please join us by allowing our urban missionaries to be your hands at work in the communities in which they serve. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generosity!

Your brother in Christ and fellow laborer in the harvest field,

Rev. David P. E. Maier
Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier
Michigan District, LCMS

P.S. Your generous gift will impact the Acts 2 Enterprise (A2E) component of the **Here We Stand** campaign's Innovative Missional Ministry initiative, and will receive a 10% match from the Michigan District Church Extension Fund campaign matching funds commitment.

P.P.S. If your preference is supporting one, or more, of the other initiatives of the Here We Stand campaign (Professional Church Worker Scholarships, Michigan District Endowment, or International Ministry), you may do so by simply checking the appropriate box(es) on the Response Form (see reverse side). Your gift to one of these initiatives will also receive a 10% match from the Michigan District Church Extension Fund.

