



## 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.



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

888.225.2111  
[www.michigandistrict.org](http://www.michigandistrict.org)

# Michigan District, LCMS Here We Stand Update

December 2021

## Christmas Appeal - Innovative Missional Ministry

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May I be one of the first to wish you and your family a **ble**ssed advent and a most joyous Christmas.

Let me continue by sharing a Latin phrase with you: *“Esse quam videri,”* meaning, *“to be rather than to seem.”* Perhaps a better translation of this phrase would be, *“if it seems too good to be true, it probably is.”* This may seem like an unusual way to begin my annual Christmas Appeal letter, but please allow me to explain.

Friends, the Michigan District is blessed to have several Innovative Missional Ministries. These ministries understand—and strive to meet—the needs of their rural and urban communities and the most vulnerable of people in them. They do so, even **today**, because of their continual, prayerful adaptation to engage the ever-changing environment around them. This was most evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when what was previously working well needed to be modified or changed completely—sometimes very quickly—to meet a new community need.

It is because of their ability to react and respond consistently in love that these Innovative Missional Ministries were able to **remain relevant in the exact moment in which they serve.** These ministries became—and remain—truly vital to their communities. They had *“to be”* to remain relevant to those they serve today. If they were *“to only seem”* relevant by doing what they had done in the past during these turbulent times, these ministries would have run the risk of falling short of meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of everyone whom God loves—especially *“the least of these”* (*Matthew 25:40*).

Great examples of this are the numerous outreach opportunities within our *Acts 2 Enterprise (A2E)* urban ministries in Detroit, Flint, Pontiac, Benton Harbor, and Grand Rapids. As the environment changed, the ministries adapted, pivoted, did whatever was necessary—sometimes uniquely in each of these locations—to faithfully serve and minister to their constituents and their communities.

**Even more importantly, they were able to continue sharing Jesus by delivering the Gospel to many children, families, and individuals. The saved were discipled and the lost learned they have a Savior.**

I am very thankful for and proud of the Innovative Missional Ministries of the Michigan District. I am incredibly grateful for their leadership that did not rest on past success or become discouraged.

Instead, they chose to strategically forge ahead by adapting quickly and decisively with a zeal for God’s lost ones and a desire to grow Christ’s Kingdom while serving.



Allow me to close with a quote from Rev. Mitch Vogeli, pastor of Nativity Lutheran Church in St. Charles, Michigan. These meaningful words of Pastor Vogeli appear in our *Here We Stand* campaign booklet:

*“In our culture today, very few unchurched people start out looking for a church service. They are, however, longing for a place to feel cared for, and a place where they can care for others. When they meet Jesus there, it all makes sense.”*

Dear friends in Christ, the above words share why the Innovative Missional Ministries of the Michigan District are critical to their communities. These ministries give people an opportunity to meet Jesus while other personal needs and concerns are addressed.

I humbly ask you to prayerfully consider supporting the various Innovative Missional Ministries of the Michigan District that are—and those yet to be. Perhaps you could start one or be a part of one. As you make your Christmas and year-end gift-giving decisions, please consider a generous investment in the lives of those served by these ministries.

Your generosity will not only be an immediate blessing as you help the vulnerable, *“the least of these,”* but will also be an eternal blessing to many as they meet Jesus and become part of His family, we pray, for eternity.

**THANK YOU!** Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration and generous response.

Again, Merry Christmas! Again, thank you! ... as you consider making a difference in someone’s life today and for eternity.

Your brother in Christ and fellow servant,

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

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