

April 2023

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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

Grace and Grit*

by Rev. David A. Davis

As we bask in the glow of the Resurrection, we celebrate the grace of God. The Father has reconciled us to Himself through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The Holy Spirit has brought us into a faith relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Grace. Pure. Complete. All by God.
But to accomplish this for us you could

continued on page 2

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Table of Contents

1	Healthy Workers
3	Great Commission
6	Great Compassion
8	Church Extension Fund
10	LLL
11	News & Events
14	Special Recognition
16	Calls and Roster Update
16	Calendar of Events

continued from page 1

say it took “grit” on God’s part. He gave His promise and kept it. He kept it when His people time and time again turned away. He kept it when His people had dull ears and hardened hearts. He kept it when His patience was tried and His people were rebellious.

Grit—as in courage, resolve, strength of character—certainly describes Jesus.

What can we say about Jesus except that His ministry was a display of gritty grace? It was a fulfillment of Isaiah 50:7: *“Therefore I have set my face like a flint.”* When His disciples tried to dissuade Him from Jerusalem, He walked forward. When He faced the trials before the Jewish leaders, Herod, and Pilate, He remained “flint faced,” determined to go the way of the cross. I cannot imagine the horror—and your imagination can’t be any better—of the cross. Add to that the agony of the judgment of the Father for the sins of you and the rest of the world. Horror transcended by agony.

Grit indeed. Grit in Him that led to grace for us. Easter celebrates grace born from grit.

But now as we, the Church, the people of God, live in the grace of God, we are called to work the work of the Gospel, the work of the Kingdom. God has committed to us the message of reconciliation as His ambassadors for the world.

What does it take to be ambassadors for this lost and hurting world? What does it take to share the Gospel of grace to a world in rebellion? What does it take to be aliens and strangers in this lost world?

Grit.

After Paul’s eloquent explanation of God’s grace in Christ and all that comes from the victory of the resurrection, he calls Christians to a life of grit: *“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding*

in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58). There are any number of similar calls for Christians to work hard, endure, suffer, and sacrifice as we follow Jesus by reaching out to the world with the Gospel.

There are challenges to the Church these days (not sure when that wasn’t the case). Opposition abounds. Our privileged place in the culture has evaporated. Interest and activity in congregational life flags. Numbers shrink. Church doors close.

God grant to us grit.

This is no time to wring our hands. This is no time to hang our heads. This is no time to shrink back and be destroyed (Hebrews 10:39). This is no time simply to insulate ourselves from the world.

God grant us grit.

Let’s redouble our effort to share

continued on page 15





Branching Out and Connecting With Your Community

The following is a summary of an interview with Peter Prochnow, the Local and Global Worship Arts and Community Engagement Director for the Michigan District, LCMS. You can listen to the full interview at michigandistrict.org/podcast.

Prochnow grew up in the LCMS, the son and grandson of Lutheran school teachers/principals. His father and grandfather were also church music directors, which allowed him to grow up in a musical environment. Peter served at Zion, Kalamazoo as Minister of Music Outreach and at St. Luke's, Oviedo, Fla. as Director of Worship arts. He also taught at Concordia University Ann Arbor and Concordia University Nebraska, Seward. He says he grew up wondering whether *"there might be some other things we could do in our worship that are in our community, specifically talking about the messengers* that are around us. And so, I started working in the early 90's on a service downtown Orlando, Fla., with jazz and reggae and Latin messengers, just taking public domain hymns and doing some format changes. And that went really well for many years, until that community or that environment changed to other messengers."*

What does the Local and Global Worship Arts and Community Engagement Director do? Prochnow answers: *"I'm here to help enhance worship and assist in whatever is needed at the local church."* When he visits a church, the first thing he does is ask whether the congregation knows its neighbors and the businesses around them: *"God so loved the world, not just certain sections of the community, so how do we get out there? That will really align with how we worship and the messengers that are there, which could be anything—from classical to bluegrass to jazz or even a mix."*

When a church needs help with finding musicians, Prochnow tries to connect them with what's already in the community: *"If you find a musician or an artist that's willing to work, honestly, it doesn't have to be a Christian at first. It can be somebody that you're starting to connect with."* He also helps with resources like media, learning a new style, online worship, and sound. If he can't personally help, he has connections to other resources within the District or even outside.

Another aspect of Prochnow's job is *The Hymnal*

Project, a resource that takes hymns that are in the public domain and sets them in a different style. The project offers lead sheets and music videos that can assist in worship. This resource was particularly useful during the COVID-19 lockdown, when many churches started livestreaming. Churches around the world (30 countries so far) have been utilizing this free resource since 2020 as well.

The Hymnal Project continues to develop, and Prochnow says they are starting to work with more of the District's worship leaders and musicians and adding many styles. This resource can be accessed by visiting thehymnalproject.com.

Besides the District job, Prochnow is part of the *Living Water* project, a recording of the New Testament in song. This resource is produced by Lutheran Bible Translators (you can learn more about it at michigandistrict.org/healthy-workers/living-water/). Because they started working on this project while Prochnow was serving at a church in Florida, he was able to enlist top Disney singers, as well as Khristian Dentley (from *Take Six*). Prochnow creates music that resembles a film score, and the singers sing each chapter of the New Testament, word for word. This project continues to develop, with exciting ideas coming up, according to Prochnow. This new way to experience Scripture is also free. You can access it at lbt.org/livingwater.

When a congregation requests Prochnow's help, he will come visit and get to know them, asking what their worship needs are and helping them network with local resources. To get a hold of Prochnow, send an email to peter.prochnow@michigandistrict.org or call him at 734.665.3791. Prochnow says once you contact him, he will get out to your church as soon as he can to meet with you and, if you have some needs that the District can help with, he would be glad to visit regularly and make that happen. ■

*Prochnow defines messengers as sound, visuals, and styles that carry a message. *"The messengers in the communities where we are called to serve are a gift from God,"* he says.

Wrestling with Change at the **Flint Mission Network**

by Jeffrey T. Heisner



“We must go, despite the violence, despite the fear and anxiety. There is work to be done in these communities.”

Rev. Christian Jones is not afraid to throw his hat in the ring. He did so in taking the call to Franklin Avenue Mission in Flint, and he has grown it into the Flint Mission Network, which includes Franklin Avenue Mission and York Avenue Mission, along with partner ministries Mercy House and The Luke Clinic.

To grow it even more, Rev. Jones and Flint Mission Network are changing some of their ministry operations. In a recent Michigan District Innovative Missional Ministry podcast (michigandistrict.org/podcast), Jones talked about taking Jesus to the streets, and that’s exactly what he plans to do: take kids’ ministry to the housing projects where the families live. “Because of shifts in the way that kids are going to school, a lot of them are not getting home until later; we’re not having as much engagement on campus,” said Jones. “So our goal, instead of doing ministry here, as we once did, is to flip the model around. Rather than busing kids to the church, how about we bus the church to the kids?”

It is a model that Jones saw at work while he was in seminary in St. Louis. “Let’s go to them rather than expecting they just come to us,” said Jones.

The plans are being put in place right now, and Rev. Jones is excited to see how things progress. “We must go,

despite the violence, despite the fear and anxiety,” said Jones. “There is work to be done in these communities.”

There are other changes happening at the Flint Mission Network. They welcomed new board members, including a new Chairman, Brian Boughman. Former Chairman Todd Fisher will now become the Treasurer. Other additions to the board are Franklin Avenue native Shanay Payton and York Avenue Mission’s Donna Fair, who is a social worker.

Jones has continually found different ways to get the word out about the ministry to the community of Flint. The latest is no exception. Jones occasionally takes off the collar and puts on the striped shirt to referee for Pure Pro Wrestling (pureprowrestling.net). One thing led to another, and the Flint Mission Network has partnered with the wrestling association for an event on March 18 at the Flint Iceland Arenas. The event featured a Grudge Match with El Luterano in the War to Settle the Score against Father Time. Pure Pro Wrestling pledged a portion of the proceeds to Flint Mission Network.

To volunteer or find out more about the Flint Mission Network, go to flintmissionnetwork.org.

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



Photos courtesy of Flint Mission Network

Two Things Parents Can Focus on to Support Their College Student When Tragedy Strikes

by John R. Rathje

I woke up on Valentine's Day shocked by the news of what had happened the night before—the opposite of celebrating the joy of human love. It hit my heart. May God have mercy on all involved, heal those impacted with His love, and work His resurrection power that overcame death and the grave to stop the violence on our campuses. At Concordia University Ann Arbor, we are heartbroken for the Spartan community and all who have been affected by the act of violence and murder. We are praying to God for healing as the MSU community and families navigate forward (Romans 12:15).

Initially, maybe like you, I'm sad that my fellow humans have been hurt. I'm afraid for schools everywhere that violence might continue. I'm angry that, somehow, we can't seem to stop such awful events.

When trouble like this happens, I encourage you as a parent to consider focusing on two things:

1. YOU

Take some time with God for YOUR wellbeing. Talk with God about how YOU are doing with this situation, and be honest. He loves to hear it. He will help you manage YOUR emotions so you can be in a healthy place to be available for your student (bashing or blaming others likely won't help them in this time). Spend time with Him in His Word, like reading Psalm 27, 46, or 67 to be reminded of His love and goodness in the face of evil. God has promised that His Spirit will work through His Word to enable you to trust Him to do such things as: love your student at all times (Jeremiah 31:3); hold them through everything in their life (John 10:27–28); work in their life even through this (Luke 13:1–5). The point is to immerse YOURSELF in God's love for you. He

proved it on the cross and Jesus's resurrection. That doesn't change, no matter what our experiences may be. Nothing in this world can change His love for you, for your student, for everyone (Philippians 4:5b–7).

As a dad of four children who have all been through various struggles in college, I can relate to feeling anxious and afraid when such calamity hits, especially when they are far from home—even if the troubles didn't happen on their campus. As the Dean of Students at Concordia University Ann Arbor and an LCMS ordained clergyman, I have the privilege of walking with students and their families every day. I've noticed that some seem healthier than others. One key ingredient is the student experiencing God's love in Christ Jesus through the parent's reactions and support. So again, remember that your love for your student starts with YOU being immersed in God's love for them.

2. YOUR CHILD

Be intentional with your student. Such events can be hard on college students, no matter what school they attend. Check in to make sure they feel safe and if they have any questions. Safety is a basic human need that God understands (John 16:33). If it's okay for your family situation, consider having them come home for a little while if needed, to feel safe. However, it's important to encourage them to work out how THEY can manage going back to campus safely. Communication is key: acknowledge that this is hard; ask them open-ended questions about how they're doing; be honest about your own emotions; and have an open ear. Try to keep your focus on supporting them to walk in healthy ways. That

continued on page 15



“ ... continue to *pray* for them that they will *lean* into Jesus, and do point them by your words and actions to the One who is able to *hold them* through anything they face in this life. ”

APRIL 2023

Announcing The Ministry Worker Wellness Grant

Many years ago, CEF sought to bless the churches, schools and other ministries of the Michigan District through the formation of our Grants Program. Because the Lord has blessed CEF with many successful years in helping to Build the Kingdom, CEF began sharing its success with others. The CEF Grant Program to date has distributed over \$16 Million dollars! The Spotlight sat down with Andy Sohn, Vice President – Strategy & Marketing to learn more about CEF’s latest grant program.

Tell us about the new Grant:

The Ministry Worker Wellness Grant is designed to help ministry workers focus on their own wellbeing. Over the past 3 years, significant and sustained stress has been experienced by almost everyone, but in particular, those that work in the mission field, who are so used to giving of themselves to help fulfill Christ’s mission. CEF has declared 2023 the Year of Worker Wellness. One component is this grant. The goal of the Ministry Worker Wellness Grant is to provide funds to eligible ministries to give their workers a chance to rest, renew, and recharge.

How will the grant accomplish that goal?

Instead of us telling a ministry how they have to spend their grant dollars, we want to see their creativity shine! It is CEF’s goal in providing this grant to encourage ministry workers within the Michigan District to find ways to look after their own wellbeing!

How much is the grant?

The grant is up to \$2500 to hold a “Wellness Event”.

What is a “Wellness Event”?

The word “wellness” can mean many different things to people. If a church wants to grant a short-term sabbatical to their pastor, the grant funds can be used to cover the cost of pulpit supply. If a school



Ministry Worker Wellness Grant

Helping care for your wellbeing

A woman is sitting on the floor reading a book to two young children. They are all smiling and looking at the book. The setting is indoors, possibly a living room or a library.

\$2500 GRANTS AVAILABLE!

Church Extension Fund | Mighty Fortress FOUNDATION



would like to hold a staff event that can help build relationships or break down barriers, they could use the funds from this grant. These events can run the gamut from retreats to healthy cooking demonstrations to paint parties!

Wow, that seems great! Is there anything else to know about the grant?

Yes! This is not just a CEF Grant, it is being co-sponsored by the Mighty Fortress Foundation.

This is a valuable and relatively new ministry partner to CEF, and their board of directors wanted to be a part of efforts to help our ministry workers. Also of note, there are three special bonus grants of \$10,000 that will be awarded to the ministries who demonstrate the greatest impact and are the most creative - so get creative!

Where can I learn more about the Ministry Worker Wellness Grant?

You can visit the website of CEF

(mi-cef.org/about/grants) or Mighty Fortress Foundation (mightyfortressfoundation.org). You will be able to find the Terms and Conditions on which the grant will be reviewed, as well as download an application. The grant runs through the end of 2023 and the special grants will be awarded toward the spring of 2024. Contact Kris at CEF at 800-242-3944 with any questions.

We hope to see your application!



"Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security."

Jeremiah 33:6



Church Extension Fund

3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-3098

www.mi-cef.org ■ Offices: 800-242-3944

A New Day With Jesus

In keeping with its “Never on Sunday” tradition followed since 1893, the 134th Tournament of Roses Parade was held on Monday, January 2, 2023, in Pasadena, California, under the theme of “Turning the Corner.” The iconic annual parade featured marching bands from throughout the United States, high-stepping equestrian units, and dozens of majestic floral floats.

Lutheran Hour Ministries participated for the 72nd time with a float entry titled “A New Day with Jesus,” the only Christian float in the parade. In addition to fulfilling its mission of providing a Gospel witness to viewers everywhere, from along the parade route to televisions, computers, and mobile devices worldwide, this year’s float was honored by parade organizers with the prestigious Director Award. This award recognizes the most outstanding artistic design and use of floral and non-floral materials. The LHM float was chosen for its stained-glass windows (on the church and back of the float), the lambs on the front of the float, and the praying hands depicted on the long sides of the float.

The LHM float, as well as seven others, was decorated by around 4,000 Petal Pushers volunteers who travel from all over the country to gather in Pasadena each December. These volunteers spent eight-hour shifts attaching thousands of roses, carnations, lilies, mums, and other flowers, as well as natural materials such as seeds, coffee beans, and leaves, to create the majestic beauty and splendor of the floral floats. Working on a variety of floats allows volunteers to work side by side with people from diverse backgrounds, believers and non-believers alike, offering an opportunity to make new friends, network, and share expressions of the faith that gives true meaning



to the experience.

The LHM float is a self-funded project of the Lutheran Hour Ministries Float Committee and the Southern California District of the International Lutheran Laymen’s League. The float is not included in LHM’s operating budget. Lutheran Hour Ministries is humbled with overwhelming gratitude for the thousands of people who came together to share Jesus on an immense scale. We are grateful for the ongoing leadership of Dick and Lynn Gast, the members of the Southern California District of the Lutheran Laymen’s League and the Lutheran Hour Ministries Float Committee, the painstaking volunteer efforts of the Petal Pushers, and everyone who supports this endeavor through financial support and prayers.

LCMS Michigan District Lutherans are encouraged to become involved in the float. For more information, visit petalpushers.org. You can also see additional float and decorating photos on this website, at lhm.org, and on the LHM Facebook page.



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

2023 John E. Herrmann Award Application

The John E. Herrmann Award was established to recognize faithful stewards in the Michigan District, and to encourage others to greater stewardship within their home congregations. It is named after one of our Synod's most influential men in the area of stewardship.

The 2023 award will be given to one of our Lutheran schools or early childhood centers which demonstrates the stewardship principles as developed by the Michigan District Stewardship Committee for the spring/fall of 2023. To be eligible for the award, the school or early childhood center will participate in the *God's Children are God's Disciples* program developed by the Committee in 2021. The award will be determined through a percentage of students participating in the program both within the school and the community at large. The award-winning school will receive a plaque commemorating the award and have its name on the



John E. Herrmann Award plaque in the Michigan District Office. In addition, the school or early childhood center will receive a \$1,000 ministry grant.

The deadline to apply is October 31, 2023. For more information and eligibility requirements and to submit your school, visit michigandistrict.org/stewardship.

Michigan District Board of Directors Listening Event – Metro West Region

The Michigan District Board of Directors is hosting a Listening Event for the Metro West Region on Monday, May 22, at St. Paul, Hamburg (Whitmore Lake). Pastors, church workers, church leaders, and laity are all welcome to attend. The Board seeks input in the following areas:

- What should the Board know about ministry in this region?
- What unmet needs do the congregations have?
- What mission opportunities exist in the region?

The findings from this event will aid the Board of Directors in its responsibilities towards strategic direction of the District. Listening events will also take place in the Metro East and West Regions. Stay tuned for dates and locations.

Faithful in All Seasons

The Girls of Grace is excited to host its 17th Annual worship concert in the St. Lorenz Worship and Event Center in Frankenmuth. Through the artistry of interpretive dance, drama, media, presentations, vocalists, personal testimonies, and live art, "Faithful in all Seasons" will come alive on the stage for three identical performances. Tickets are on sale for Saturday, April 15 at 1 and 5 p.m. and Sunday, April 16 at 3 p.m. General admission tickets are \$10/adults and \$5/children under 10. To purchase tickets, visit stlorenz.churchcenter.com/registrations/events.

The Journey Home Bible Study

The Journey Home, provided by Lutheran Hour Ministries, is a 12-part Bible study. Since its release, it has had a profound impact on many lives as people read Jesus' words in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which includes his longsuffering father and his not-so-happy brother. *The Journey Home* Bible study is especially relevant for these organizations:

- Drug and Alcohol rehabilitation centers
- Correctional Facilities
- Juvenile Detention Centers

Whether you purchase a single copy or several, Lutheran Hour Ministries can mail these directly to the facility of your choice or to a particular inmate when all the necessary information is provided. The Bible study is free to chaplains by sending an email to suzie.sallee@lhm.org or calling 314.317.4214. To purchase the Bible study or find suggestions to ship to an inmate or a quantity to a facility, visit lhm.org/journeyhome.

Revive Fest Tickets Discount Code

Looking for something AWESOME to do this summer with the family? Get your tickets for REVIVE FEST on July 21–22, featuring Rend Collective, We Are Messengers, Sanctus Real, Sidewalk Prophets, and more! This is a great opportunity for families and youth groups. Primitive camping is available. Save 10% on tickets using promo code MILCMS. To purchase tickets, visit myrevivefest.com.

St. Paul's Restoration Connects with the Community

by Mary Craaybeak



On Sunday, Feb. 26, 2023, St. Paul's, Centreville celebrated a complete restoration of its lower-level facilities. A congregational potluck dinner was enjoyed in the newly refurbished Fellowship Hall, after which Pastor Roger L. Sassaman led a service of dedication and prayer.

Brothers Brad and Bill Balk were recognized for the management of all logistics associated with scheduling of contractors and their own tireless, sacrificial service. They were presented certificates of appreciation by Mark P.

Trowbridge, congregation president.

Although the St. Paul's congregation, like others, has in recent years experienced challenges, members have clung to scriptural promises such as Psalm 46:1—*"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."* The former parsonage was sold to an established early learning center. Now the church shares its refurbished driveway/parking lot to facilitate pickups/drop-offs of ELC parents, staff, and buses.

An ongoing lower-level moisture issue was resolved with installation of long-extension roof gutters and re-engineering of other means of improved drainage. The entire Fellowship Hall was painted an attractive tri-color combination, and classrooms and restrooms also were repainted.

All lower-level floors, including the entire kitchen, were sealed with an easy-to-maintain polymer surface. A number of other accoutrements were improved and/or restored. Some work was accomplished with the assistance of residents of Twin County Community Probation Center, who were happy for the opportunity to earn more hours of community service. Several of those who helped were recognized guests at the dedication.

All of this was accomplished in time for the congregation's annual collaboration with the Three Rivers American Legion Post #454 to assemble more than 50 Easter baskets containing hygiene and personal

care items for area military veterans, a project supported by a Thrivent Action Team.

An Easter egg hunt was held for church families as well as children and families of the early learning center, St. Clare Catholic Mission, and Right to Life of St. Joseph County. A shower will take place on Sunday, April 30 to support clients and babies of Pregnancy Helpline of Sturgis and Pregnancy Helpline Center of Three Rivers. The public is invited to the shower, at which tours will be offered of the "Garden of Hope" Memorial to Unborn, still another Thrivent-supported project dedicated at St. Paul's in September 2022. The memorial, featuring inspiring sculptures and a contemplation bench, is always open.

To the Triune God be all glory!



Photos courtesy of St. Paul's, Centreville

Love 4 Others Seeks Volunteers

The Love 4 Others service event will take place this summer in Detroit, July 23–27. Camp Restore Detroit (CRD) and Gifts For All God’s Children are teaming up to serve. Volunteers from around Michigan (and beyond!) will gather to serve in Detroit and demonstrate to the community that “We Are The Church!” The days will be spent sharing God’s love for others through community service projects suitable for all ages and abilities.

Each evening will include dinner on the CRD campus followed by a speaker and live worship bands. CRD will host individuals, groups, and families who need overnight accommodations in its bunk rooms. The registration fee includes a t-shirt, meals, lodging, project coordination, evening programs, music, and worship.

For more information, visit shorturl.at/bmsLQ.



Christians in a WOKE World

St. Stephen, Waterford is hosting *Christians in a Woke World—A Call to Courage, Confession, & Love* with guest speaker Rev. Paul Dare on Saturday, May 13. This event is free, but seats are limited and registration is required. To register, call 248.673.6621 ext. 100 or send an email to office@ststephenwaterford.org no later than May 4. Jimmy John’s lunch boxes provided upon request for \$12 each and may be paid for on the day of the event.



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FOR EFFECTIVE GOSPEL MINISTRY

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The Michigan District Blog and Podcasts support the District’s critical targets: Great Commission, Great Compassion, Healthy Congregations, and Healthy Workers. They can be easily shared through social networks and email. We are always looking for authors; to submit your article visit michigandistrict.org/storybucket.

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Special Recognition

Maas Installed in Hillsdale

On Sunday, February 12, 2023, Rev. Dr. Korey Maas was installed as Associate Pastor at St. Paul's, Hillsdale. Rev. Maas, his wife Kate, and their five children have been members there since 2016, where Pastor Maas has served as an elder while also teaching at Hillsdale College.

Photo courtesy of St. Paul's, Hillsdale



Pictured (l-r): Rev. Eric Kilmer, Rev. Dr. Korey Maas, Rev. Sean Willman, and Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mumme.

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Grace and Grit

continued from page 2

God's grace with the people around us. Is there a new ministry your congregation can begin? Is there a neighbor who needs to see and hear the love of Jesus? Are there partnerships your congregation can develop with another? Can you begin steps toward greater "parochial education" ministry, perhaps opening a homeschool learning pod? Are there some things your congregation should quit doing to free up energy and resources for something new?



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People turn away. Dull ears and hardened hearts abound. Our patience is tried as rebellion persists.

Kingdom work now and always takes grit. Grace is free to the receiver but requires gritty resolve on behalf of the giver. Having received God's grace born of His grit, may we too become people of gritty grace. Let us join Jesus and work, with grit, while it is day until night comes and we cannot. ■

*I owe the idea of grit in this context to a conversation with the District's Vice-Presidents Davenport, Andrzejewski, Bickel, and Cloeter.



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

Parents Support College Students

continued from page 6

includes trusting Jesus. Assure them that God is present in all things. It's important to help THEM find the support they need, like clergy, counselors, talking with friends, etc. both



© Frank Alarcon/Unsplash

on campus and if they come home. Remember, this is an opportunity for THEM to learn how to manage life, trusting God through it all. Don't rescue them (unless they are hurt) but continue to pray for them that they will lean into Jesus, and do point them by your words and actions to the One who is able to hold them through anything they face in this life. As you trust them to navigate this, you are demonstrating your trust in the Lord to walk with them.

May God grant us humility and trust in Him with such mysteries that surpass our understanding and may the God of peace be with us all (Romans 15:33). Amen. ■

Rev. John R. Rathje, LPC, NCC, SPM is the Dean of Students at Concordia University Ann Arbor and also serves as the Church Worker Mental Health Support Coordinator for the Michigan District, LCMS.

Your Investment Builds Ministries

When you invest with Church Extension Fund your investment helps to renovate and build churches, schools and ministries just like Camp Arcadia.

"We reached out to banks and other institutions, but CEF understood our ministry and the dynamics of capital campaigns, which made them very easy to work with."

- Chip May, Executive Director at Camp Arcadia



Church Extension Fund

Office:

800-242-3944

24/7 Interest Rates:

800-232-7313

Website:

www.mi-cef.org



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Calls and Roster Update

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. Delwyn Campbell (Gary, IN) to Sr., Good Shepherd/Trinity, Lansing
Rev. Roger Sassaman (Goshen, IN) to Sole, St. Paul's, Centreville
Rev. Aaron Vergin (Waterford, MI) to Sole, St. John's, Grand Haven
Rev. Larry Warsinski (Clyde, MI) to IIM, Zion, Hemlock

Change of Status

Rev. Mark Hetzner (Chesterfield, MI) to Emeritus
Rev. Richard Wolfram (Howell, MI) to Emeritus

Transferred Into District

Rev. Joel Haak (Rochester, MN) from Minnesota South District
Rev. Samuel Fink (Orchard Park, NY) from Eastern District

Transferred Out of District

Rev. Merelyn Snider (Peyton, CO) to Rocky Mountain District
Rev. Lee Zabrocki (Louisville, KY) to Indiana District

Resigned From the Roster

Rev. Kevin Dykstra (Grand Rapids, MI)

COMMISSIONED

Calls Accepted

Cody, Robert (St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth) to Concordia University,
Seward, NE
Klauer, Susan (Peace, Shelby Township) to Zion, Auburn
Sievert, Benjamin (St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth) to St. Lorenz,
Frankenmuth (new position)
Spear, Alexandra (St. Paul, Ann Arbor) to Immanuel, Belvidere, IL
Splattstoesser, Kelsey (Concordia, Seward) to Zion, Bay City

Change of Status

Loren, John (Trinity, Paw Paw) to Candidate

Transferred Out of District

Schimm, Alisha (Candidate) to English District
Shirley, Tessa (Candidate) to North Wisconsin District

Removed From Roster

Brandt, Alayna
Etheridge, Kimberly
Haines, Renee
Johnson, Paul
McMahon, Petrea
Wyly, Jeanene

A complete up-to-date listing
of Calls and Vacancies can be
found at michigandistrict.org.

Called Home

Bergant, Virginia



Calendar of Events

Please check the District website for the latest updates and
detailed information as COVID-19 concerns continue.
michigandistrict.org/events

APRIL 2023

- 6 Maundy Thursday
- 7 Good Friday
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 9 Easter Sunday
- 21–23 The Katie
DoubleTree, Bay City
- 25 Call Day
Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne, Ind.
- 26 Call Day
Concordia Seminary St. Louis, Mo.
- 28 Community Worship Network Workshop
Concordia University Ann Arbor

MAY 2023

- 1–2 North and East Pastors Conference
DoubleTree, Bay City
- 9–10 South and East Pastors Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 10–11 Circuit Visitors Conference
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
- 15–16 West Pastors Conference
Inn at Harbor Shores, St. Joseph
- 22 Board of Directors Listening Event MW Region
St. Paul, Hamburg (Whitmore Lake)
- 23 Board of Directors
St. Paul, Hamburg (Whitmore Lake)
- 24–25 Intentional Interim Ministry Conference
Michindoh, Hillsdale
- 29 Memorial Day
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED

JUNE 2023

- 2–4 Junior High Gathering
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth
- 3 State Track Meet
Valley Lutheran High School, Saginaw
- 5–7 1517 Craft of Preaching Workshop
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
- 9–12 Synodical Convention Floor Committees
- 12–15 A2E Master Built Lego Camp
The Vine-Walker, North Grand Rapids
- 12–16 Sports Camp/VBS
Detroit
- 17 Synodical Delegates' Pre-Convention Meeting
St. Luke, Haslett
- 19–21 FLAME
Ann Arbor
- 25–28 High School Gathering