

October 2021

michigan

IN TOUCH

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



HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

Luther at the Diet of Worms Part 2

by William R. Wangelin

Continued from Part 1 michigandistrict.org/dietofworms1

The proceedings were always spoken in German and then repeated in Latin. Luther was asked the same question as the day before—if the books were his and if he would recant what he wrote. Luther was more prepared this time, and with greater confidence addressed the assembly. He said that his books fell into three categories. The first were Christian writings

continued on page 2

michigan
IN TOUCH

Official Periodical of the Michigan District
of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
October 2021, Volume 20, No. 9
ISSN: 1538-8115 (print)
ISSN: 2331-8619 (online)

Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier, President
Debby Fall, Editorial Manager

Linda Ekong, Art Director
Elisa Schulz, Staff Writer/Copy Editor

©2021 Michigan District, LCMS, Ann Arbor, Michigan. *Michigan In Touch* is published monthly by the Michigan District and inserted into *The Lutheran Witness* and distributed to subscribers 11 times a year. It is also available online at www.michiganintouch.com. Reproduction of articles is permissible with written permission of the Michigan District Communications Department and should give credit to *Michigan In Touch*. References to resources and websites for further information are included in *Michigan In Touch* for the potential use by individuals and congregations. Resources not associated with or published by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or Concordia Publishing House® may contain helpful programmatic information but may vary in doctrine from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Please use discretion or consult your pastor on doctrinal issues. Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is from the English Standard Version (ESV).



Michigan District, LCMS
3773 Geddes Rd
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

888.225.2111
intouch@michigandistrict.org
michigandistrict.org

Table of Contents

- 1 Healthy Congregations
- 3 Great Commission
- 4 Great Compassion
- 10 Church Extension Fund
- 12 Here We Stand
- 13 LLL
- 14 News & Events
- 16 Special Recognition
- 17 Convention News
- 20 Calls and Roster Update
- 20 Calendar of Events

continued from page 1

about faith and the Gospel which everyone agreed were good and godly. These he could not recant. The second category were writings against the abuses and tyranny by the pope and canon law against the German people. To recant these would be to allow the tyranny and godlessness against the German nation to continue. Many of the nobles in the room agreed wholeheartedly. The third category contained writings against persons or individuals who had attacked him or were defending the abuses. Here, Luther gave his sole concession that he may have spoken too harshly against them. However, since these writings also contained the word of God and the teaching of the Gospel, he could not recant these either.

Pressed one more time to answer clearly, Luther replied in a quiet voice, first in German, then in Latin.

“Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I can do no other. Here I stand. May God help me. Amen.”

The phrase “*I can do no other, here I stand*” was included in the first printed reports of the Diet, but was not included in the handwritten notes. This is why sometimes they are included in the quote and other times relegated to a footnote. Regardless, Luther made the appeal once again to the Scriptures as the highest authority in the church, along with the claim that popes and councils could err. This is what ultimately got Luther into the biggest trouble—undermining the divine authority of councils and pope and placing it firmly in the Scriptures alone. The trajectory of the Lutheran Reformation would continue on the path of *sola Scriptura*—Scripture alone.

After Luther was escorted from the chamber, he felt a great relief, and told his supporters, “*I’ve come through!*” Luther had emerged on the stage of world history, and everyone was solidifying their opinions of this man and the movement. The estates discussed the matter with the emperor on April 19 and 20. They were greatly concerned about public uprisings and took a softer stance than the emperor and church officials. On April 22, they were given three days to try and resolve the matter with Luther. A committee from the estates met with Luther. While the estates tried to focus on Luther’s attitude and behavior, Luther called for a council to settle the doctrinal disputes on the basis of Scripture. All the points of the previous days were repeated and no solution could be reached. Luther asked for safe protection from the emperor and the opportunity to defend his teachings on the basis of Scripture. Any way forward, for Luther, must recognize the sole authority of the Scriptures.

On April 25, Luther was officially informed that the emperor, as protector of the church, would be taking action against him, and that he had 21 days to safely return home before the promise of protection ended. Luther was forbidden to preach, write, or stir up the people in any other way. Luther’s opponents would use the time to officially publicize the proceed-

continued on page 18

Any way forward, for Luther, must recognize the sole authority of the Scriptures.



© ZL_09/Stock



The Garden of God's Word

by Coleman K. Geraci

Freedom Child Care Center, located on Pleasant Lake Road in Ann Arbor, Mich., is a Christ-centered child care devoted to providing children, from infants to pre-Kindergarten, with quality nurturing and training in God's Word. Recently, thanks to a Thrivent Action Grant and dedicated parents and families associated with the child care, Freedom has built an above-ground vegetable garden and a "natural" playground. Both of these additions are reminders that, while we build with our hands earthly things that will ultimately pass away, the Lord builds His Kingdom through His Word which will never pass away.

First, the Bible begins and ends with two garden scenes. In the beginning, God places man in a garden with the tree of life—the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1); at the fulfillment of time there is also a garden with the tree of life, producing leaves that are healing for the nations (Revelation 22). In that last garden, everything will be brought to its fullness in the Lord. But there is a garden and tree that stand in between these two that Christians must recognize. The garden and tree in between are the only way that this healing, wholeness, and redemption is brought about. That garden is the Garden of Gethsemane and that tree is the the Cross of Jesus Christ. In that garden, Jesus begins His suffering on our behalf and all creation—He begins to endure agony and pain in order to reconcile the world to God. On the tree of the Cross, He completes His suffering to atone for our sins when He cries, "It is finished." Moreover, the revelation that "He is risen," proving He accomplished what He was sent to earth to do, happens in a garden, when He is mistaken to be a gardener (John 20:14).

Second, the Lord has promised that what He builds by His Word will endure. Though we in this life will build up our bodies through eating and physical activity, the Lord Himself builds us up as His living, holy temple through His Word. What He gives in this life for exercise and recreation is to be used and enjoyed according to His

design; but what He promises to give us when He rebuilds all things, that gift will be greater than any enjoyment or recreation that we can have here and now. He gives that gift through His Word and Sacrament—the very means by which He builds His eternal Kingdom. So, while we play and exercise for this life, the Lord gives us His Word to build us up for eternity.

At Freedom Child Care Center, the goal is not simply to educate the children in basic skills to prepare them for school, but to build them up in lives of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; to plant God's Word in their hearts and minds that it may sprout forth and bear fruit in their lives. This planting of and building up in the Word of God happens at Freedom by hearing God's Word, singing God's Word, and praying God's Word. The dedicated staff at Freedom Child Care Center implements this through Chapel services, Bible-based teaching, and compassionate service to the children. The Lord Jesus Christ promises that His Word will not come back void, and it is from this promise that Freedom carries out its ministry. ■

Rev. Coleman K. Geraci is the pastor at St. Paul, Milan and St. Thomas, Ann Arbor (which operates Freedom Childcare Center in Freedom Twp).



Photos courtesy of Freedom Childcare Center



White house turned blue - before restoration.

Let *Love* Lead ... Locally

by Amy Fanta

Photos courtesy of Camp Restore Detroit

What a whirlwind summer at Camp Restore Detroit! Overall, as things wind down and I have a moment to breathe, I am overwhelmed by the blessings we received this summer and the impact that has been made on the East side of Detroit over the last few months. God is good!

When Elizabeth (our former Associate Director) first said, *"I think we can open if we pray, plan well, and are careful,"* we did not know what to expect. We spoke to community leaders and found that yes, the community was ready to invite volunteers back in and groups seemed ready to come.

We took one group in at a time and followed protocols that were a bit foreign to us—we are a very relational ministry, so social distancing was incredibly strange to all of us!—but we managed and, thankfully, were able to stay open all summer.

So here is a detailed update. In terms of this summer, our theme was "Let Love Lead" and it sure did!!

Numbers:

So far, 2021 has brought **289 volunteers**, who stayed **1,105 nights** on campus. These volunteers have worked a total of **6,626 hours**! This doubled our pandemic expectations!

Campus Projects

Garden of Eatn' – The community Gardens received a major overhaul this summer. Summer volunteers put in a fitness trail, a rain collection system, and a farmer's market stand! We were able to have our very first "You Pick Farmer's Market" just a couple weeks ago. The Land Bank released their hold on this property upon seeing the progress. We are looking for volunteers to help take care of the garden plants, weed, mow, and water.

White House Turned Blue – The white house turned blue this summer! It has all new windows and doors and is nearly finished being sided. We need the siding finished—including some special fascia. After a couple porches are built, we can turn our attention to the inside! Other than installing HVAC (already promised), we are working on finding volunteers for all of the work that needs to be done here.

Redeemer House – This house has almost all of the Foamular® put on because that had to be done in order to install the new windows. There is one window left to be put in, a bit of demo work inside and out, siding, porches, and the entire inside, except HVAC, to be done. We are hoping that siding will be donated this week. Any volunteers for this project would be appreciated!

 I think we can open if we *pray, plan well, and are careful.* 

Reflection Gardens – These gardens have been planted and well maintained throughout the spring and summer. The Land Bank released these as well! A special thanks to Brian McNally who has been outside nearly every single day tending to these gardens, which allowed us to dedicate the Reflection Gardens this summer! The amphitheater is many people's favorite part of campus! Volunteer help maintaining these gardens is always welcome and appreciated.

Landscaping – There is a very large area of land between the two houses. Volunteers this summer spent a lot of time cutting down trees and clearing this area. We then rented large equipment—thanks to Sunbelt who gave us 50% off everything!—and had volunteers and staff clear out the concrete and blight. It took 6 dumpsters just for the concrete and garbage! The yard waste (a pile as long as 3 cars and as high as two people) was picked up by the city. It is now a dirt field that needs to be leveled and seeded as soon as possible. It will also need a lot of landscaping, sidewalks, and work put into it. We are looking for volunteers, donations, and materials for this.

Dorms – These are so very close to being done! A lot of work went into a final push by volunteers to have this ready for our summer campers. We need new fire exit signs hung as well as a couple lights. We have the signs and lights; we just need an electrician to hang them.

We have come to know our immediate neighbors very well as this work progressed. There is SO MUCH excitement and enthusiasm for the work being done!

Off Campus Projects

Community leaders were certainly busy this summer leading the volunteers in projects. Countless lots were cleared of overgrowth, sidewalks made usable, and parks made enjoyable once again. Volunteers also kept busy planting trees in the Osbourn neighborhood, setting up for community events, building a reading circle at Fischer Magnet School, making benches for the Houston-Whittier Corridor, and so much more! Ongoing projects in need of volunteers include the beautification of our main streets—building and planting flower boxes,

continued on page 19

A Way with Words

by Paul R. Naumann



© Glen Carrie/Unsplash

As Christians, we need to be careful with what we say. James famously warns us of the damage that our tongue can cause, saying *“the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness... setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell”* (James 3:6). So as Christians we try not to use foul language, obscenities, and “four-letter words.” We obviously steer clear of taking the Lord’s name in vain for the second commandment clearly prohibits it, as does the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer. St. Paul also reinforces this when he writes: *“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear”* (Ephesians 4:29).

The world, on the other hand, is very enamored with certain four-letter words and loves to use them in movies and music. For example, the “F-word” is one of their favorites for (surprisingly) it still seems to retain enough shock value to be provocative. Thankfully, words like that are still more or less censored from traditional network television, and for the most part are still not considered acceptable in public or in “mixed company.” But I am finding that there remains a four-letter word that the world really doesn’t like and doesn’t know quite what to do with. It is a four-letter word that has become increasingly taboo, suspicious, and even illegal in our society. I am referring to the word “hate.” Because intolerance is now considered by our current culture to be the most heinous of sins and hate speech and hate crimes the most inexcusable of behaviors, the word “hate” seems to be inappropriate in most any context.

But then there is the Bible, which (at least in English) uses the word “hate” 400 times. As much as we might try to soften it and say that we only hate sin and not sinners, the Bible does not always neatly draw a distinction between the two. For example, the same beautiful Psalm that affirms God’s creation of all human life in the womb, and concludes with *“Search me, O God, and know my heart! ... lead me in the way everlasting,”* also boasts to God: *“Do I not hate those who hate You, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with complete hatred”* (Psalm 139). This sort of thing is so frequently found in the Psalter that theologians have given it a name—*imprecatory psalms*. An imprecatory psalm is one that invokes judgment, calamity, or curses upon one’s enemies and especially those perceived to be God’s enemies. Two

major examples would be Psalm 69 and 109, but imprecatory portions can be found in in many places (see Psalms 5, 6, 11, 12, 35, 37, 40, 52, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 79, 83, 94, 137, 139, and 143).

These kinds of passages obviously present a problem for interpretation (and for use in worship). They can certainly be taken out of context to justify violent behavior. But rather than seeing them as prescriptive for us, we can read them as descriptive of the strong feelings people might understandably have who have been abused, victimized, violated, discriminated against, and otherwise taken advantage of by others for a long period of time (perhaps generations). In other words, they can be a cathartic venting of anger rather than actual threats or encouragement to violent behavior.

An African American theology professor at Mercer University named Chanequa Walker-Barnes recently decided to use this style of imprecatory psalms in her prayer which was included in a *New York Times* best-selling book entitled, *A Rhythm of Prayer: A Collection of Meditations for Renewal*. In her entry, she asks God to help her “hate white people.” As one might expect, this has been extremely offensive to many people, especially white people, who find her attempt to decry racism to be itself racist. She attempts to justify her prayer saying: “In all truth, my family and my personal experiences have given me millions of reasons to hate white people” and that she can “even find biblical precedent for it.” She then

indicates that she is in fact using an imprecatory style of prayer when she says: *“The folks critiquing have clearly never read Psalms (other than 23 and 100). Cause then they’d recognize what it’s modeled after.”*

I have been an ivory tower professor myself for a time, so I sort of see where she’s coming from, but I’ve also been a pastor long enough to know that what she was attempting to do was very ill-advised, and not informed by the Gospel. As New Testament Christians, we need to look to Jesus as the ultimate example of what to do and what not to do. There was a time in Jesus’ earthly ministry for Him very appropriately to speak hard-hitting words of rebuke to those who really needed to hear them (even though they clearly did not appreciate them) in order that they might see their sin and turn from their evil and abusive ways. It is true that Jesus

“As New Testament Christians, we need to look to Jesus as the ultimate example of what to do and what not to do.”

continued on page 19

O Land ... Hear the Word of the Lord!

by Paul M. Clark

Our modern culture is bound up in a web of lies, with the result that many people simply choose to ignore the issues that face us, either believing that they are too complicated for them to understand, or else believe that they are too far gone to make it worthwhile to fight against the prevailing cultural tidal waves.

Both of these options are not open to us as Christians, who test all things by the eternal and unchanging truth of God's Holy Word.

In **Jeremiah 14:14**, the LORD GOD speaks to Jeremiah and says, *"The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds."*

Indeed, there are many who act as prophets today, who do not speak the truth of God, but give to the people a *"lying vision,"* based on the deceit of their own minds. Many of these voices come from those who walk the political halls of power, or many in universities and other public institutions—but even more sadly, many come from within Christendom itself. There are those *who will not* denounce abortion for what it is—the *extinguishing of a human life*—the life of a defenseless unborn baby.

Oh, yes, there are those who say that the Church is *only* called to preach the Gospel, to proclaim Christ. **What Gospel is it that they preach, and what Christ is it that they proclaim?** Certainly *not* the Gospel that announces forgiveness for sinners who have been convicted by the Law, or the Christ who says **"Repent and believe,"** or **"Go and sin no more."** Certainly *not* the Christ who upholds His Father's commandments as holy, including **"You shall not murder."** Certainly *not* the Christ who Himself was an unborn baby who leapt in the womb of His mother Mary, and certainly *not* the Christ who says **"Let the little children come to Me."**

We **MUST** stand up for the unborn, and for the sanctity of human life, including the mentally and physically-impaired, the aging, the frail, the dying.



We Are Christ-Bearers

We are Christians. We are **Christ-bearers**. We are forgiven, and we are called to speak and act and love and forgive, *but always remember*—we walk not in darkness but in the light of Jesus Christ. **And this Jesus is the Lord of Life.**

In **Jeremiah 22:29**, we see these words: ***“O land, land, land, hear the Word of the Lord!”***

Jesus desires that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. He died on the cross for the sins of all. But it is *by faith*—***graciously supplied by the working of the Holy Spirit***—that we receive this precious gift of salvation. True faith begins with repentance, confessing our sins, and then eagerly receiving ***the plentiful fountain of forgiveness that flows from the Savior, given to us in Word and water and bread and wine.***

So, shall we—the Church of God—be muzzled? No. Shall we be silent and uninterested as the holocaust of abortion continues? ***Never.*** Shall we just stand in the background as the false prophets, even those within the Church who refuse to take a stand for God’s gift of life, and continue to ignore the terrible bloodshed and harm that not only destroys babies, but also physically, emotionally, and spiritually harms the women and men involved in an abortion as well? ***How can we?*** They *need* the truth. They *need* Law and Gospel. They *need* to repent and

they *need* the forgiveness of sins found in the Savior.

This is not an option. This is ***who we are*** as God’s holy and forgiven people. God’s Word ***cannot*** be bound. It ***must*** be proclaimed, taught, and confessed – in ***ALL*** of its truth and purity!

“O land, land, land, hear the Word of the Lord!”

God, grant us determination and endurance, as we speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. ***Amen.*** ■

Rev. Paul M. Clark has been the pastor of St. Paul, Fowler for 33 years. He serves as President of Lutherans for Life of Michigan, as well as the Pastoral Counselor. He serves also as the District Life Coordinator for the Michigan District – LCMS. Rev. Clark and his wife Elizabeth have three children through the blessing of adoption.

“Jesus desires that *all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.* He died on the cross for the sins of all.”



OCTOBER 2021

Volunteer with Impact by Representing CEF at Your Church

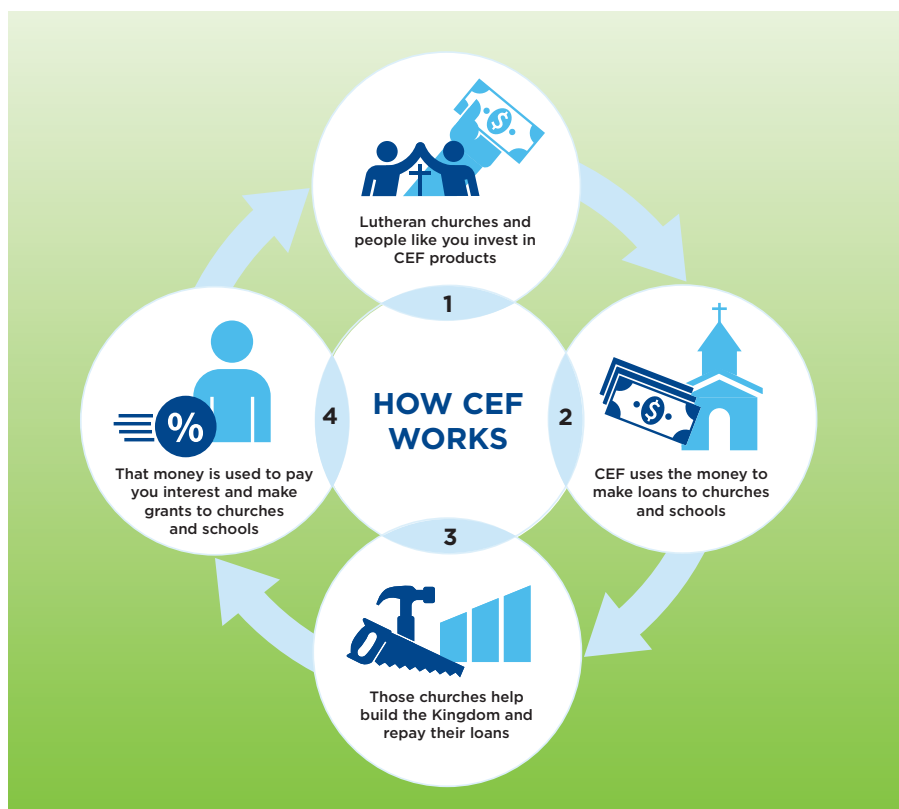
Are you looking to volunteer at your church in a way that truly makes a difference? There are many possibilities. Some church members teach Sunday School or serve on a board or a committee. Others use their talent for fixing things to help with church maintenance.

But what if you don't have that much time to commit to your volunteering role? Church Extension Fund offers you these worthy and less time-consuming alternatives:

- Consider serving as a **CEF Congregational Representative (CER)**. Here you'll faithfully and joyfully help us carry out CEF's mission to make needed financial resources available to church members and congregations in the Michigan District.
- Or serve as a **CEF Stamp Representative**. In this role, you'll engage with children, mostly in Lutheran day schools, to help teach them the importance of saving and planning ahead while they grow in love for Jesus and dedication to faith.

Called to Represent

"It's amazing how many church members have served their congregations as CERs for



Central to the CER role is displaying CEF's monthly rate sheets, current informational literature, and distributing CEF's annual offering circulars. In these ways and more, you'll encourage church members, as well as the congregation itself, to partner with CEF.



"The calling to represent CEF can become such a passion that it's difficult to give up when the time comes to pass the baton to the next generation of servants."

Bill Burmeister

Director of Congregational Services
Church Extension Fund

literally decades,” says Bill Burmeister, CEF’s Director of Congregational Services. “We’ve had CERs in the role for more than 30 years. The calling to represent CEF can become such a passion that it’s difficult to give up when the time comes to pass the baton to the next generation of servants.”

Central to the CER role is displaying CEF’s monthly rate sheets, current informational literature and making CEF’s annual offering circulars available. In these simple ways, the CER encourages church members, as well as the congregation itself, to partner with CEF.

CERs have made a huge difference to their congregations by reminding their members and leaders to take advantage of the many valuable programs that CEF has to offer.

“Take, for example, our grants,” says Burmeister. “Some CEF grant dollars may have gone unused without the attention of our CERs. There are church beautification projects, technology upgrades and new installations of security cameras and locks that might not have happened if their churches’ CERs hadn’t been there to gently nudge.”

Currently, CEF offers the Equip+Connect Grant to churches, schools and other ministries seeking to purchase new and innovative technology.



As a CEF Savings Stamp Representative, you’ll support a program that has been a Michigan District tradition for 60 years. Children may save simply to buy a gift for a friend. Others have saved enough for their first car or to help pay college tuition.

“Your congregation’s CER will know and tell all about this wonderful opportunity,” Burmeister says.

Learning Stewardship

Being a CEF Stamp Rep is especially fun for a church member who loves to interact with children and parents. Per Burmeister: “You’ll encourage students to save for specific personal goals or collective goals with their classmates. And you’ll work along with parents to help teach their kids important lessons about money and stewardship. It’s a delight just to watch the students’ excitement as they fill up their stamp books.”

Andy Sohn, CEF’s Vice President of Marketing and Relations, fondly remembers his childhood of saving quarters and dollars as a student at Our Savior Lutheran in Lansing. “After years of accumulating,” he says, “my

stamp account had enough to provide a portion of the down payment when my wife and I bought our first home.”

The Work of Our Hands

Psalm 90:17 tells us: “May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands.”

As you assess your church volunteering options, God may point you to the path of a CER or Stamp Rep. If so, CEF will be honored by your service. Our prayer is that God’s favor will be upon our representatives, and that your service is established and blessed.

Want to learn more about representing CEF at your church? Call Bill Burmeister or Andy Sohn at 800-242-3944 or email them at cef@mi-cef.org.



Church Extension Fund

Church Extension Fund ■ Michigan District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-3098 ■ www.mi-cef.org

Offices: 800-242-3944

The information provided here is not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy CEF securities. The offering of CEF securities is made solely by our Offering Circular. CEF will offer and sell our securities only in states where authorized. The securities are subject to certain risk factors as described in our Offering Circular. CEF investments are not insured by the FDIC, SIPC, or any other governmental agency.

Innovative Missional Ministries

The Michigan District's *Here We Stand* campaign comes alongside urban ministries with funds raised through its Innovative Missional Ministry initiative. These funds, dispersed over a period of years, help our many ministries to connect with their communities, evangelizing and discipling them with the Good News of Jesus Christ. We'd like to take this opportunity to share highlights from some of these ministries.

Bethany Lutheran Church in Detroit, under Rev. Christopher Bodley, has recently expanded its outreach through a partnership with a local organization to support foster care families. Bethany serves as a support to guardians of foster care children between the ages of 9-17 through luncheons, prayers, and providing mentorship for the youth and faith formation support for the guardians.

Bethany has also recently begun a community entrepreneur support for residents on the East Side of Detroit. In partnership with a community stakeholder, they provide a pre-assessment for entrepreneurs in determining the scope, direction, and viability of a business. The assessment is provided 3 times a year.

Ms. Megan Schultz, Family Life Minister at Large for the city of Detroit, continues to work on building relationships and partnerships with lay leaders at Detroit area congregations.

Rev. Dietrick Gladden recently accepted the call to *Mt. Calvary* and *Charity Lutheran Churches* in Detroit. Charity continues to hold its iCan Achievement Camps for children, providing homework help during the school year.

Family of God in Detroit, under the leadership of Rev. James Hill and Rev. Tyler Cronkright, continues to reach out to its community. They provide meals 6 days a week at the church and have recently begun a "Ministry in The Parks" by going to Scripps Park and Clark Park to serve meals to the homeless and have a Bible study. They are currently working on planting a second site, partnering with a congregation located a block away from Clark Park. They also continue to assist families in crisis through their partnership with The Luke Clinic.

The Luke Clinic in Detroit continues to provide accessible, high-quality medical care for expectant mothers and infants under 12 months of age in the Detroit metro area. The clinic is run by a dedicated team of over 100 volunteers with a home office staff of four medical and professional workers. They partner with the University of Michigan Department of Family Medicine, which staffs two doctors per clinic and sends its medical residents for their clinicals. The Luke Clinic is dedicated to saving

lives of both moms and babies, empowering the women, and building faith in the families they serve. They hope to expand their services to Flint in November of this year in partnership with the Franklin Avenue Mission.

St. Paul Community Lutheran Church in Pontiac, under Pastor Christopher Jung, serves its community through meals, tutoring, health classes, and needed items for families.

Benton Harbor Lutheran Outreach continues to offer a mobile/drive-by food truck that provides for 125-160 families each month. They also host a Soup Kitchen and have a PLARN sleeping mat ministry.

Franklin Avenue Mission (FAM) in Flint, under Pastor Christian Jones, continues to serve dinners twice a week, and volunteers regularly mow and clear debris from vacant lots. FAM operates Mercy House for homeless mothers and their families, and provides services including a Clothes Closet, Bible studies, children's programs, personal care items, and clean water. FAM is also partnering with Vicar Sergio Vargas of Concordia Seminary's Center for Hispanic Student and Migrant Workers in Michigan to help minister to the Latino community on Flint's eastside.

These are but a few of the many ways in which your support of the *Here We Stand* campaign is impacting and enriching the lives of many throughout our state. We pray that you will continue to help us support these amazing ministries as they share the Gospel message with those who do not yet know Jesus. To learn more about the campaign or to donate, visit michigandistrict.org/herewestand.

Campaign Goal: \$10 million

Campaign Progress: \$8.88 million
(as of September 1, 2021)

Participating Congregations: 174

Individual Contributors: 1,442

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



Here We Stand

Our LHM Family in Ethiopia Needs Your Help!

August 17 started as a typical Tuesday for the staff of Lutheran Hour Ministries–Ethiopia. The ministry team was busy registering new students for its Bible correspondence courses, writing reports, and making plans for a trip the next day to share the Gospel with people in a village 12 hours to the south. But this typical summer day took a sudden turn for the worse.

Late that afternoon, the staff noticed muddy water from a nearby stream rapidly beginning to flow into the office through the back doors of the building. They quickly began unplugging computers and gathering their belongings to leave through the front door. During that brief time, the water rose rapidly and filled the interior of the office. The water pressure from the rising stream made it difficult to open the door, so several staff members strained to open the door and heavy gates to reach the safety of higher ground on a nearby hill.

Thankfully all LHM staff members were able to escape without injury but the next morning revealed extensive damage to the ministry center. The water left several inches of mud that ruined carpet, furniture, computers, printers, and the generator. Most importantly, the damage destroyed all the team's ministry materials: its inventory of thousands of Gospel tracts, booklets, Bibles, and Bible

Correspondence Course lessons as well as its public address system and digital projectors used to share the Gospel at large-scale events.

While we are grateful for God's love and protection of the ministry staff, this catastrophic loss of inventory and materials has left LHM's ministry in Ethiopia at a virtual standstill. Upcoming events and activities to share the hope of the Gospel with thousands will have to be postponed until critical ministry outreach materials can be replaced.

You can help the ministry team in Ethiopia get back on its feet by helping raise \$50,000. Since the damage caused from these rising flood waters is excluded from insurance coverage, your generous support will assist with relocation costs as well as replacement of ministry resources in the weeks ahead. Funds raised beyond what is needed to reestablish LHM's ministry in Ethiopia will support other LHM ministry efforts in the region. Thank you for your prayers as we provide basic care for our staff in Ethiopia, and for your support that will allow us to continue sharing the Gospel throughout the country with people who need to hear it.

For more details on how you can help, visit lhm.org/give/ethiopia-21/.



LUTHERAN HOUR
MINISTRIES
www.lhm.org

Your Investment Builds Churches

When you invest with Church Extension Fund your investment helps to renovate and build churches and schools, just like St. Michael, Portage.

"I would highly recommend any congregation work with CEF for funding. They use their resources for the Great Commission."

— Pastor Paul Naumann,
St. Michael, Portage



Church Extension Fund

Office:

800-242-3944

24/7 Interest Rates:

800-232-7313

Website:

www.mi-cef.org



The information provided here is not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy CEF securities. The offering of CEF securities is made solely by our Offering Circular. CEF will offer and sell our securities only in states where authorized. The securities are subject to certain risk factors as described in our Offering Circular. CEF investments are not insured by the FDIC, SIPC, or any other governmental agency.

Feed My Sheep

St. Paul's, New Boston Christian Care committee met with a group of congregation members who were inspired by the Spirit to use the God-given talent in the congregation to reach out to the community and share the love of Christ.

St. Paul's, like many Lutheran congregations, has always been passionate about food and feeding others. Historically, events held by the congregation involving the community have always centered around food/meals. Christian Care acted on this strength of the congregation and began Feed My Sheep, a ministry based on John 21:17 to reach out to members of the congregation and its community in sharing the love of Christ.

Cook teams were organized and, in the middle of a pandemic, personal protective equipment was used for the safety of those making meals as well as those we served. The team began with its prayer list and shut-ins to "test" the procedures. Meals were cooked and packaged; delivery calls were made by members eager to share Christ's love. Eleven meals were delivered in the first week and currently, 80 meals per week are being delivered.

St. Paul's developed partnerships with its local school district, community emergency management, local VFW, local American Legion, and others to help identify those in need. St. Paul's reaches out to local group homes to deliver meals as well as perishable and non-perishable items from its food pantry.

A devotion sharing God's Word is included with every delivery. St. Paul's social media presence has brought community members that wouldn't have had a connection otherwise. Some referrals come from those who are served.

St. Paul's food pantry has also grown substantially through the generosity of the congregation. The need increases every month and St. Paul's partners with Forgotten Harvest and Panera Bread to subsidize the stock.

In July, a Veteran's luncheon was held, honoring local veterans for their sacrifice for our freedom. All who attended were pleased to be able to have a place to fellowship with others and share a meal. Future events are being planned for the veterans and other groups in the New Boston community to spread the love of Christ.

God has truly blessed the congregation through this ministry as they serve the Lord and touch the lives of others with joy-filled hearts.



Photo courtesy of St. Paul's New Boston

100th Anniversary

On November 22, 2021 at 3 p.m., at Mount Calvary, Detroit Dr. Jon Eifert will lead a hymn festival as part of its 100th anniversary celebration. Dr. Eifert is a son of the congregation, having spent his youth at Mount Calvary's school. A freewill offering will be taken, followed by a brief reception in the auditorium. For more information, please contact Mr. Daryl Witte at 586.899.8967.

Grand Rapids Area Outreach Event Focuses on Grace

On August 14, The Vine Church, a new LCMS mission start of the Michigan District, hosted Jason Gray in concert at a community park. Jason shared a simple Gospel message: We are all broken by sin. God in His GRACE comes to our rescue through

Jesus. Jesus uses our brokenness to share His love, forgiveness, and strength with the broken (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

Pastor Jim Richter of The Vine Church shared these words regarding the outreach event: *"We are so grateful to God for HIS many GRACES that made this event happen. We are grateful for the donor who knew Jason Gray and brought him in to minister to us with his music and message. We are grateful for the many volunteers from The Vine who helped us serve the community with Jesus' love. We are thankful to The City of Walker, Michigan, for allowing us to be the first entity ever, other than The City of Walker, to use the community amphitheater so Jason could share God's message of grace, healing, and hope. We are grateful for the mercy ministries that came out in full force to share their healing grace—The King's Table Ministries, Matthew's House Ministry, and others. Even Skinny's BBQ and their delicious food brought God's grace to the people attending the concert. We are grateful for every person who came and enjoyed a beautiful night with beautiful music that soothed our souls. Most of all we thank JESUS for giving us the privilege of being part of His mission to comfort, save, and strengthen people in Walker and greater Grand Rapids with His LOVE!"*



Photo by Elisa Schultz/Michigan District, LCMS

Deaf Ministry Attends Mission Festival

Michigan District Deaf Lutherans from all over the state joined members of St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth for its annual Mission Festival which featured outdoor worship, a delicious chicken BBQ, and mission speakers. This year marked St. Lorenz' 19th invitation to the Deaf community and proved to be the most well attended, with nearly 50 Deaf Lutherans and friends in attendance.

In the afternoon, the Deaf group separated for an all-Deaf mission presentation on Spiritual Warfare given by Dr. Robert Bennett of Luther Academy. Michigan District Deaf Ministry continues as a vibrant ministry in partnership with St. Paul, Flint and the Ephphatha Lutheran Mission Society for the Deaf.

Ephphatha Lutheran Mission Society is a Recognized Service Organization of the Michigan District, LCMS whose purpose is to establish Lutheran Mission Outreach to the Deaf community and to raise funds in support of these goals. Its vision is to see the lives of Deaf people transformed and impacted through God's Word.

St. Martin Lutheran School for the Deaf delivers a



Photos courtesy of Rev. Thomas Dunseth

Christ-centered education to meet the spiritual, academic, and social needs of its students. It provides a bilingual ASL and English environment for grades K-8 and resides within its partner hearing school, Emmanuel Lutheran School in Dearborn.

For more information and Deaf ministry resources, visit michigandistrict.org/ministries/care-ministries/deaf-ministries.

Lutheran World Relief Ingathering

The Lutheran World Relief Ingathering is a regional event where quilters and kit-makers can drop off donations to be shipped to LWR's Maryland or Minnesota warehouses. Ingatherings allow many people to ship their donations of quilts and kits together in a coordinated and efficient manner, saving time and money. If you haven't before, consider bringing your quilts and kits to one of the Michigan Ingathering sites found in the LWR flyer at michigandistrict.org/lwrgathering.

Check out the resource page for a few helpful downloads that include the 2021 Quilt and Kit Ministry Guide; the Michigan District list of Gathering Sites, Dates, and Coordinators LWR Flyer; the "Where Did the Quilts and Kits Go in 2020?" table; and a donation form. Please consider giving a donation to your local collection site for the cost of renting a truck and/or to LWR for overseas shipping costs.

After 21 years volunteering, this will be Pat Schuknecht's last year as the Michigan LWR Coordinator. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in taking over this great work, please contact Pat at 517.548.2435 or pschuk58@gmail.com. She is willing to help the new coordinator through the process in 2022.

The Changeless Word in a Changing World: Post-Pandemic Ministry

The Lutheran Foundation is hosting a one-day conference on Monday, October 25 at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. This conference will explore what opportunities the Church has in technology, mental and emotional wellness, and cultural changes. Speakers include David Kinnaman, Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast, Jr., Rev. Trevor Sutton, Rev. Dr. Richard Marrs, Rev. Mark Kiessling, Rev. Matt Peebles, and Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz.

The conference begins at 8:30 a.m. All are welcome to attend. The cost is \$25/person. To register, visit ctsfnw.edu and click on events.

Special Recognition

Oelschlaeger Installed

This past summer, Rev. Benjamin Oelschlaeger (pictured center) was installed as pastor at Good Shepherd, Lake Orion. Prior to entering Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis, Mo., he received a degree in Civil Engineering from Valparaiso University. While there, he met his wife Krista. They were engaged while she taught high school in the Federated State of Micronesia and married in August 2020. Together, they enjoy exploring local restaurants and parks, watching baseball, and caring for the people in their lives.



Photo courtesy of Good Shepherd, Lake Orion



Photo courtesy of Trinity, Pinckney

Rev. Michael R. Ruhl was installed as sole part-time pastor of Trinity, Pinckney on Sunday, July 18. Pictured (l to r) are Pastors Michael Ruhl, Galen Grulke, Merelyn Snider, Richard Wolfram, and Donald Neuendorf.

St. Paul, Sanford Welcomes New Pastor

In July, St. Paul, Sanford welcomed its new pastor, Rev. Christopher Vossler. There was gratitude not only for Pastor Vossler, but also Rev. Samuel Reith, who had faithfully served the congregation and recently retired, and Rev. Larry Wright, who had served as our Vacancy Pastor for the past year.

Participating in the Installation Service were Rev. Mark Brandt, Frankenmuth; Rev. Rick Vossler, New Jersey; Rev. Larry Wright, Midland and Deacon Donald Barnard, Sanford as well as members of the clergy from the surrounding area.

Pastor Vossler attended Concordia University Chicago and Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis, Mo. He served Trinity Lutheran Church in McFarland, Kansas for the past eight years.

Next year, the congregation will celebrate its 75th anniversary, looking forward to many more years of “Growing in Faith, Living in God’s Love, and Reaching out to Others with the Good News of Christ.”



Photo courtesy of St. Paul, Sanford

Board of Directors Host Listening Forums

The Michigan District Board of Directors (BOD) is hosting four listening forums, three of them in early October. The first forum was held on Saturday, September 18 at Peace Lutheran School in Saginaw.

Through these forums, the Board hopes to hear from attendees regarding (1) what they believe are the biggest challenges in our district right now; (2) what problems their congregation is facing right now; (3) what characteristics they think we need in the next district president; among other things.

All church workers, convention delegates, lay leaders, and laity are invited to join one of the remaining three events in preparation for the Michigan District Convention which will take place June 26–28, 2022.

St. Michael Lutheran Church, Portage on October 2, 2021 – 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. - Continental breakfast included.

Guardian Lutheran Church, Dearborn on October 5, 2021 – 7–9 p.m. - Snacks included.

Zoom Meeting on October 6, 2021 – 7–9 p.m. (A Zoom link will be available in the registration confirmation email).

The cost is free, but please register for planning purposes. If you have any questions, contact Stephen Boergert, Board of Directors Chairman, at 248.600.3258.



IMPORTANT DATES

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| January 31, 2022 | Circuit Forums must be conducted before this date |
| February 26, 2022 | Deadline for all nominations, reports, and overtures |
| May 14, 2022 | Floor Committee meetings |
| June 26-28, 2022 | Michigan District Convention |

michigandistrict.org/convention

Luther at the Diet of Worms continued from page 2

ings against Luther and make their case against him. The Edict of Worms, condemning Luther as a heretic, would be dated May 8 and published May 25. Luther shook the hands of the officials, and thanked the estates and the emperor for hearing him, and complained only that his case was not addressed on the basis of the Scriptures. Again, the Word was paramount.

Luther set out from Worms with his companions on April 26 and retraced his steps on the journey to Wittenberg. After his stay in Eisenach, on May 4, Luther and two companions were traveling to visit friends nearby when they were ambushed by men on horseback with crossbows. Luther was thrown into a wagon and whisked away. The kidnapping plot had been put in place by Luther's friends who took Luther secretly to the Wartburg Castle, near Eisenach. There Luther would remain in hiding for over 10 months in absolute secrecy. This was to ensure Luther's safety and see how things would unfold after the events in Worms. From the confines of the Wartburg, with many wondering if Luther was dead or alive, Luther would continue the work of reforming the church until March, 1522, translating the New Testament into German, and spending time in prayer and writing. Subsequent events will be commemorated in future 500 year anniversaries.

As we remember Luther's confession of Christ before the Diet of Worms, and his commitment to the authority of the Scriptures and the pure teaching of the Gospel, we see how God uses moments in history



to guide and direct His church, using sinful human beings like Luther, yet filling them with the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. As Lutheran Christians, we recommit ourselves to the authority of the Scriptures as the Word of God, to the proclamation of the pure Gospel, repenting of and reforming abuses in the church, and taking our stand against any worldly power that might threaten the Gospel. Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 10:18, "*On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.*" In each generation of disciples, there are certain men and women who have the opportunity to take their stand on the word of God and speak before worldly authorities to profess Christ and the authority of God's Word. May the Lord strengthen us as His witnesses, as we share the Gospel with all nations and take our stand on the Word of God. May God help us. Amen! ■

Rev. William R. Wangelin serves as pastor of Our Savior, Lansing.

For further reading and sources:

- Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1977
- Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther His Road to Reformation 1483-1521*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1985
- James Kittelson, *Luther the Reformer: The Story of the Man and His Career*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2003
- Eric Metaxis, *Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World*, Viking, New York, 2017
- Frederick Nohl, *Martin Luther: Biography of a Reformer*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 2003
- www.lutheranreformation.org
- www.lcms.org/here-i-stand-sunday
- Grace on Tap podcast episode on the Diet of Worms

Calls and Roster Update

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. Zachary Holdorf (Wausau, WI) to Redeemer, Jackson
Rev. Jonathan Trinklein (Shelby Twp., MI) to Associate, St. John,
Rochester
Rev. Theodore Voll (West Branch, MI) to IIM, Faith Prescott

Status and Title Change

Rev. Mark Auernhamer (Bridgeport, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Carl Bassett (Niles, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. John Carrier (Fort Gratiot, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Christopher Dodge (Lansing, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Thomas Fischer (Rochester Hills, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Mark Gilson (Fruitport, MI) to Candidate
Rev. Matthew Hall (Birmingham, AL) to Candidate
Rev. Gerhard Mau (Farmington Hills, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Alan Schwieger (East China, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Wayne Wentzel (Clarkston, MI) to Emeritus

Transferred Into District

Rev. David Goehmann (Norfolk, NE) from Nebraska District
Rev. Zachary Holdorf (Wausau, WI) from North Wisconsin District
Rev. Jonathan Trinklein (Shelby Twp.) from New Jersey District

Transferred Out of District

Rev. William Allwardt (St. Peters, MO) to Missouri District
Rev. Michael Belinsky, Sr. (Beulah, MI) to Nebraska District

COMMISSIONED

Calls Accepted

Bernau, Jonathan (Candidate) to St. John, Champaign, IL
Brown, Alexandra (Concordia, Ann Arbor) to St. Paul, Ann Arbor
Hohnstadt, Rebecca (St. John's, Adrian) to St. Paul, Stevens Point, WI

Change of Status

Bernau, Jonathan (Zion, Bay City) to Candidate
Kern, Heidi (Holy Cross, Saginaw) to Candidate
Ulmer, Laurie (Christ, Stevensville) to Emeritus

Transferred Into District

DeSimpelare, Susan (Ohio District) as Candidate
McMahon, Petrea (English District) as Candidate

Transferred Out of District

Bernau, Jonathan (Candidate) to Central Illinois District
Gorka, Katherine (Open Arms, Belleville) to Pacific Southwest District
Hohnstadt, Rebecca (St. John's, Adrian) to North Wisconsin District

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

OCTOBER 2021

- 1 New Teacher Orientation
District Office, Ann Arbor
- 1–2 Quest Autumn Gathering
Concordia University Ann Arbor
- 2 Listening Forum
St. Michael, Portage
- 5 Listening Forum
Guardian, Dearborn
- 6 Listening Forum
Zoom Format
- 10 State Cross Country Meet
Concordia University Ann Arbor
- 10–12 All Pastors Conference
Shanty Creek Resort, Bellaire
- 19 Board of Directors Meeting
Camp Concordia, Gowen
- 23 State Volleyball Tournament
St. Paul, Ann Arbor / Concordia University Ann Arbor
- 28 New Church Worker Conference
Concordia University Ann Arbor

NOVEMBER 2021

- 1 All Saints Day
- 11 Veterans Day
- 22–23 Connections Joint District Educators Conference
Fort Wayne, Ind.
- 25 Thanksgiving
- 25–26 District Office Closed

DECEMBER 2021

- 23–24 District Office Closed
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 District Office Closed

JANUARY 2022

- 23–29 National Lutheran Schools Week

FEBRUARY 2022

- 3–4 Principals Snow Tire Conference
Location TBD
- 5 Michigan District Theological Conference
Our Savior, Lansing

