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

IN TOUCH

HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

Really Synod?

by Rev. David A. Davis

As you know, “Synod” means walking together. Literally it is to be *on the same road*. When we in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod hear that word, our inner GPS dials up St. Louis and the International Center. That needs recalibration.

It is important to remember that Synod **starts here**, in your community, in your circuit. The journey of walking together in faith and faithfulness as followers of Jesus begins locally. And now more than ever.

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IN TOUCH

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“Now more than ever, we need to be Synod locally ... We can work together with the confidence that Jesus will build His Kingdom ...”

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Throughout our District we have many small congregations, and we have congregations that cannot afford a full-time pastor. These congregations are small, but that does not necessarily mean dying.

At the same time, we have congregations with great capacity for ministry. They have a large worshipping community. God has blessed them with large staffs, robust programs, and large facilities.

And in between are plenty of mid-sized congregations. They are “holding their own” in an increasingly non-Christian environment. They work to expand their touch into their various communities.

We also see fewer pastors available for ministry. For many years now the graduating classes from the Seminary have gotten smaller. The average age of pastors has risen; the baby boomers are retiring.

Of course, in the midst of this, many, many around us languish in unbelief: our neighbors don’t know Jesus; people are living lives of distraction, distortion, and drug induced dullness. Mission opportunity is at our every doorstep.

Now more than ever, we need to be Synod locally. Our congregations and pastors must band together not only to maintain ministry, but to increase faith and faithfulness, to expand Gospel outreach. We can work together with the confidence that Jesus will build His Kingdom and neither the gates of hell, a hostile culture, an aging congregation, nor a limited pool of pastors will prevail against it.

Here are three ways you can be Synod locally:

- Work with other congregations around you to share resources, properties, and workers. Smaller and medium-sized and very large congregations can strategically unite in ministry. A key to this is not to worry about “what is ours.”
- Embrace rather than criticize the differences between congregations. Set suspicion and competition aside. We are in this together. Let’s leverage the distinctions between us for outreach around us.
- See your Circuit as the seedbed of the Synod. Use your Winkel meetings and Circuit Convocations as mission strategy centers.

You do not need to wait for a Synod program to get started.

The Kingdom of God is never in retreat. Jesus taught, “*This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how*” (Mark 4:26–27 NIV).

Let us walk together here and now. Let us be really Synod—on the same road. Let us prayerfully, joyfully, and humbly work in the Spirit for a season of church planting and revamping. Synod starts here. Now. You and me. ■



Rev. David A. Davis serves as President of the Michigan District, LCMS.

Just a Little Bit Longer

by Craig S. Oldenburg



Do you like surprises? What about when you get together with a group of people and you are surprised by how much you enjoy and appreciate their company—so much that you wish it did not have ... to ... end?

That is a summer camp experience. A surprise ending! The best and the worst day of camp is the *last* day. Surprised by the friendships and the personal growth. Leaving to go home knowing there is a community that cares for you. Wishing it did not have to end.

Maybe you have read about friendships that result from fighting a battle together. While camp is not a battle, it is a commitment through the new and the unknown. Living and serving together. Young adults who take on this calling and challenge to serve as summer ministry staff walk away with incredible life stories, life skills, and lifelong friendships.

To help explain this more, let me introduce Qu, Tallawah, and Goldfish (camp aliases). Read what they have to say about the value of their summer ministry staff experience—the experience they might have liked to have just a little bit longer. Then see what a few camper parents have to say.

“As a Cabin Leader at Camp Concordia, I not only had the opportunity to see and facilitate growth in my campers, but I also got to grow myself. Over the summer, sharing Jesus became much more comfortable than it ever has been. I went to a public high school, so my faith was supposed to be kept quiet there; it got to the point where I had very little faith altogether. Over the summer this changed. My faith became a central part of my life because of the environment of camp. Furthermore, my professional skills increased. I learned how to communicate with others, and how to problem solve in order to accomplish my goals. My time at camp truly helped me to develop skills and a mindset which will be beneficial to my life outside of camp.” Qu (Abby Yakimow -

Concordia University Wisconsin)

“Camp Concordia summers never disappoint me. This summer (2022) I had the opportunity to be the Program Coordinator as well as the waterfront director. These jobs have given me so many skills that I could take with me in the future. I am studying to be a Director of Christian Education someday and this summer helped me grow tremendously in my leading skills. Most importantly, I grew closer to Jesus. Camp has and will always hold a special place in my heart.” Tallowah (Chloe Dahn - Concordia University Nebraska)

“Working at Camp Concordia has proven to be an extremely rewarding opportunity for me. The honor to help bring Christ to all of the campers was a very fulfilling experience. Throughout the summer, I witnessed my campers learning and growing in their faith. Not only was I able to teach the campers about how their faith applies to their life, but the campers also taught me so much about myself. I had the opportunity to gain experience as a Christian and as a person. My experience at Camp Concordia gave me the chance to learn numerous new skills that I will be able to use outside of camp.” Goldfish (Luke Minnick - Bethany College, Indiana)

“I realized it was harder for me than her, but she was ready. I let go and she was so proud of herself. She wanted to stay longer ... I did it!” (First time Explorer Mom of 6-year-old)

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Photo courtesy of Camp Concordia

How to *Pray* Through Scripture

by Christopher K. Paavola



Lutherans love the Word of God! As our Confessions famously say, we believe Scripture is the “only source and norm” of our doctrine. But the Bible is not only the basis of our theology or our preaching or our daily lives—God’s Word is also the source of our prayers.

When you stand in church and pray, “*Have mercy on me, O God,*” you’re citing Psalm 51. When you sing in the car, “*Great is Thy faithfulness ...*” you’re praying the words of Lamentations 3. When you say the Lord’s Prayer at bedtime, you’re praying the words of Jesus found in Mathew 6. Each time, it’s a prayer that is informed and prompted and drawing on the very words of Scripture.

HOW TO PRAY THROUGH SCRIPTURE

But praying Scripture doesn’t have to be limited to the actual prayers of Scripture. With just a few tweaks of phrase, you can pray through ANY section of Scripture.

For instance, when Paul writes in Ephesians 1:18,

“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you ...”

To make it a prayer, you would simply change the words from second-person to first-person:

“I pray that the eyes of MY heart may be enlightened in order that I may know the hope to which YOU have called ME ...”

Or, when you read Colossians 3:12, say,

“ ... praying through Scripture is more than an interesting exercise. It deepens your experience with God’s Word in multiple ways ... ”

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

You can easily make Paul’s instruction to the church a prayer of your own,

“God, YOU have chosen ME to be holy and dearly loved. Help me clothe MYSELF with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.”

Even a story can be made a prayer! For instance, if you read in Genesis 12:1,

“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.’”

You could easily pray,

“Lord, you said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.’ Would you also lead me this day, God?”

THE POWER OF PRAYING SCRIPTURE

But praying through Scripture is more than an interesting exercise. It deepens your experience with God’s Word in multiple ways:

PRAYING SCRIPTURE BROADENS YOUR PRAYERS

When Christians hear “prayer requests,” they tend to think about prayers for sickness and surgery. And that’s fine, but God wants us to pray about so much more than Aunt Cindy’s upcoming procedure. When you pray Scripture, you break out of any rut you may have and start praying for the wealth of topics in His word—from prayers for God’s mission to prayers for God’s leaders, and the countless topics of prayer between.

PRAYING SCRIPTURE INCREASES YOUR FAITH

God’s Word is God’s will! And 1 John 5:14 reminds us, “if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.” So, when you repeat God’s word back to Him in prayer, you’ll find your boldness and faith to pray will also increase. After all, if God promises something,

why wouldn’t we ask for it in prayer?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE HELPS YOU FIND THE WORDS

Just like God’s Spirit intercedes in your prayers (Romans 8:26), so does God’s Word. When you’re at a loss for words, simply find a Scripture that speaks to the issue and then pray about it.

PRAYING SCRIPTURE HELPS YOU MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE

What we learn by heart guides our heart! It’s one thing to read God’s Word, to understand it, or to apply it to our lives. But when we pray the words of the Bible, we’re hiding it deeper in our heart (Psalm 119:11) and making it easier to recall later on.

YOUR TURN

The idea of praying through Scripture was my entire idea behind writing 25 Prayers to Christmas. The idea was to find 25 different prayers that could be prayed to prepare for the Christmas season using the words from Luke’s gospel account.

But you don’t need to wait until December to pray through Scripture. Simply go back to the most recent section of the Bible you read. Maybe it’s the section you heard at church last Sunday, or maybe it’s the verse you read this morning for your devotions. Whatever it is, read it again. But this time, rewrite it as a prayer. I think you’ll be surprised at how fun and how easy it can be to pray through Scripture.

I know so. I prayed Scripture for you that “*at that time you will be given what to say*” (Matthew 10:19). ■

Rev. Christopher K. Paavola is the Senior Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Battle Creek. He is also the author of several books on prayer, most recently 25 Prayers to Christmas, that helps readers pray through the Christmas story. He and his wife, Ashley, have five children through adoption and have been married and doing ministry together for 17 years.

Urban Ministry Tour

by Elisa L. Schulz



“God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does.” – Martin Luther

On Thursday, October 27, a group of 33 people met at Faith, Troy and boarded a bus. After introductions, some instructions, and a prayer, the group set off on a full-day tour of urban ministries in and around Detroit. The tour was idealized several years ago by Patti Jacques, Executive Director of **Gifts For All God's Children** (GFAGC), and has been taking place for 11 years, sometimes twice a year, with the exception of 2020/21 due to the pandemic.

This year's tour was organized by Jenny Jaroneski (Social Ministry Associate at Trinity, Utica) and led by Patti Jacques. It consisted of an introduction to several ministries, with the goal of opening people's eyes to existing needs and opportunities to serve. Not all of the ministries visited are Lutheran, but all of them have the goal of serving the *least of these*, showing them the love of Christ in concrete ways.

The bus utilized for the tour was from **The Power Company Kids Club**. Located in Pontiac, they do weekly home visits, Saturday Kids Club, Friday night “Plug,” leadership development, Project Christmas Joy, public school assemblies, Power in the Park, and feeding programs.

Similar to and partnering with The Power Company is the **Good News Gang** in Detroit. They invest in consistent one-on-one relationships, weekly home visits, and child sponsorship, and meet physical needs that hinder personal and spiritual growth, such as school supplies, coats, and food. They offer the following programs: summer school, after school, basketball, and creative arts.

Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries (DRMM) offers recovery housing and has 3 shelters in Detroit. One such shelter is the Genesis II House, which the group visited. They have 110 residents and usually receive 20–24 walk-ins who can spend the night inside but, due to lack of space, don't get a bed. They receive meals, the opportunity to shower, and new clothing items. Additional available services may include case management, mental healthcare, and substance abuse aftercare.

People of the Book Lutheran Outreach (POBLO) aims to share the Word of God and help Muslims and other immigrants and refugees meet their individual needs to better their life in the United States. They do that through refugee resettlement assistance, friendship and hospitality, ESL classes, and sewing classes.

Family of God, Detroit (FOG) strives to bring hope to the hopeless by showing the community the love and

compassion that our Savior Jesus Christ has for everyone. Every day except for Saturdays, FOG provides a hot meal which is prepared and served by groups of 5–10 people from different churches. They also host a meal and Bible study twice a week in two local parks and host a Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meeting every Friday night.

The Luke Clinic, housed inside Family of God, provides personalized prenatal and infant care to any mother who needs it, at no charge. They have incentives for moms to keep their appointments and provide additional services such as childcare, transportation to clinic, free pharmacy, baby clothes closet, classes, and food.

On the Rise Bakery is located in the Solanus Casey Center. Their bakers have recently been released from prison or completed a substance abuse treatment program. Purchase of their baked goods helps make possible the provision of supportive housing, training, counseling services, educational opportunities, and self-help programs.

Camp Restore Detroit (CRD) houses and feeds volunteers who work on various projects in the surrounding community. Relationships with the community are key to the ministry, and CRD partners with local families to improve their homes and living situations. They also tackle blight and help with community gardens.

Peace Lutheran Church in Detroit is a very small congregation, but a couple of members keep a food pantry and clothing closet going.

Trinity, Utica's Human Care Outreach and Missions operates a Sunday meal program, kids closet, build project team, food ministries, and a community health care clinic; during the holiday season they participate in meal basket giveaways, Christmas Toy Shop, and Salvation Army bell ringing. Additionally, Trinity hosts events such as the Family Feud fundraiser, Homeless Awareness Sleep-Out, MCREST Host Week, Fall Free Oil Change Partnership, and Warming Center collaboration.

Elli's House serves homeless and runaway women involved in human trafficking in the city of Detroit. Its mission is to abolish sex trafficking in Detroit through building relationships, offering safe shelter, and providing education. They have a two-year residential shelter program, a middle school mentoring program, and provide food, hygiene kits, and clothing to survivors

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JANUARY 2023

How CEF helped Build His Kingdom in 2022

Spotlight readers know that CEF helps congregations and ministries through loans, investments, grants, and services. We wanted to show some pictures of the Kingdom work that CEF has engaged in 2022 and also a few shots of the CEF Fall Conference.



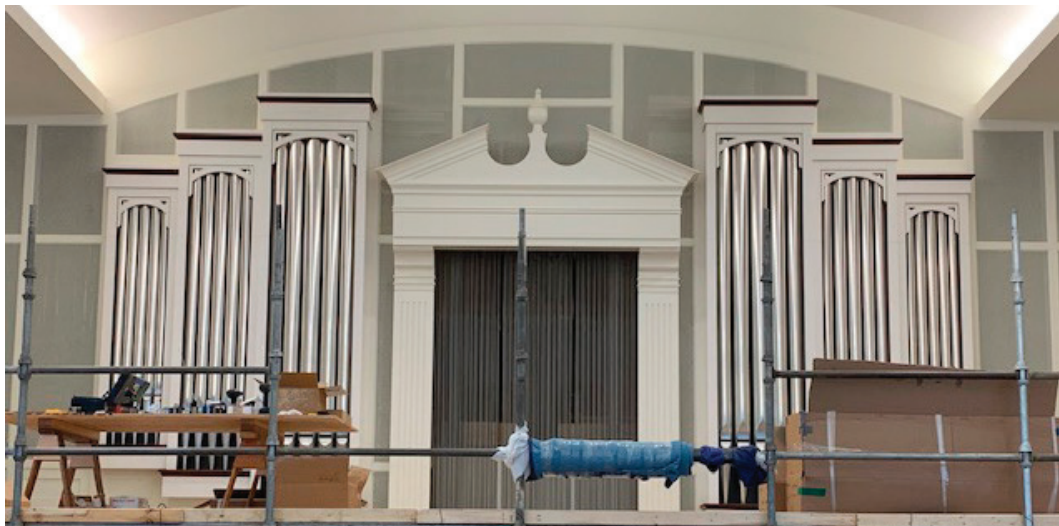
Saginaw – Investment Rebate

CEF's Director of Congregational Services Bill Burmeister presents an Investment Rebate check to Rev. Mark Loest. Immanuel received a rebate of over \$7000 because its members and the church invest at CEF!



Midland – New Building Loan

It may not look like much in this picture, but this will be the future home of The Bridge in Midland. A ministry connected to Messiah Lutheran Church, this grocery store charges 5 cents above cost, helping numerous people make ends meet in the community. CEF helped with the purchase of the building.



Birmingham - Construction Loan

The new organ at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Birmingham was installed this summer. Because of a CEF loan, this instrument will play praises to the Lord for years to come!



Rowan & Martin?

CEO Jim Saalfeld and VP - Strategy & Marketing Andy Sohn were the hosts of Friday evening's entertainment at the CEF Fall Conference in September.



Worship & Bible Study Leader

Rev. Brad Hubbard of St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth was the Fall Conference Chaplain.



CEF Attendees Sporting their Spirit!

Some of the attendees of the Fall Conference sporting their CEF ball caps. Baseball helped illustrate the conference theme of Eternal Glory, including speakers from college and professional baseball!

Have a blessed 2023!



Church Extension Fund

Church Extension Fund

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The Lutheran World Relief Ingathering, *A Community Effort*

by Hannah M. MacAfee

For the past seventy-seven years, the Lutheran World Relief (LWR) has been collecting goods and resources to send to those in need around the world. For the last nearly twenty-two years, Pat Schuknecht has been the coordinator between the Ingathering sites for the Michigan District. This year, I started the process of taking on that coordinator leadership role from her as she prepared to retire.

This was also my first time working at an LWR Ingathering.

In 2021, the LWR collected 122,400 quilt kits alone. That's not including the school, personal care, and baby care kits that were also collected, each of which separately accounted for over 30,000 kits. The kits are shipped all over the world to countries in South America, Africa, and Europe to help those in need. Especially poignant to our times right now, Ukraine is included in our list of countries receiving help from the LWR.

With the exception of Pat Schuknecht, I had only been in contact with most of the site leaders through email. I wasn't sure how best to present myself, as the serious leader or the new person just ready to lend my hand and be prepared for the number of high schoolers who would be helping the days of the main loading. Now that the event is done, I know that none of those concerns mattered.

I went to two of the three main ingatherings (churches collect at smaller sites throughout the cities of Michigan and then those collections are brought to one of the three main sites on the assigned day) and both days were cold, windy, and rainy, but the high schoolers there were diligent and thoughtful. They carefully took boxes from pickups, vans,

and trailers, and packed them as well as they could into the large semi-trucks that stretched across their high school parking lots. Between the packing, they took well-earned breaks to be normal high schoolers as they drank cider, ate some doughnuts, and at one particular site, chased geese (only for a few minutes and no geese were harmed).

Throughout it all both students and adult volunteers joked, laughed, and shivered as they lifted box after box. It was also a joy to talk to those coming in from the churches dropping off the boxes, with many praising their congregations' "quilt ladies." As someone who has had to help lug some of these thick quilt boxes into a truck, I can confirm these quilt ladies are doing a tremendous job.

Eventually the loadings came to an end and, as I went home marveling at all the kits that would simply become part of the larger number in the LWR's stats for next year's mailing, I realized something: the LWR ingathering is more than a group effort; it's a *community* effort of Christians seeing the wrong in the world and doing everything they can for their neighbor even though they'll very likely never meet the student benefiting from the school kit or the refugee woman washing her face with supplies from a personal care kit. The Michigan District is just one of many working to make the LWR Vision a reality: "A healthy world forever flourishing in dignity and justice." ■

Hannah M. MacAfee serves as the Administrative Assistant Congregation Mission and Ministries / Receptionist and the Lutheran World Relief Coordinator for the Michigan District.

Despair on Detroit's Eastside

by Jeffrey T. Heisner



Photos by Jeff Heisner/Michigan District, LCMS

Tina rattles off a list of friends she's lost over the past few weeks. *"Nicole, Trap, Octavia, the one that got hit on Rochelle and Chalmers at 7:30 in the morning, Stacy ... Ghost."*

It's been difficult for the community that Deb Ellinger and Elli's House serve. Recently, several people had either been shot, murdered, or died of other causes. Violence and death continue to impact a community that has been hurting for years. The Elli's House white van is still making rounds throughout Detroit's Eastside bringing food, hygiene packets, and clothes, but Ellinger and the crew are also trying to find a way to bring comfort and God's grace to this area.

Elli's House works to connect women with the help they need to leave the world of human trafficking. It's a task that is not easy. Volunteers hand out food, leggings, and blankets to the women they encounter who are in forced prostitution. Ellinger prays with many of the women on the streets and shares God's blessings.

"There's a lot of stress and tension out here," Ellinger said. *"We lost a girl to a shooting last Tuesday at the hotel and two weeks before that one of our girls got hit by a car and the car took off. And then one of the residents we talk to, a guy, was also shot last month, so in the last four weeks we've lost 3 people we really care about."*

As difficult as it has been recently, the outreach becomes even more challenging as winter hits.

"There's a lot of anxiety surrounding where they're going to sleep and if they're going to be warm enough," Ellinger said. *"So, there's some tension."*

To help these women through the ministry of Elli's House, you can purchase items directly from an Amazon Wish List (michigandistrict.org/joinaministry) or make a donation at ellishouse313.org. To learn how you can volunteer with Elli's House or other ministries, visit michigandistrict.org/joinaministry. ■

Jeffrey T. Heisner is the video journalist and digital media director for the Michigan District, LCMS.

LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

LHM Resources for Congregations

Is your congregation looking for a way to share the mission of Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) with its members? LHM has resources to help church leaders.

LHM SUNDAY

The theme for the 2023 Lutheran Hour Ministries Sunday is *Discover LHM*. No specific Sunday is being designated statewide or nationwide; congregations are invited to choose a Sunday that works for them. This creates an opportunity to come together and celebrate the impact that the Lord makes in people's lives every single day.

By promoting LHM in your congregation, church members encounter the life-changing nature of the Lord's work and learn how they can be a part of its mission of Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church.

You can find information and promotional materials at lhm.org/lhmsunday. The page includes bulletin announcements and inserts, posters, PowerPoint slides, and a video.

OTHER RESOURCES

Want to purchase replacements for your Project Connect rack? Or buy the latest product bundle? Go to shoplhm.org!

You can always find stories and interesting information on the impact LHM is making around the world. Look for the stories at lhm.org/ourlhm.

If you would like someone to make a LHM presentation at your church, contact LLL district president Chuck Bennett at imseebie@gmail.com.



Michigan District, LCMS presents
2023 Theological Conference
February 4, 2023 | Our Savior, Lansing, Mich.
A conference for laity and church workers

**General \$25
Student \$15**

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).

Keynote Speakers:
Rev. Dr. Jeffrey J. Kloha
Rev. Dr. Mark R. Hoehner
Dr. Thad A. Polk
Rev. David A. Davis - Moderator

michigandistrict.org/theological23

Monroe Circuit Supports Selah's Center of Hope with Funds from LCMS Life Ministry Grant

Selah's Center of Hope (SCoH) is honored to be the recipient of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Life Ministry Matching Grant. The following LCMS Monroe Circuit congregations raised a combined total of nearly \$35,000 towards this grant with the LCMS matching \$17,500: Immanuel, East Ida; St. John's, Waltz; Trinity, Monroe; Grace, Monroe; Holy Ghost, Monroe, and Lutherans for Life of Michigan. SCoH is grateful for the LCMS and the members of these churches.

These funds are vital to SCoH's mission of providing holistic Christian care for their maternity home residents who have chosen life for their children. For more information about Selah's Center of Hope, please visit selahs.org or call 734.244.5123.

The people of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

love children and families, and they demonstrate this love through many acts of mercy in their communities. To support these local pro-life efforts, the LCMS has offered \$1 million in matching grants. This program is specifically aimed at providing care for those facing beginning-of-life challenges. The theme for the Million Dollar Life Match is from 1 John 3: "*Christ laid down His life for us. We love in deed and truth.*"



Photo courtesy of Trinity, Monroe

District Youth Gatherings

This summer marks the much-anticipated Senior High Youth Gathering on Mackinac Island, since the 2020 gathering had to be postponed because of the pandemic. On June 25–28, High School students will gather under the theme "Anchored in Hope." Communities, schools, and churches are filled with kids who are searching for HOPE and desperately craving for an anchor in this anxiety-stricken culture. The gathering theme is based on Romans 5:1–8. Guest speakers and entertainers, including GRAMMY® nominated and Stellar Award-winning hip-hop artist FLAME, will encourage and challenge students to grow in their faith so that, when faced with difficulties, they will persevere and develop the character that produces HOPE in their sure anchor, Jesus Christ. Pre-registration runs through February 15, 2023. More information can be found at michigandistrict.org/srhigh23.



In Frankenmuth, June 2–4, middle school students will gather under the theme "Enough." Common thoughts like "I'm not fast enough;" "I'm not smart enough;" "I'm not pretty enough;" "I'm not good enough" attack us at many stages of life, but the sad fact is *that's correct!* Students will grow in the faith and learn that, as sinful creatures, they'll never be fast enough to keep up with all the demands of life; they'll never be smart enough to solve all the world's problems or pretty enough to please everybody; they'll



never be good enough to save themselves or anyone else. But, through faith, they have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer *they* who live, but *Christ* who lives in them. *He* is all they need. *He* is everything they cannot be and so much more. *He* is enough! Pre-registration opens in early January. For more information, visit michigandistrict.org/jrhigh23.

The costs of these gatherings are kept as low as possible through sponsorship organizations and gracious donors, as well as through the Michigan District budget. For these generous gifts, we say "Thank you!"

Connect your Students to a Spiritual Home While They are at College

Do you have children or grandchildren attending college in the state of Michigan? There is a network of campus ministry pastors throughout the state who want to help your college students find a spiritual community. Connect the Michigan District Campus Ministry with your students and we'll plug them into one of our active campus ministries or a local congregation.

Don't see your school's name on the list? That's okay! No matter where you go to school in Michigan, we have nearby university campus ministries and a network of pastors at local congregations who are eager to bring your students into a caring community while they are away from home.

A list of schools is available at michigandistrict.org/campusconnect. Complete the form on that webpage and your student will be contacted directly.

All Things Bright and Beautiful – A Digital Photography Exhibit by Elisa Schulz

The artwork of the Michigan District's own photographer, Elisa Schulz, is on display at the Kreft Art Gallery at Concordia University Ann Arbor.

Known around the District for her photography of events and ministries, Elisa also loves to capture the beauty of God's creation and the wonders of human ingenuity, as well as the extraordinary details of everyday life. Her website is elisaschulzphotography.com.

The exhibit's title, *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, comes from the hymn that states: "All things bright and beautiful, / all creatures great and small, / all things wise and wonderful, / the Lord God made them all." The exhibit is focused on nature and its ultimate goal is to open the viewer's eyes to the artistry of God's creation.

All Things Bright and Beautiful will be on display through February 24. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday from noon to 4 p.m.

Photos courtesy of Elisa Schulz Photography



A Day with Concordia Worship Arts

Concordia University Ann Arbor is hosting a Worship Arts Day for high school students on February 3–4, 2023. This immersive experience will give interested high school students the opportunity to learn and apply skills in contemporary worship on their instrument and/or as vocalists. Breakout sessions will include specific instruction on voice, guitar, keyboard, and percussion, as well as songwriting and creative use of hymns. Devotional time will include a "worship-in-the-round" experience for the participants, and a final worship service for friends and family, where the students will showcase what they have learned alongside CUAA Worship Arts students.

High School seniors attending Worship Arts Day in February who are also interested in auditioning for CUAA Music Scholarships will have the opportunity to audition while on campus.

Space is limited for this event, and registrations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration cost is free and includes all meals, overnight lodging, and a t-shirt. Register at cuaa.edu/musicday.

For more information, please contact Director of Church Music Dr. John Boonenberg at john.boonenberg@cuaa.edu.

BY GOD'S GRACE, THE COMMON
IS TRANSFORMED INTO THE
REMARKABLE

Steadfast in that gift, Concordia University
sees the uncommon potential of each student.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN & ANN ARBOR

Just a Little Bit Longer

continued from page 3

"This was our first year sending our son to overnight camp, so we had a number of questions. The staff was so responsive and helpful in answering our questions. They put our minds at ease both before camp started and during his week at camp. He had a fantastic week—so much so that he wanted to stay longer! Thanks for all you did for all the kids this summer and for being there to support us first-timer parents. He is already talking about next summer!" (Mom of 9-year-old)

"My daughter had a great time again this year. She came home full of joy, more centered/focused and more at peace. I attended Camp Concordia when I was her age (about 35 years ago); it's so special that we have this awesome shared experience. I am truly grateful for Camp Concordia and the amazing work you all do there—it's such a blessing. THANK YOU!!!" (Mom of 13-year-old)

I like surprises. Well, most of them. And these notes from staff and camper parents are always a delightful surprise that God sets before me each year. Surprises I would also like to have just a little bit longer.

Applications are open for 22 total summer ministry staff positions. Go immediately to campconcordia.org/



Photo courtesy of Camp Concordia

employment. You will be contacted for an interview after application is received. ■

Dr. Craig S. Oldenburg has been involved full-time in Lutheran outdoors ministry since 1987. He has also served as a teacher, youth minister, and college professor. He has served as Camp Concordia's Director since 2014.

Urban Ministry Tour

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weekly through street outreach.

Patti Jacques sums up the event: *"What an incredible day! (...) I always come back from these urban tours more motivated to use what days the Lord has given me to show His compassion and make a difference in the lives of those who have so little."*

Organizer Jenny Jaronesky said, *"I feel incredibly blessed to have felt God moving hearts and stirring minds on ways that our organizations and churches can work together. As the body of Christ, we can help benefit those in our nearby communities who are in great need. (...) It was an amazing group to be a part of!"*

To learn more about our District-supported ministries or to volunteer, visit: michigandistrict.org/joinaministry. ■



Photo by Elisa Schulz/Michigan District, LCMS

Your Investment Builds Churches

When you invest with Church Extension Fund your investment helps to renovate and build churches and schools, just like St. John, Fraser (pictured). Pastor Smith of St. John says about their recent renovation, "CEF is very supportive of the work. They don't simply supply the money, they have worked with our staff for years to make it all come together."



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.

Calls and Roster Update

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. Michael Hansen (Wixom, MI) to Immanuel, Oceanside, CA

Transferred Out of District

Rev. Phillip DeVries (Saginaw, MI) to SELC District

Rev. Michael Hansen (Wixom, MI) to Pacific Southwest District

Called Home

Rev. George Brinley

Rev. Douglas Janetzke

COMMISSIONED

Calls Accepted

Coomer, Hannah (Concordia, Ann Arbor) to St. John's, Grand Haven

Prisby, Tyler (Cq. Concordia, Ann Arbor) to LHSA, Rochester Hills (Northwest)

Change of Status

Bauer, Todd (St. John, Rochester) to Candidate

Brandt, Alayna (Our Savior, Grand Rapids) to Candidate

Hueseman, James (Holy Cross, Jenison) to Candidate

Nuffer, Patricia (Hands of Mercy, Williamsburg) to Emeritus

Resigned From the Roster

Backus, Traci

Removed From the Roster

Rahn, Kalera

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

JANUARY 2023

- 1 New Year's Day
- 2 DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 6 Epiphany
- 13–14 Quest Winter Gathering
Northwood University, Midland
- 16–17 Board of Directors
Redeemer, Jackson
- 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

- 2–3 DCE/DFL/Deaconess/Worship Arts Conference
St. Paul, Hamburg
- 4–5 State Basketball Tournament
CUAA/St. Paul, Ann Arbor
- 14 Board of Directors
Location TBD

APRIL 2023

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

MAY 2023

- 1 North and East Pastors Conference
DoubleTree, Bay City
- 9–10 South and East Pastors Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 10–11 Circuit Visitors Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 15–16 West Pastors Conference
Inn at Harbor Shores, St. Joseph
- 23 Board of Directors
Location TBD
- 24–25 Intentional Interim Ministry Conference
Michindoh, Hillsdale
- 29 Memorial Day
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED

