

November 2022

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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

Getting to Know Our New District President

by Elisa L. Schulz

David A. Davis was born on September 13, 1957 in Flint, Mich. He is the middle child, having one older sister and one younger sister. He grew up in Grand Blanc, as did his wife Sallie. Davis says his wife's family always went to church, whereas his didn't go very often. But there was a really great youth director who got him far more involved in the church and would eventually encourage him to become a pastor.

Davis started college at Central Michigan University but, he says, "*I was having such*

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Photo by Elisa Schulz/Michigan District, LCMS



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Official Periodical of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
November 2022, Volume 21, No. 10
ISSN: 1538-8115 (print)
ISSN: 2331-8619 (online)

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“To have a passion for Jesus is to have a passion for His Word, because that’s where we find Him.”

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a good time my freshman semester and acting as lost as all of my friends, and I knew I wasn’t lost. So I had to get out of there.” Back in eighth grade, Davis had toured Concordia with his youth group, and when he was in high school the youth director suggested that he should go into the ministry. After his freshman experience, Davis continues, *“I said, ‘I don’t know what it means to be a pastor, but I’ll go down and give Concordia a try. And I’ll just take it a quarter at a time, and see where that leads.’”* Davis started at CUA and Sallie came after she finished high school, not because he was there, but because Concordia was her school of choice. They started dating during their CUA years.



Photo by Elisa Schulz/Michigan District, LCMS

David and Sallie got married in 1980. They have four grown daughters, three sons-in-law, two granddaughters, and two grandsons.

Davis earned a B.A. from CUA in 1979 and an M.Div. from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. in 1983. Other academic pursuits include Classical Studies at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo. and Governance and Executive Training through the Pastoral Leadership Institute. Since his ordination, Davis served as pastor of four different congregations, all in Michigan: St. Matthew, Spring Lake; St. Paul, Trenton; Immanuel, Grand Rapids; and St. Luke, Haslett/Lansing.

Davis has served in various leadership positions in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, planted congregations, developed multicultural ministry, led non-profit governance seminars, developed mentoring processes, wrote leadership development materials, and facilitated meetings and retreats. He has authored a book, *Toward Significance: A Guide For Pastoring Well*, and has a blog with the same name (towardsignificance.com/blog). He also produced a 12-month leadership development resource to help pastors raise up 8 to 12 laypeople by spending a year with them, reading and discussing assigned texts. The program is called *Leadership Pathway*.

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Davis served as Michigan District vice president for 13 years, and as a member of the Board of Directors for several years prior to that, which means he’s been involved with the District for half of his ministry. He says, *“Somehow I don’t mind meetings. I just like to keep them moving.”*

Davis’ main hobby is spending time with his family. He also plays the tuba, likes to read, and says he’s a terrible golfer.

An area of ministry near and dear to his heart is getting people to read the Bible: *“I think there’s power in the Word. Keith Minda (Commissioned Emeritus who served at Peace, Saginaw) said, ‘To have a passion for Jesus is to have a passion for His Word, because that’s where we find Him.’”* Davis is also passionate about church planting/moving ministry forward, leadership development, and building up brother pastors.

When asked what the District should expect for the next 3 years,

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When We Forget to Pray

by Aaron W. Roggow

As a pastor, I am regularly asked to pray for individuals, both publically and privately. So we at St. Paul, Ann Arbor keep a list of all the individuals and special events that we are asked to publically pray for. Personally, I keep a list of people that I'm currently praying for in a small notebook. Both lists are quite long, and sometimes our time that we spend in God's Word and in intercession also becomes quite long. Inevitably, people get left off of my personal list because I forget to add them. Inevitably, I forget to pray for someone or some occasion in the Prayers of the Church.

Additionally, I am often asked to pray for individuals at certain times. Someone is having a surgery between 2–6 p.m. A child is facing a serious illness and needs immediate prayer. A student is taking a difficult but important exam on Thursday morning. A family watches over a loved one who will rest in Christ within hours. These are important and timely prayer requests. Sometimes I remember and I stop to ask God to guide/heal/comfort them. Sometimes I forget in the moment, or at the particular time, or with the requested group.

Maybe you've forgotten to pray, too. When I forget, I feel awful. Whether I forget in public or in private, a horrible feeling plagues me. I let a family down. I didn't follow through in my commitment to offering prayer. It's the one thing that I could do in the situation, and I didn't do it.

How do we handle these failures? What do we do

when we forget to pray? Well, the first thing we can do is PRAY. I know that sounds like a copout—like a makeup or do-over. But that's not it. When we realize we forgot to pray, we are remembering to pray. And there's no better time than the present. We offer up those prayers, petitions, and intercessions in the moment we're able. Secondly, when we forget to pray, we ask for forgiveness. As I said, I forget, and I often

“When we forget to pray: rest in the assurance that *God is still at work.*”

need forgiveness for neglecting prayer. Forgiveness is the way that broken relationships are restored. Forgiveness is the action that keeps me from beating myself up again and again over my negligence. And forgiveness points me to the third thing, and maybe most essential, we can do when we forget to pray: rest in the assurance that God is still at work. The Holy Spirit is interceding for us, and for His people, even when we forget to pray.

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the

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A photograph of a man and a woman, both looking down at a document or book. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right. They are both looking down with a focused expression. In the background, an American flag is visible, with its stars and stripes. The image is slightly blurred, giving it a soft, contemplative feel.

Election Season and the Christian's Responsibilities

by Dennis W. Matyas

Christians and churches do funny things with politics and reconciling them to their spiritual life is a multivalent experience: they might jump head-long into a sort of old-world Manifest Destiny, believing that God will bless us with lower gas prices if only we had a more moral collective. On the other hand, they might eschew politics altogether, sitting on the sofa on a Sunday afternoon (as Simon and Garfunkel put it), pretending that governmental designs have no lasting

effects on their lives. Both extremes are unsensible, but in different ways. Yes, God is present in the entire world, and no earthly government is perfect or permanent: “*Trust not in mortal man,*” (*Psalms 146*). On the other hand, pretending that your faith has nothing to do with your politics is like saying your skin has nothing to do with your body. You live in it, so how could it not? Even worse, getting angry because your church says you should keep the commandments of God is

really just getting angry at the Bible when it says you should “*choose life over death*” (*Deuteronomy 30:19*).

DOCTRINE OF THE TWO KINGDOMS

Lutherans hold a mediating political theology that I believe is both Scriptural and realistic to guide a Christian, especially in an election season. It’s called the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms. On the one hand (“Right Hand”) there is the Kingdom of Grace: this is the church, the gospel, the free-and-clear gift of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here there is no social status, no taxation, “*neither Jew nor Greek ... neither slave nor free ... no male and female*” (*Galatians 3:28*), no law or condemnation for those who are in Christ (*Romans 8:1*). It is not, never has been, and never will be a democracy by the people. It is a divine monarchy, and God the Father is our King. We live and die by His grace and providence. Nothing you can do will earn His favor, and no offense is too great to be forgiven. You are His citizen, set free to be free (*Galatians 5:1*) and to serve others as Christ served you.

The other Kingdom (“Left Hand”) is the Kingdom of Law: this is the world in which you live. So, you have relationships: you are a father, a mother, a son or daughter; you have a job with a title, a salary, and a tax bracket. You have papers in your fire-proof safe that legally declare your citizenship of a particular land in a particular time. You are under the law, and there is no grace here. There are only consequences if you break those laws.

The doctrine of the Two Kingdoms is a paradox. As long as you live, you live in *both* Kingdoms. By grace you are saved, and not by works. But by works and not by grace do you live decently and at peace with your neighbors. The Kingdoms are inter-related but offer very different statuses of existence. Consider this: if I sin by being angry at my brother, I’m guilty of hell in the Kingdom of Grace. Yet in the Kingdom of Law, if I harbor a grudge against my brother there’s no law I am breaking. Contra wise: even if I *murder* my brother, by repentance and faith in Christ I can actually (scandalously!) be forgiven in the Kingdom of Grace. Yet in the Kingdom of Law, I will spend the rest of my life removed from the general population (or in some cases be executed). These Kingdoms aren’t contradictory; it’s how God designed them, and He is in control of *both* Kingdoms (cf. *John 18:36* and *Romans 13:4*).

Obviously, the Kingdom of Law is finite, and the Kingdom of Grace everlasting. So, in the maintenance of the paradox, how do these Two Kingdoms work together? Simple: *your earthly life and citizenship in the Kingdom of Law is informed by your life and citizenship in the Kingdom of Grace*. What does this mean? It means that I get over the grudge because God put His grudge against me on Jesus. It means I love my brother *because* Christ loved me and gave Himself up for me. It means I serve my neighbor because the Spirit of peace enflames in me a love of my fellow man. It means God didn’t save you so that you could

“... your earthly life and citizenship in the Kingdom of Law is informed by your life and citizenship in the Kingdom of Grace.”

be selfish, uncaring, and “sin boldly” whilst receiving absolution like a magic trick on Sunday morning. It means God saved you (Kingdom of Grace) *so that* you can do good works (Kingdom of Law) “*which [he] prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*” (*Ephesians 2:10*).

So, what does this mean (and not mean) for American Christians in election season?

CONSIDER YOUR NEIGHBOR

It means that voting is a work in the Kingdom of Law, so your consideration is for your neighbor and not for yourself. Because of the way this Constitutional Republic is organized—your representatives representing you “the people”—voting is one of the easiest acts of service (or disservice) you can give to your neighbor. In fact, I would go so far as to say that sometimes *not* voting at all is a sin of omission, since you are failing to serve your neighbor even in this simple way.

The doctrine of the Two Kingdoms also does *not* mean that if a fellow Christian disagrees with you over any number of political issues that they are *necessarily* demonstrating themselves to be a Pharisee or a hypocrite. They might be, but it’s probably more complicated than that, so show a little charity. There are myriad issues that inform the reasons people vote. Some are naturally going to be prioritized due to the changing passions and harried



God's Helping Hands

By Paul Bohn

Over four years ago, during an every-member visit with Pastor Paul Hauser of Zion, Hemlock I mentioned to a member of our congregation that I thought of starting a food and clothing giveaway but didn't have any contacts. The member mentioned two contacts including one at St. Peter, Hemlock. After information was gathered from these sources, it was taken to the Voters Assembly for discussion. Our school had been closed for years and the rooms were not being used and could be turned into stock rooms. Others from our congregation were interested in helping, and so began *God's Helping Hands* of Hemlock and Merrill.

Clothing racks were built, rooms were cleared, and a Facebook page was created. Clothing donations came in and many hours were put in organizing the clothing. Meetings were held and it was decided that we would open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month, on opposite days of another church which had a similar ministry, so those in need would have more supply options. The start date would be August 25, 2018.

Opening day was disappointing. Despite advertisement on Facebook and distribution of flyers, only four people showed up. But the next time we opened, 8 people showed up and the following time 16 people. It just kept growing. Meanwhile, we were working on building shelves for food, and when we started giving away food,

the numbers exploded.

During our hours of operation, an average of 70 families were being serviced. That adds up to 200 people! For a very rural church, it is more than we expected. Along with food and clothing, we give away Bibles to anyone who would like one. Pastor Hauser connects and ministers to those waiting to shop, praying for their needs. Everyone is welcomed.

Our ministry serves a 30-mile radius of Hemlock. Families from city and rural areas come. It takes about 15 volunteers to keep things running. These same individuals come on Thursdays to organize Saturday's event.

“We give thanks to the Lord who has richly blessed us ... so that we can be a blessing to many.”

About \$1,000 is spent on food that is purchased at a deep discount from the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. Hidden Harvest in Saginaw provides free food. The community supports us and gets involved—area growers have donated blueberries, apples, sweet corn, potatoes, and more. For Thanksgiving, Christmas, and

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Hurricane Ian Disaster Response

Below is a letter from the Executive Director of School and Youth Ministries of the Florida-Georgia District LCMS regarding the relief efforts currently underway.

It's been quite a week in Florida! Hurricane Ian packed a punch as it slow marched across the state. Most of the reports coming in are from churches and schools with typical storm damage—loss of power, downed trees and fences, and roof damage.

Two areas were hit the hardest. Ft. Myers and the communities along the southwest coast have major wind and water damage, and the communities on the northeast side of Orlando are dealing with flooding. The extent of the damage is still being assessed, but it's abundantly clear that the list of those needing assistance will continue to grow.

Many have already asked how they can help. Schools that are interested in supporting relief efforts for the FLGA and SELC schools in Florida can do one of two things:

- Give money directly to the FLGA Disaster Response fund at flgadistrict.org/give/
- Collect gift cards for stores like Lowes, Home Depot, Walmart, and chain restaurants

Mail gift cards to:

Florida Georgia District

5850 T.G. Lee Blvd Suite 500

Orlando FL 32822

All disaster response donations go directly to schools and congregations for cleanup efforts such as roof repair, tree removal, water damage mitigation, fencing, and other supply needs. Gift cards will be distributed to staff and families.

Thank you for all of your prayers. What a blessing to be part of a Christian community that loves and cares for each other. Continue to pray that the love of Jesus shines brightly through the response to this disaster. This is an opportunity to put love into action as we help and support those impacted by the storm!

Jennifer Tanner

Executive Director, School and Youth Ministries
Florida-Georgia District LCMS

Michigan District LERT Response

On the first weekend of October, a Michigan District LERT team picked up 500 flood buckets and 300 hygiene kits at Living Faith in Marine City. These buckets/kits had been assembled over the past 12 months by congregations throughout the District and stored at Living Faith. Thanks to the great volunteers in the picture who got the truck loaded up in an hour and a half. The truck then stopped at Trinity, Clinton Township to pick up a few more supplies. The District paid for the truck rental and Trinity paid for the gas to get the truck to Ohio and back. The workers in the picture are from Trinity, Clinton Township and Trinity, Utica (besides Travis Grulke). Many thanks to Kent Marshall for driving the truck!

The flood buckets and hygiene kits were taken to Caldwell, Ohio where they were combined with other supplies and hauled down to Florida for immediate use. Christ Lutheran Church in Saint Peterburg and St. Luke in Oviedo will be the final destinations for all the supplies/aid. ■

Photo courtesy of Travis Grulke





Granado Leads Michigan District Hispanic Ministry

Rev. Ricardo Granado was installed as Michigan District Missionary for Hispanic Ministries at the All Pastors Conference, October 9-12, 2022. Below is an interview of Rev. Granado by Michigan District Staff Writer Elisa Schulz.

Elisa Schulz: Where are you from?

Rev. Granado: I am from Venezuela. I was born in Monagas state on the eastern side of the country, in a small town called La Morrocoya, where I was raised until the age of five.

I grew up in another small town in the countryside, south of Venezuela, where my parents moved to, migrating because their crops had been lost due to flooding. In this new place we lived for about 30 years.

I arrived in the United States due to the hard economic and political situation that my country is experiencing, with an increasingly difficult crisis. Without being at war, we have as many displaced people as Ukraine, which is actually experiencing war. Unbelievable! That is how big the Venezuelan crisis is.

Schulz: Tell us about your family.

Granado: We are a family of 12. My dad went to meet the Lord about 18 years ago and four of my siblings have already passed away too. The most recent one was my brother Juan, who died on August 25, 2022. He was younger than me and was the brother with whom I used to play and fish when we were kids. As part of those things that happen in migration, where sometimes we have to say goodbye to loved ones by a phone call, I had to say goodbye to him from a distance. I still have seven siblings and my mother back in Venezuela, in addition to other relatives.

I am married and my wife and children are also Venezuelan. My wife Pricilla and I have been married for 25 years. She is a Medical Laboratory Technician, a housewife, and a faithful companion in the mission of the Lord. We have three children: two girls, Sara and Ana Rebeca and a son, Samuel. Sara is already in college, Samuel is waiting for his documents and scholarships to start his career and Ana is in her last year of high school.

I am so grateful to God for my family, for the family of the Church, for calling, joining, and sustaining us in

faith. Truly God has used so many brothers and sisters in the Church as His visible body to take care of us in this country.

Schulz: Tell us about your journey to becoming a pastor and how you ended up in the Michigan District.

Granado: I grew up in a Lutheran family. My parents attended Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in La Morrocoya, where I started attending Sunday School and VBS led by the LCMS missionary Rev. Dr. Rudolph Blank. Later, when the family moved to southern Venezuela, we attended a mission planted by Dr. Blank as well, which later became Prince of Peace Lutheran Church where I was confirmed and baptized, and also began my theological studies. From there, I participated in youth gatherings as well as leadership workshops and trainings that were offered at National Conventions by missionary pastors and professors such as David Coles, Rudolph Blank, Dan Conrad, Dana Brones, Robert Selle, Mark Braden, Philip Bickel, James Tino, Mark Kempff, Michael Tanney, Angel Lanza, Arthur Boone, and many others.

I moved to the country's capital, Caracas, to do my university studies and I graduated with a business administration major. I then did a certification in conversational processes and conflict resolution. I participated in the local churches, and also continued with my theological studies at the Juan de Frias Theological Training Institute during the time I was there. Juan de Frias offers continuous studies of theological formation and trains pastors and leaders in Venezuela. After completing my studies, Prince of Peace Lutheran, my home church, extended a call to me to serve as their pastor.

After serving at Prince of Peace, I was called to serve as vice-president of the National Church (The Lutheran Church of Venezuela or ILV), then as administrator of Christ the King Lutheran School in Eastern Venezuela, then as Director of the Juan de Frias Theological Training Institute, and finally I was called to establish/plant a mission called Christ the King of Glory, which was the last congregation where I served in Venezuela.

While I was in Venezuela, I started my Master's Degree in Systematic Theology from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. and was able to finish it once I moved to the States. I hope to be able to start my doctoral studies soon with the help of God and His church.

The arrival in the Michigan District was through Pastor Don Schmidt from Messiah Lutheran Church, where we attended in Memphis, Tenn. He was in conversation with Seminary President Emeritus Dr.

“God has His time and that shows that almost always He calls us when we are busiest in His kingdom, so I thank God for the opportunity to serve with His Word and Sacraments, the gifts of Christ for His church, with great joy to my dear brothers and sisters.”

Meyer looking for an opportunity to call me. Dr. Meyer later contacted Dr. David Maier and, thanks to God and the leadership of the Michigan District, the call was given to serve here, planting Hispanic missions.

I remember that I came to Detroit for the first time in 2019. At that time I had been living in the United States for 8 months and I had not received a call, nor did I receive one in Detroit on that date, although in my heart I wanted to come and serve here. However, it was after 3 years, in 2022, when I was busiest establishing a mission in Memphis, that God called me to come to Michigan. God has His time and that shows that almost always He calls us when we are busiest in His kingdom, so I thank God for the opportunity to serve with His Word and Sacraments, the gifts of Christ for His church, with great joy to my dear brothers and sisters.

Schulz: What will you be doing in the District? Where will you serve and what do you hope to accomplish?

Granado: I am working from both Pan de Vida and St. Stephen Lutheran Churches, located in Southwest Detroit, specifically in Mexicantown, focusing on God's mission in an intentional way. Along with Pastors Eddie Morales, Tyler Cronkright, Jim Hill, Todd Jones, Robert Kasper, and Sergio Vargas, we hope that God opens doors and opportunities to plant His Word throughout the District, especially where there is a greater presence of Hispanics. It is our prayer that God takes His Word from the ears to the hearts of His children and that He brings to the Church those who have to be saved. The goal is to establish Hispanic mission points in congregations that are open to developing a Hispanic Ministry so that, by the grace of God, we can serve the hundreds of Hispanic brothers and sisters who live around us (some of them living in critical, difficult situations) and show God's love and compassion for them and for our world. May God, who is the owner of the harvest, receive all the glory and honor forever and ever. Amen. ■

NOVEMBER 2022

With a New Mission Statement to Guide Us, CEF Looks Ahead to Our Future in Faith



For more than 12 decades, whether in times of peace, war, depression or pandemic, CEF has remained dedicated to serving our ministries and members as they continue to help build God's Kingdom here in Michigan.



“Keeping it simple
is better. CEF’s new
mission statement
tells who we are, how
we serve, and why we
serve in a simple and
compelling way.”

Jim Saalfeld
Chief Executive Officer
Church Extension Fund

For our entire 121-year history, Church Extension Fund has been a ministry focused on a mission.

It was the simple yet powerful idea by Lutheran church members in the Detroit and Frankenmuth areas that led to CEF’s formation in 1901. These visionaries wanted to see more Lutheran churches built in Michigan, so they started a fund that congregations could build up and then borrow from to bring their new ministry dreams to reality.

The same general model still describes CEF’s core operations today. By selling investments to Lutheran church members across Michigan, CEF creates the resources churches and ministries need when they build new facilities, repave parking lots, improve building security, or launch new ministry programs. Loans are offered

at preferred low interest rates, and as these ministries repay their loans, CEF pays interest back to our investors. That’s the very definition of a win-win!

Through Changing Times

Since CEF’s founding, we’ve experienced many changes in the **when’s**, **what’s** and **where’s**, of our long history. Yet our **who**, **why** and **how** have remained constant.

Over the years we’ve updated our name, we’ve moved offices, and we’ve entrusted new generations of leaders with carrying out our mission. Yet the heart of what CEF does – what truly matters – hasn’t changed a bit. We continue to work with you to help Build God’s Kingdom here in Michigan, just as we always have.

If you recall a few years ago, CEF redesigned its logo and established updated brand standards. This reflected our dedication to remaining the preferred lender to Lutheran ministries, and a valued investment source for churches and its members, across Michigan.

Then, just this past summer, we unveiled a new and improved online CEF Direct system. This makes it easier for our loyal investors and borrowers to manage their accounts.

In CEF's latest strategic undertaking, we've reimagined how we state our ministry's mission. Through many months of self-study and reflection, we've come to a better set of words to express our fundamental purpose and method. It's the same mission our founders had, yet it's conveyed more simply and concisely.

Trusted and Innovative

Here, following approval of our Board of Trustees this past July, is CEF's new mission statement:

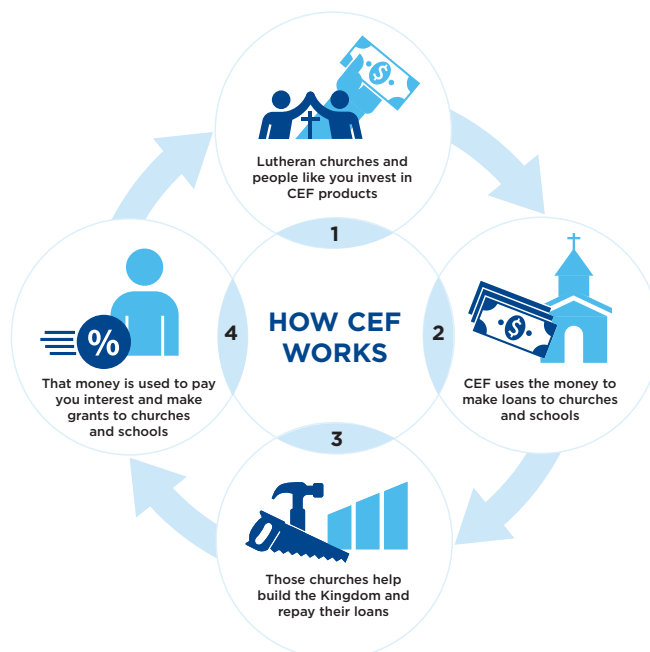
“Church Extension Fund serves as trusted and innovative stewards of financial resources by providing investment and lending products to help Lutheran ministries and church members build God’s Kingdom.”

Jim Saalfeld, CEF's Chief Executive Officer, provides perspective on this update: “We believe CEF's new mission statement tells who we are, how we serve, and why we serve in a simple and compelling way.”

As Jim attests, “Keeping it simple is better.” Consider how the mission statement's key pieces break out:

Who We Are

Church Extension Fund serves as trusted and innovative stewards of financial resources



How CEF Helps You Build His Kingdom

How We Serve

by providing investment and lending products

Why We Serve

to help Lutheran ministries and church members build God's Kingdom.

Providing “Space and Place”

We're proud to say that while the exact words of CEF's mission statement have changed, our core

promises to investors and borrowers remain the same as ever.

With the new mission statement as our guide, CEF will continue to work fervently and with focus to provide the “space and place” for the congregations, schools and ministries of the Michigan District to continue bringing the life-changing Gospel of Jesus to all.



“Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.”

Proverbs 19:21



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

This information is provided to assist you in your estate planning process and is not meant to offer financial or legal advice. Please contact your Attorney or Financial Advisor to obtain appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances.

LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

LLL Fellowship and Outreach Opportunities

Arcadia Retreat

This year's Michigan District Lutheran Laymen's League retreat attracted 101 attendees, including 30 first timers. Rev. Gabe Kasper, lead pastor of the University Lutheran Chapel in Ann Arbor and Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper, Michigan District Assistant to the President, were keynote speakers. Chaplains were Rev. David Mews of Guardian, Dearborn and Rev. Thomas Schroeder of Christ Our King, Saline.

Next year's retreat is set for September 7–10, 2023, and will feature Dr. Dale Meyer, former Concordia Seminary president and Lutheran Hour Speaker, as keynote speaker. This annual fall retreat features spiritual growth, fellowship, relaxation, and recreation.

The Lutheran Hour Rose Parade Float

The week after Christmas, hundreds of volunteers learn how floats are designed and constructed, and help decorate many meaningful Rose Parade floats.

Michigan LCMS men and women are invited to be on the Lutheran Hour Ministries® (LHM) PetalPusher® Tour

for three days of hands-on float decorating, then attending the world-famous Rose Parade on January 2, 2023 from grandstand seats along Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, Calif. To learn more, visit petalpushers.org.

In 2023, The Lutheran Hour Ministries celebrates its 72nd anniversary of sharing the Gospel message in the Rose Parade. There is still time to join the tour! If you are interested, please contact Luther Tours at 844.777.1517 for more information.



LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE



HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with
praise: give thanks to him and praise his name.

Psalm 100:4



LWML
Michigan District

<https://lwmlmichigan.org>



Dedication of Garden of Hope Memorial

A dedication of a memorial site, “Garden of Hope,” was attended on September 10 by 50 members and guests at St. Paul’s, Centreville, on the National Day of Remembrance of Aborted Children (nationaldayofremembrance.org).

The garden was created through the efforts of more than 25 volunteers who prepared the site at a corner of the church lawn. The ground was leveled for a concrete slab and installed by a local contractor. An Amish-owned business donated vinyl fencing. Others donated flowering plants, trees, shrubs, pavers, and sculptures, as well as landscaping labor. Local retailers provided discounts. A contemplation bench was a gift of Right to Life of St. Joseph County. The project earned a \$250 grant from Thrivent.

The site overlooks a knoll on which is situated a cross constructed of donated barn timbers. Officiating the dedication was Rev. Roger L. Sassaman.

All are welcome to visit the memorial to the unborn at



Photo courtesy of St. Paul's Centreville

St. Paul’s. Its purpose is to offer hope and healing. The site is among some 50 memorials for unborn children in Michigan and hundreds across the United States.

1200 + Attend Family Praise and Picnic in the Park

St. John, Rochester celebrated its 23rd “Family Praise and Picnic in the Park” at Rochester Municipal Park. A record 1,228 St. John members and guests participated in an outdoor worship service that was blessed with great weather, inspiring music, a family baptism, and encouraging messages by Pastor Marc Schwichtenberg and Family Ministries Director Steve Wilson.

Following the service, attendees had an opportunity to visit prayer and photo booths and view a vintage vehicle display. A tasty picnic lunch was followed by ice cream, sno-cones, popcorn, and the popular Red, White, and Cute Wheels Parade. A fire truck and police vehicle display, children’s obstacle course, and face painting were popular activities, along with entertainment by Roman Balloon Artists and Illusionist Chris Clark.



Photo courtesy of St. John, Rochester

Living Nativity, A Journey to Bethlehem

Immanuel (Frankentrost), Saginaw is presenting its 26th annual Living Nativity. Travel to the ancient town of Bethlehem to pay your taxes and be counted in the Roman census. Hear the shepherds talk about the angels’ proclamation. Listen to the prophet talk of signs and wonders. Enjoy the city alive with activity and no room at the inn. Avoid the anger of the Roman soldiers and tax collectors. See the babe asleep in a manger. Experience all of this and more on Friday, December 2 (7–9 p.m.); Saturday, December 3 (6–8 p.m.); and Sunday, December 4 (6–8 p.m.). This free 30-minute walk is mainly an outdoor event, so dress for the weather.

For more information, please contact the church office at 989.754.0929 or visit frankentrost.org.

Deaf Ministry Events

Deaf Lutherans and friends are invited to attend a Christmas Weekend, December 9–11. Dinner will take place on Friday evening at the Bavarian Inn in Frankenmuth followed by Evening Prayer at St. Lorenz Lutheran Church. On Saturday, participants will travel to Traverse City for a wine and food pairing at Soul Squeeze Cellars and a presentation at the Grey Hare Inn. The weekend will wrap up with worship at Trinity, Traverse City on Sunday morning. Registration is required. For more information, visit michigandistrict.org/deafministry or contact Rev. Thomas Dunseth at 616.634.1100.

Photo courtesy of Rev. Thomas Dunseth



Deaf Lutherans sign together at the St. Lorenz summer Mission Festival and outdoor worship this past August.

In August, Deaf Lutherans from all over Michigan travelled to Frankenmuth to join St. Lorenz Lutheran Church at its annual mission festival and outdoor worship. This year's festival had the highest attendance by Deaf Lutherans—over 70 joined for the outdoor worship. Following a delicious German chicken BBQ, three Deaf mission speakers brought God's work from international fields to the eyes of all the Deaf people who attended.



Photo courtesy of Faith, Prescott

The Faith, Prescott LWML Quilters Team made quilts for house fire families and Veterans. These are ongoing projects for the quilters.



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Special Recognition

Ashley Installed as Pastor of Youth and Families

Rev. Jeremy R. Ashley isn't new to Trinity, Clinton Township. In fact, he and his family have been members at Trinity for nearly a decade. He was called to Trinity to serve as the Minister to Families with Young Children and spent most of his time making connections through the Early Childhood Center. In September, he was officially called and ordained into a new position and a new title—Pastor of Youth and Families.

Rev. Ashley has spent several years studying to become a pastor as part of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program through Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. He served under the mentorship of Senior Pastor, Rev. Kenneth M. Wise. According to Michigan District President Emeritus Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier, participants in the SMP program are selected based on gifts that others recognize in them.

"You've been recognized by the church, and the Council of Presidents, serving as the Board of Placements, is now going to place you here, and has, at Trinity Lutheran Clinton Township," said Maier, during the ordination. *"What a joy and a privilege."*



Photos courtesy of Trinity, Clinton Township

While his ordination has taken place, Rev. Ashley still has about a year-and-a-half of classes to take before his program is officially complete.



New Teacher Orientation

On Friday, September 30, the Michigan District held a New Teacher Orientation for a great group of 19 teachers from all around the District who are just beginning their teaching careers in our Lutheran schools. Some are fresh out of college and others are second career educators who are stepping into classrooms for the first time. We are grateful for their ministry and hearing the call of the Good Lord to serve our Lutheran schools!



Photo courtesy of Travis Grukke

The image features a promotional graphic for 'The Hymnal Project'. On the left is a stylized illustration of a church steeple. To the right of the steeple, the text reads: 'THE HYMNAL PROJECT' in large, bold, serif font. Below this, in a smaller font, is 'Music for Worship Devotion Time'. Further down, it says 'Variety of Formats' followed by a list: 'MP3', 'Instrumental', 'Lead Vocals', 'Videos with Lyrics', and 'Leadsheets'. At the bottom left is a logo featuring a cross and the text 'thehymnalproject.com'.



Michigan District, LCMS presents

2023 Theological Conference

February 4, 2023 | Our Savior, Lansing, Mich.

The Word Works **Building an Ethic of Bible Reading**

"so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

Save the Date

Registration to open in December 2023

michigandistrict.org/theological23

... Our New District President

he said, “I think we’re on the right path: People of Hope, Great Commission, Great Compassion, Healthy Congregations, and Healthy Workers. I think we also have to respond to the lack of workers.” He outlined his goals as follows:

1. Build an ethic of being in the Word;
2. Leadership development, building on what is already happening;
3. Church planting and revamping: “I don’t like the idea of closing buildings and selling property. I think we need an incarnational presence—not saving the building, but having a presence. That’s ministry revamping.”
4. Parochial education 2.0: “How can we support the homeschoolers more, and how can we support the public students more? Christian formation of the children is something we have to look at.”
5. All of the above have to be connected to our communities.

Welcome, President Davis! We look forward to working with you. ■

Elisa L. Schulz is a staff writer, copy editor, and photographer for the Michigan District, LCMS. She is married to Rev. Dr. Charles Schulz (Concordia University Ann Arbor) and they have three children.

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Photo by Elisa Schulz/Michigan District, LCMS

When We Forget to Pray

saints according to the will of God” (Romans 8:26–27 ESV).

Does God desire us to pray? Of course He does. Does He use you and me on behalf of His people when we offer prayers for others?

Absolutely! But when we forget to pray, God is still at work in the lives of the people and in the midst of the occasions that we forget to pray for. He is still interceding for them, just as He is for you and me. Thanks be to God, who gives us this gift of prayer, and never forgets to pray for us!

Holy Spirit, I need your help. When I forget to pray, I feel frustrated and ashamed. I have let others down in my commitment to pray for them. Please forgive me, renew me, and restore me, both in my relationship with them and in my relationship with You. Where I fail, I pray that you would continue to be faithful. Work on behalf of your people, and then turn my heart once again to pray for You to work, and for Your will to be done. Be my reminder, so that I may be united with you in prayer for all. Amen.

*Come, pray in me the prayer I need this day;
Help me to see Your purpose and Your will –
Where I have failed, what I have done amiss;*

Held in forgiving love, let me be still. (LSB 769:2) ■

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Rev. Aaron Roggow serves as Assistant Pastor at St. Paul, Ann Arbor.

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Michigan District, LCMS presents

2023 Professional Church Workers Conference

November 19–21, 2023 | Grand Rapids, Mich.

michigandistrict.org/pcw23

ABID In Jesus

John 15:4-5

Election Season ...

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instances of human life. But being broken by nature, politics is always a zero-sum game: sell your soul over here in order to get something good over there. Either way you look at it, you lose (Simon and Garfunkel again). But some losses are patently worse than others, and it would be foolish to equalize them. Instead, use godly wisdom to arrive at the best holistic decision, and pray that God's will be done.

To that end, what is *best* for my neighbor (not necessarily what is most agreeable or comfortable for me) is what I will bring into the voting booth with me. Churches should *not* endorse individual politicians or parties as if good works are exclusive to individuals. They should rather examine (as saved people in a broken world) what God would have them do best to serve their neighbors according to the system of government—especially since that system is designed to change according to the will of the people voting. In church, Christians should expect to be exhorted toward moral and godly living *always*. Not just in election season, we should want to be turned toward the practical considerations and service of others, and toward being a good citizen of our land “*so that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way*” (1 Timothy 2:2). Obviously this includes addressing moral issues on the regular, and it also includes directly addressing ballot issues or legislation that would be harmful to your neighbor.

MICHIGAN PROPOSITION 3

To be perfectly clear: you are entitled as an American citizen to vote for whomever you wish. To be even clearer: you are not entitled as a Christian citizen to vote for your neighbor's harm. Right to Life (rtl.org) of Michigan provides helpful information not only about what churches and pastors can and cannot



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legally say and do politically, but about the upcoming Proposal 3 (supportmiwomenandchildren.org/amendment-summary/) that would enshrine a radical abortion law into the Michigan State Constitution. This is one of those rare occasions when it is legally and doctrinally acceptable for a pastor to adjure people towards a particular action in the voting booth. You can keep your opinions about *whomever* but a moral *whatever* like Proposal 3 is my pastoral responsibility to address. Go and read it: it isn't actually about personal freedom; it's a political bait-and-switch to make Michigan one of the most violent havens for abortions in the country. It is an abomination against humanity, and God will judge its supporters.

Again, I want to be crystal clear on this: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and its professional rostered members and congregations officially confess the Bible to be the Word of God, and our doctrinal positions and teachings support both the sanctity of life *and* the public exhortations against evil—especially if we are legally entitled to a voice against that evil. Could it be that some of our societal problems stem from cowering at the sounds of loud criticisms and wishing to be “polite” rather than “political?”

Dear Christian, you have been redeemed by the death and resurrection of Jesus, and are free to do good works for your neighbor. Therefore, if you are a voting citizen of this state, you are conscience-bound by your Christian faith to vote “no” on Proposal 3.

Please do the right thing. ■

Rev. Dennis W. Matyas serves St. Paul, Bay City (Frankenlust) and as a member of the Michigan District Board of Directors (North & East Region). He and his wife, Valerie, have four children.

PROPOSAL 3 RESOURCES

Looking for information and resources regarding Michigan's Proposal 3? Informative videos, links to information, voter registration in Michigan, and more can be found at:

michigandistrict.org/prop3

God's Helping Hands

Easter, we brought in a semi of food to give away before the holidays. We have been able to do these special giveaways six times, helping 200 families and 600 people for each holiday.

God's Helping Hands also partners with Diaper Alliance (thediaperalliance.org). Because of this organization, we distribute 6,000 diapers per month for a comparatively small annual fee. In addition, we give away small household items.

Many people have expressed a deep gratitude. Some have even said that they would not be able to make ends meet if it wasn't for this ministry.

We do this because we want to love and help our neighbor and out of a desire to please our Lord and Savior. At times, it has looked impossible as the need for food is so great, but the Lord always comes through. One time, he sent someone with a carload of canned goods! COVID didn't even slow us down. When it hit, we moved everything outdoors.

To date, *God's Helping Hands* has been able to give away 300,000 lbs. of food, more than 30,000 articles of clothing, 20,000 household items, and 100,000 diapers.

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Photo courtesy of Zion, Hemlock

We have helped over 5,000 families (16,000 people). This year the quilters, who turn out about 400 quilts a year, will be giving a quilt to each family we serve at *God's Helping Hands*.

All of this has been done at very little cost to the church—mainly storage space, electricity, and heat. Some have donated monetarily, including Paul Walter Hauser, actor and son of Rev. Paul Hauser, who gave us our start-up funds. We give thanks to the Lord, who has richly blessed us over the past 4 years so that we can be a blessing to many. ■

Paul Bohn is a lifelong member of Zion, Hemlock where he has served in many church leadership capacities. He currently serves as the head elder.

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Calls and Roster Update

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. John Bookshaw (Big Rapids, MI) to IIM, Chapel of the Lakes, Mecosta
Rev. Jesus Ricardo Granado Lizardo (Dearborn Heights, MI) to Missionary at Large, Michigan District
Rev. Mark Latham (Traverse City, MI) to St. Michael's, Traverse City
Rev. Benjamin Roberts (Grosse Ile, MI) to Associate, St. Paul, Trenton
Rev. David Rutter (Shelby Twp., MI) to Associate, Trinity, Utica
Rev. Stephen Schilke (Bay City, MI) to IIM, Trinity, Oscoda

Change of Status and Title Changes

Rev. Alan Eisinger (Sterling Heights, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Mark Flory (Lady Lake, FL) to Emeritus

Transferred Into District

Rev. Jesus Ricardo Granado Lizardo (Dearborn Heights, MI) from Southeastern District
Rev. David Rutter (Shelby Twp., MI) from English District

Transferred Out of District

Rev. Mark Flory (Emeritus) to Florida/Georgia District
Rev. James Van Dellen (Emeritus) to South Wisconsin District
Rev. Galan Walther (Emeritus) to South Wisconsin District

Reinstated to the Roster

Rev. Kurt Overway to Candidate Status

Called Home

Rev. Dale Krueger

COMMISSIONED

Calls Accepted

Clark, Lori (Reinstated) to St. John, Rochester
Cooper, Amy (Candidate) to Valley Lutheran, Saginaw
Cruz, Melissa (Trinity, Bay City) to Valley Lutheran, Saginaw
Jung, Sara (Cq. Concordia, Ann Arbor) to St. John, Rochester
Seehafer, Tyler (Candidate) to St. Paul, Ann Arbor

Change of Status

Grage, Glenn (Faith, Bay City) to Candidate
Flegler, Samantha (Good Shepherd, Saginaw) to Candidate
Preuss, Micah (Martin Luther HS, Lansing) to Candidate
Steinke, Eric (St. John's, Adrian) to Candidate

Transferred Into District

Scott, Kimberly (Indiana District) to Lutheran Special Education Ministries, Ann Arbor
Winterstein, Thomas (Indiana District) to St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth

Resigned From the Roster

Duerr, Lynn

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 2022

- 1 All Saints' Day
- 2-4 MANS Teachers Conference
Lansing, Mich.
- 5 State Volleyball Championship
CUAA/St. Paul, Ann Arbor
- 11 Veterans Day
- 24 Thanksgiving Day
- 24-25 DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED

DECEMBER 2022

- 23-26 DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas Day

JANUARY 2023

- 6 Epiphany
- 22-28 Lutheran Schools Week

FEBRUARY 2023

- 2-3 Snow Tire Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 4 Theological Conference
Our Savior, Lansing
- 22 Ash Wednesday

MARCH 2023

- 4-5 State Basketball Tournament
CUAA/St. Paul, Ann Arbor

APRIL 2023

- 6 Maundy Thursday
- 7 Good Friday
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 9 Easter Sunday
- 21-23 The Katie
DoubleTree, Bay City

