

December 2023

michigan IN TOUCH

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

HEALTHY WORKERS

Continuing in The Word

by Rev. David A. Davis

Here is a great word and promise from Jesus: *“If you [continue] in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31–32).*

This past year, anyone who got near me was encouraged to continue in Jesus’ Word. Specifically, people have been encouraged to read through the whole Bible annually. Much fruitfulness grows out of

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Rev. David A. Davis, President
Debby S. Fall, Editorial Manager

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

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

888.225.2111
intouch@michigandistrict.org
michigandistrict.org

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“To continue in the Word is to continue in relationship with Jesus, to continue in His Kingdom, to continue in His grace. There is truth. There is freedom.”

this, not the least of which are truth and freedom. To continue in the Word is to continue in relationship with Jesus, to continue in His Kingdom, to continue in His grace. There is truth. There is freedom.

How has it gone for you? Did you think about getting started and never did? Did you get started and then dropped out? Did you read far more than the previous year but only portions of it? Did you indeed read through the whole Bible?

Well, 2023 draws to a close and a New Year is at hand. What is your plan in 2024?

Let me encourage you to take up Jesus' invitation ... again. Continue in His Word. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Scriptures. Whether you never started, started and stopped, or started and kept going, in 2024 purpose to read through the entire Bible. Find a good plan (like the *Reformation Reading Plan* on the YouVersion Bible app), find a readable translation, find a good time of day, find a good location, and find Jesus. When you find Jesus through His Word, you find truth and freedom page after page after page. A game changer, indeed.

There is another point about continuing in the Word that you could consider.

What if we had stopped with the Old Testament? We would still be bringing sacrifices. What if we stopped with Advent? We would be adoring a miraculous baby and nothing more. What if we stopped with Jesus' miracles and teachings? We would be amazed but not changed. What if we stopped with Jesus' crucifixion? Paul said we should be pitied more than all people. What if we stopped with His resurrection? We would have an eternal hope but temporal uncertainty. What if we stopped with His reigning at the right hand of the Father? We would have comfort but not urgency of ministry.

Let's continue in Jesus' Word all the way to the words about His return in glory. One day our King is coming back. That serves as the culmination of His Word and the consummation of our hope. Continuing to that very end is both truth and freedom.

When Jesus said, *“Take and eat; take and drink”* (Matthew 26: 26ff), he was not introducing a new law. He was offering a life-changing invitation. In the same vein, receive this invitation: *“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”* (John 8:31–32).

Continue right on through, from Advent prophecies to the King's return. ▀



Rev. David A. Davis serves the Michigan District, LCMS as its president.

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© Photos courtesy of Shepherd's Gate, Shelby Twp.



Serving and Sacrifice

by Jeffrey T. Heisner

Ron Kuczera walked away from his career as financial consultant to serve as Shepherd's Gate Church's Local Missions Coordinator. *"If you would've told me that I'd be doing this work now 10 years ago, I'd probably say you're a little crazy,"* said Kuczera.

As he drives through the city of Detroit on a summer weekend checking on crews of volunteers he helps coordinate, Kuczera shares why he loves his current job. He organizes and serves on Shepherd's Gate missions that help people in Macomb County and Metro Detroit. *"For me, this is not work,"* said Kuczera. *"Don't tell Pastor Tim, but he could probably not pay me for this."*

Shepherd's Gate's pastor, Rev. Tim Bollinger, knew being Shepherd's Gate's Local Missions Coordinator was the perfect fit for Kuczera. *"He has one of the biggest hearts I've ever met,"* said Bollinger. *"I've been on mission trips with him, I've served so many local projects with him. It's in him."*

Kuczera meets with people and organizations that need help. Whether it's Elli's House, Samaritan House, or shut-in members of the church, he calls on his team of volunteers and gets the yard work, construction, or other labor done and needs met. *"Two, three times a weekend he's somewhere, doing something incredible in a practical way,"* said Bollinger.

Kuczera also organizes Shepherd's Gate *Step Out and Serve* weekend. That's where more than 400 members work as the hands and feet of Jesus. They go out into the community and help around 40 families and organizations. Kuczera plans it all. He makes sure the materials are where they're needed, the work gets done, and the volunteers are fed. With Kuczera's lead, the weekend of serving has turned into a yearlong event, and Shepherd's Gate's volunteers do this whenever and wherever it's needed.

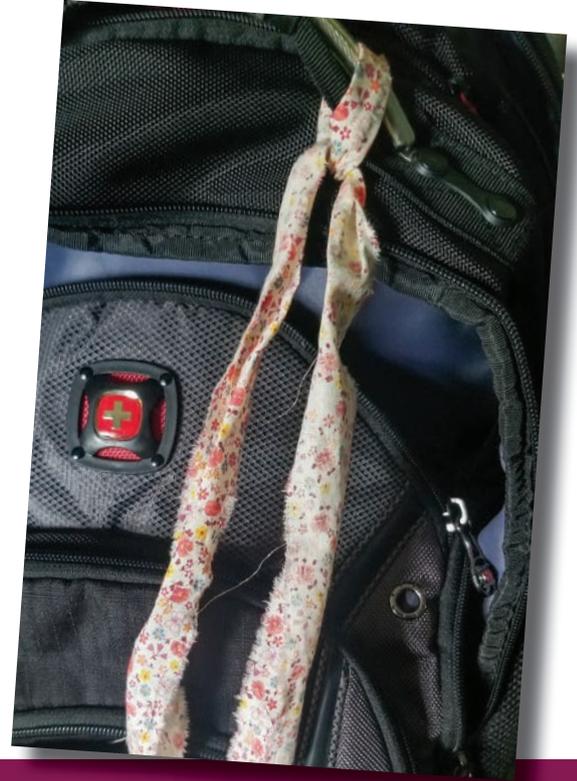
At the time this story was written, he was setting up and getting ready to give shelter to several homeless women and children in Macomb County. By working with MCREST, Kuczera helped Shepherd's Gate transition into a temporary shelter—a safe place to stay, eat, and sleep for a week in October.

As he checked in on the final crew that was working in Detroit on that summer day, he pondered what his future will look like. *"Who knows what I'll be doing in a year, or ten years, but I have a feeling this is going to be a big part of it."* said Kuczera. ■

You can view this story at youtu.be/7TivJ82TA88.

Mr. Jeffrey T. Heisner is the Video Journalist/Digital Media Manager for the Michigan District, LCMS.

Photos courtesy of Kathy Harris



Blessed to be a Blessing

by Kathy Harris



Faith, Bridgeport had a team of five people serve on a “hammer-and-nails” project for Funny River Community Church, Alaska, on August 17–24. The team was made up of Tom Harris (who had previously served in Alaska on 2 other projects), Kathy Harris (previously served in Alaska on 3 other projects), Bill and Sandy Stroup, and Terri Buchinger (first Alaska mission).

Our home church supported us in every way possible (prayers, emotionally, financially). The week before we left, our pastor blessed us in front of the congregation and took a piece of cloth and ripped it in half (see picture). One half stayed on the altar at Faith, to remind our members to pray for our mission, and the other went with us. We put ours on the door handle in the church where we slept; every time we passed it, we prayed for our congregation and for the Funny River community.

During this project, we worked alongside some locals (Leroy S., Dar B., Mark S., Pat D., George W.) and a retired pastor (Frank Johnston). We helped sheet external walls, cut/built trusses, and cleaned windows. After building the pattern for the trusses, we got 13 of the 26

trusses built and all of the wood and gussets cut for the remaining trusses. The church opened its facility to host our team and the community fed us. Members of the church opened their homes to our team to learn more about their community.

Throughout the week, we saw God blessing us through community members being open to help with the project, other helpers, and non-members of the church who attended church with us on Sunday. We also got to see God’s creation up close (moose, bears, otters, reds ...), develop friendships, and so much more.

This project wouldn’t have been successful without Jan Bruick and staff from Alaska Mission for Christ (AMC). They picked us up at the airport, arranged housing (at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Chugiak, AK) after our flight was delayed by four hours, and arranged for our car rental agency to stay open later for our arrival. God truly used everyone’s talents on this trip and we are very thankful for each and every one of them.

God is awesome. ■

Mrs. Kathy Harris is a member at Faith, Bridgeport.

Editor’s notes:

David Anderson from Shepherd’s Canyon Retreat was in Funny River, AK this summer. He met a group from Michigan that was on a mission trip to build a building for the local church. Anderson contacted the Michigan District, LCMS and said that this group was amazing—they were Jesus’ hands and feet on the ground. Later, the District learned that this was the group from Faith, Bridgeport.

Alaska Mission for Christ (AMC) is an LCMS ministry in its 31st year of serving in the country’s 49th state. Jan Bruick, AMC’s servant event coordinator, says that this summer they had 56 teams and 400 volunteers serving in Alaska. Four of the teams were from Michigan:

- Faith, Bridgeport served in Funny River, AK with a building project.
- Christ, Milford, served at Mt. Drum Lutheran Church, Copper Center, AK in VBS ministry. They have been doing this for 10 years.
- St. James, Montague, served for the first time in VBS ministry at the Fairbanks Native Bible Church in Fairbanks, AK.
- Teams from Bethlehem, Good Shepherd, Holy Cross, and Peace in Saginaw as well as St. Peter, Hemlock have all served in Goodnews Bay, AK in VBS ministry. Last fall, a family from Goodnews Bay traveled to Saginaw and spent a week sharing their life story with area churches and Valley Lutheran High School. This year, led by Jan Rauschert, a team of 11 people from Good Shepherd, Saginaw and VLHS went back to serve in Goodnews Bay.

Additionally, the AMC missionary in Fairbanks, Nate Milan, and wife Sarah are both from Michigan. AMC’s Jan Bruick adds, “*We are thankful for our Michigan District teams and co-workers in His Kingdom!*”

Are You Crazy?

South Africa Student Scholarship Ride4Change

by Marc N. Schwichtenberg

“Why would you want to ride a bicycle nonstop for 170 miles?! Are you crazy?!”

It’s a question I was asked a lot as my friend Muzi Khumalo (son of the late Pastor Mandla Khumalo) and I prepared to take on the 175-mile Munga Grit, a South African-inspired gravel race up in Traverse City this past September.

The answer to this question leads back over five years ago when I was first blessed with the opportunity to spend time with our Lutheran Christian sisters and brothers in South Africa. Like many of you over the years, I had read some of the stories and watched a few of the movies that documented the brutal atrocities of apartheid and was somewhat aware of the racial, political, and economic tensions that still exist to this day. Yet to be in South Africa, and see firsthand the racially segregated neighborhoods and townships established so many years ago that still exist—and what the Lord can do when He has His way among His people who have been through so very much—would leave me forever changed.

Perhaps you’ve heard the story of a young Zulu man named Mandla Khumalo, whom the Lord raised up and transformed from a resistance fighter wanted by the police in the days of apartheid, to a man of reconciliation and peace by the life-changing power of the gospel of Jesus—a man who would later be called by the Lord to become a Lutheran pastor. You may also be familiar with how the Lord gave him godly vision to establish a Lutheran church body (Confessional Lutheran Church of South Africa) along with a Lutheran school that would impact South African lives for eternity. As he knew well, when you bring quality education to a child you change the world, but when you bring a quality Christian education to a child you change the world for eternity! While the Lord called Pastor Khumalo home to heaven much too soon by our limited, temporal timeline in March of 2021, his vision for Christian education, gospel outreach, and Christ-centered reconciliation continues to this day among the Lord’s people of South Africa.

Home base for those efforts is St. Peter Lutheran Church and School in Mhluzi, a suburb of Middelburg. This past year, St. Peter began partnering with a local orphanage and has admitted nearly 70 new students



Photo courtesy of Rev. Marc Schwichtenberg

who are now receiving eternal formation in Jesus through a quality *Christian education*. Through them, our world will never be the same!

Understandably, this important mission partnership requires resources. While COVID devastated the world’s economy, South Africa has never rebounded from over 50% unemployment and widespread crime and unrest. In recent days, Christian Outreach For Africa (COFA), the USA-based nonprofit mission partner established to provide sustainable mission support toward this work in South Africa, shared a five-year goal of raising a \$1 million student scholarship endowment for students to attend St. Peter Lutheran School in Mhluzi for today and into the future.

Which leads back to the original question: Perhaps now you understand why anyone would be so very motivated to ride a bike 175 miles nonstop! It’s because *we are crazy*—crazy about sharing the love of Jesus by making a Christian education available to as many South African students as possible—knowing full well that it will change the world for eternity!

This is why Muzi Khumalo (who serves as director of the school) and I took on the 175-mile Munga Grit gravel race to raise scholarships for the students of St. Peter Lutheran School in Mhluzi. Beginning at noon on Saturday, September 9, we rode straight through the afternoon, evening, and night to cross the finish line together in absolute exhaustion 23 hours later! What made it truly worth the crazy effort was the prayerfully generous financial support that continued to flow in before, during, and after we took on the crazy challenge of the ride—all making a crazy difference in Jesus’ name!

And thankfully it’s not too late to be crazy with us!

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Pastor, We're *Praying* for you!

by Joshua C. LaFeve

“*Pastor, we’re praying for you.*” Those were the words I heard as I descended the steps, passed the front entrance of Immanuel, Leland, and made my way to my office prior to the Sunday morning Divine Service. I turned to acknowledge the parishioner speaking, and to express my gratitude, when she met me with an extended hand holding a single white sheet of 8.5 x 11 paper, folded in half.

Now, I don’t know about you, but when the pastor is handed a single sheet of paper on a Sunday morning accompanied with the words, “Pastor, we’re praying for you,” he is typically not convinced that the words tucked in that folded up piece of paper contain good news. Nonetheless, I said, “Thank you,” accepted the offering, engaged in a bit of light conversation with her, and then headed to my office.

With some trepidation, I sat down at my desk and unfolded the sheet of paper. At the top of the page was the title, “*Praying For Our Pastor.*” Below were two columns. The first contained all the weeks of the year with the appropriate dates. The second contained signatures of Immanuel, Leland parishioners. Each signature represented a single member or family that agreed to pray intentionally for their pastor and his family for an entire week of the calendar year.

As you might expect, that was quite encouraging for this pastor to see. And I keep that piece of paper close at hand, next to my Call documents, to remind me when the going gets tough, just who is in charge of this whole endeavor (God in Christ!) and who is

supporting me and my family in prayer.

It’s been at least three years now that I’ve received a piece of paper like this from one of my parishioners, along with those words, “*Pastor, we’re praying for you.*” The one in 2020 was especially meaningful. A pastor regularly prays for the people God has called him to serve. He does this in the Prayer of the Church on Sunday morning, and at various other times during a given week. How special it is—though certainly not necessary—to also have just a small piece of evidence that the prayer line goes both ways.

A couple of years ago I found myself in a conversation with some folks from another parish. In that conversation they asked, “*How best do you think a congregation can care for its pastor?*” I told them my story. Can you think of a better way (aside from a fair salary and decent benefits!) that a congregation can care for its church workers than through prayer?

“*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now*” (Philippians 4:3–5). ■

Rev. Joshua C. LaFeve serves Immanuel Lutheran Church in Leland, Mich.

“ I keep that piece of paper close at hand ... to remind me when the going gets tough, just who is in charge of this whole endeavor (God in Christ!) and who is supporting me and my family in prayer. ”

DECEMBER 2023

CEF Year in Review - 2023

Church Extension Fund has been blessed to serve the Michigan District for over 120 years. And the past 12 months of 2023 have been further proof of CEF's nonstop opportunities to further His kingdom!

From expanding our relational efforts with investors to hosting new events and programs, all of our work is made possible through the loyal investments from supporters like you.

Hands and Feet of CEF

There may only be 12 people working daily at the Michigan CEF office. But across our small staff, we have counted over 200 cumulative years of ministry—which is part of why additions and subtractions to our team have such an impact.

Throughout 2023, we have said hello and goodbye to some amazing servants at CEF. One such loyal worker was Bill Burmeister, who retired from CEF after 13 years of serving as the Gift Planning Counselor as well as the Director of Congregational Services.

CEF has also had the privilege of welcoming Rodney Barodte as the new Director of Relations.



Rodney Barodte

Thanks to his work, CEF now daily connects with churches, pastors, volunteers, Lutheran school principals and their faculty, as well as CEF congregational representatives.

Throughout the next several months, CEF will be interviewing and hiring two new employees in the IT and Mortgage department.

Promoting Worker Wellness

CEF focused specifically in 2023 on programs that promoted worker wellness and overall ministry health.

This is why we partnered with Concordia Plan Services to offer a summer worker wellness workshop, a free opportunity for Lutheran ministry workers in the Michigan district. The event focused on the idea of preventative planning and personal care through financial, physical, and mental health.



CONCORDIA PLANS

CEF also established the Ministry Worker Wellness Grant this year to help work toward our wellness goal. The new grant program has offered funding of up to \$2500 for Michigan ministry workers to host a wellness event, along with three bonus grants of \$10,000 for the most creative wellness ministry ideas. This grant is in partnership with the Mighty Fortress Foundation.

Ministry Worker Wellness Grant

Helping care
for your wellbeing



\$2500 GRANTS AVAILABLE!



*Ministry Worker
Wellness Grant*



*Pastor Ed Doerner talks with CEF's Andy Soh
about the many ways that Messiah Midland
reaches into their community.*



*Marty Moro on a medical team for
MOST Ministries.*

Building the Kingdom in 2023

But the true core of our work at Church Extension Fund is working directly with ministries throughout our district to empower the growth of His kingdom.

St. Matthew Westland gave us an opportunity in 2023 to directly invest in the financial well-being of a congregation in need. Messiah Midland

continues to expand into new community outreach programs with CEF's support. And projects like the church worker housing loan and helping MOST Ministries remind us at the CEF office how we can directly empower the individual lives of church workers through our business functions.

With your support in 2023, we have built new facilities, improved building accessibility,

launched new outreach programs—and financed the dreams of Lutheran ministries all over the Michigan District. It is thanks to your investments that we get to support church workers and district-wide ministries.

We are so grateful for how you continue to empower CEF's work, and we can't wait to see what we accomplish together in the new year!



"Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters dwell together in unity!"

Psalms 133:1



Church Extension Fund

Church Extension Fund

3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-3098

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

LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

Holiday Specials

These holiday specials are available through Lutheran Hour Ministries. Check lhm.org for more details.

Little Shepherd is a 30-minute, animated Christmas special about how the birth of Jesus transforms a shepherd boy and his family. It is LHM's most recently produced TV special.

Red Boots for Christmas is a 30-minute, animated Christmas special based on a German folk tale about a grouchy shoemaker who comes to understand the gift of giving.

Christmas Is is a 30-minute, animated Christmas

special about a boy who dreams he's a shepherd boy in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago.

The City That Forgot Christmas is a 30-minute animated Christmas special in which the voices of Sebastian Cabot, Louis Nye, and Charles Nelson Reilly bring to life the tale of a town where Christmas is almost forgotten.

The Stableboy's Christmas is an Emmy-award-winning 30-minute Christmas drama about a young daughter's disappointment over a gift she did not receive and a fantasy about the first Christmas.



LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

TASTE AND SEE THAT
THE LORD IS GOOD



PSALM 34:8

SAVE THE DATE

LWML Michigan District
Convention
2024

Fri, Jun 28 - Sun, Jun 30, 2024

Held at the Amway Grand
Grand Rapids, MI



<https://lwmlmichigan.org/>



Michigan District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

People of Hope ... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

2023 Christmas Appeal

Dear Friends in Christ,

Certainly, you have many on your “Christmas list”—people you plan to give a gift to as we celebrate again the great gift of Jesus. Jesus coming into the world as Savior is worthy both of great celebration and also imitation in the practice of gift giving.

This Gift is timeless—beyond any day or any season. Our joy in the Michigan District is equipping congregations to share Jesus, the greatest Gift of all, with each other and within our communities and the world.

As we prepare our hearts to receive Jesus, would you consider adding the Michigan District to your gift list? Until our work is complete on the day He returns, there will always be a need to bring Jesus to those who will find Him in our shared Great Commission and Great Compassion ministry.

Continued on reverse side

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Yes, President Davis, I would like to support the Michigan District, LCMS!

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of : \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Congregation/City _____

I would like my gift to support:

- Greatest Need (Unrestricted)
- General Endowment
- Lutheran Education
- Mission & Ministry
- Conference & Training Support
- Leadership Development
- Church Worker Care
- Other _____

I'm considering including the Michigan District in my estate, please contact me.

To explore additional ways to give to the Michigan District, visit michigandistrict.org/donate/ways-to-give.



Your gift can be given for any of these designations:

- 🎁 Greatest Need/Unrestricted – Ongoing and special needs
- 🎁 General Endowment – Invested with distributions for ongoing and special needs
- 🎁 Lutheran Education – Early childhood centers and K-12 school support
- 🎁 Missions & Ministry – Training, grants, and administrative support for great compassion and great commission endeavors
- 🎁 Conference & Training Support – District-sponsored training and enrichment events
- 🎁 Leadership Development – Activities and scholarships for next generation leaders
- 🎁 Church Worker Care – Preventive and immediate assistance and referrals

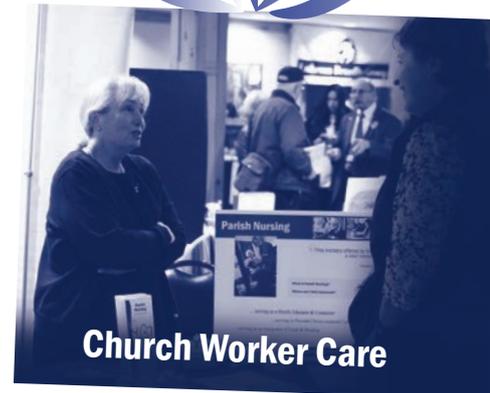
Gifts to the Michigan District are not meant to replace or reduce your gifts to your congregation or other ministries. Instead, these gifts support our current congregations and church workers through district-wide training opportunities, congregation/circuit collaboration, strategic congregation partnerships with the community, and vision support for future ministry and innovation as we carry out this work together as People of Hope.

Your gift will enable the Michigan District to church workers and congregations to share the that a world in need sees our hope in Jesus.

God grant you a blessed Christmas and a New Year share your hope.

...eyes on Jesus ...

Rev. David A. Davis, President
Michigan District, LCMS



My 2023 Christmas Gift

Please make checks payable to Michigan District, LCMS or provide credit card information below. Return completed form and check (if applicable).

Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____
(MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express, Diners Club)

Billing Address (if different from front) _____

Cardholder's Name (as it appears on the card) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

By signing this form, the card holder is authorizing the Michigan District, LCMS to debit their card.

Return to:
Attn: Development Department
Michigan District, LCMS
3773 Geddes Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Or donate online at michigandistrict.org/christmasappeal

CHRISTmas at St. Lorenz

Come to listen, sing along, and enjoy a Frankenmuth tradition: The St. Lorenz CHRISTmas Concert. All church ensembles including the Mixed Choir, Mass Choir, Parish Hand Bells, and Wind Ensemble will be heralding the celebration of Our Lord’s nativity with joyous and festive music. Additionally, come to hear and sing some of your favorite Christmas Carols to start the Advent and Christmas season. For more information, visit stlorenz.org. For 2024 Music at St. Lorenz, see display ad on page 14.

Hymn Festival

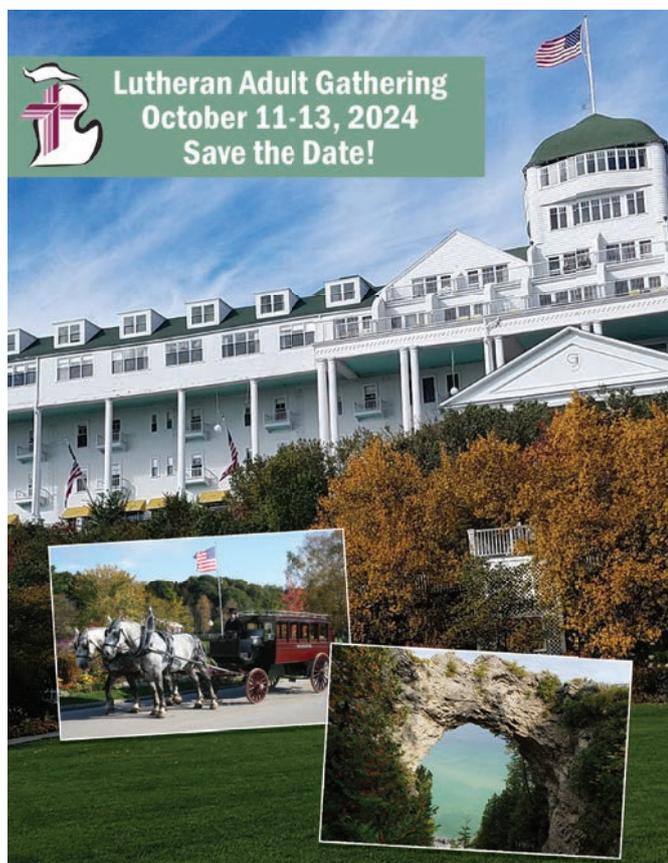
Holy Light: A Candlelight Service of Carols and Hymns will be led by organist Robert Hobby at Our Savior, Lansing on Wednesday, December 6, at 7 p.m. Hobby is the Minister of Music at Trinity English Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Ind. The singing, by congregation and choir, will be accompanied by organ, brass, timpani, and handbells. A freewill offering will be taken. Invite your family and friends and join Our Savior as they celebrate the coming King born in Bethlehem.

New Beginnings in His Presence

Do you need a break? Do you need encouragement from fellow Christians? Do you like Mackinac Island? Would you like to stay at the Grand Hotel while the Michigan colors are in full glory? Could you benefit from great times of worship and Bible study? Do you need an evening of laughter? If you answered yes to even a couple of these questions, then the Lutheran Adult Gathering is a great fit for you.

The 2024 Lutheran Adult Gathering (LAG) will take place October 11–13, 2024 at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island. LAG is a weekend retreat with brothers and sisters in Christ who come together from around the region to experience worship, encouragement, education, and time together. It is a chance to see old friends and meet new ones, a chance to be intentional about your faith development, and a chance to step out of the normal busy routines to be refreshed and equipped for daily life.

The Gathering is for adults of any age—whether you are in your twenties, thirties, forties, or older, you are welcome to come! This could make a great Christmas gift for your spouse or adult family members. For more information, visit michigandistrict.org/events.



2024 Theological Conference
February 3, 2024 | Our Savior, Lansing

Love Talks: *Daring*
Conversations toward
Reconciliation



Speakers:
Rev. Dr. Chad Lakies
Rev. Mark Schulz
Dcs. Tiffany Manor
FLAME



Music at St. Lorenz presents

All concerts are free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be received.

Concordia University - Choir February 28 | 6:00 PM

COMING FROM IRVINE, CA, the fifty-five member Concordia University Choir under the direction of Dr. Michael Busch will perform a wide range of repertoire during the usual 6pm mid-week Lenten service.

LOCATION: ST. LORENZ CHURCH SANCTUARY

St. Lorenz Wind Ensemble "March Mania"

March 10 | 3:00 PM

LOCATION: ST. LORENZ WORSHIP & EVENTS CENTER

Join the Wind Ensemble for March Madness festivities as they play songs and marches that you will get to vote on in a tournament style bracket! Make sure to show up with the family to get your favorite song to be the winner!

Ascension Day Vespers May 9 | 7:00 PM

We conclude the season with the RISEN AND ASCENDED SAVIOR who lives and reigns! Experience the beauty of EVENING VESPERs as we celebrate this high festival with songs of praise aided by the choirs and instrumentalists of St. Lorenz.

LOCATION: ST. LORENZ CHURCH SANCTUARY

ST. LORENZ
LUTHERAN CHURCH
1030 W. Tuscola
Frankenmuth

ST. LORENZ WORSHIP
& EVENTS CENTER
850 W. Genesee
Frankenmuth

989.652.6141
stlorenz.org

Your Investment Builds Churches

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

Kaye Wolff Receives *Christus Vivit* Award

Chosen by the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis—after consideration of personal knowledge and/or recommendations by others—Mrs. Kaye Wolff was the recipient of the *Christus Vivit* Award for demonstrating exemplary service to the church.

Wolff, a retired information and technology professional, has dedicated much of her tremendous volunteer service to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) ministries and initiatives that serve minority groups. She has worked closely with LCMS Black Ministry and other ethnic ministries. She is a founding member of Concordia Seminary’s Multiethnic Symposium committee, which began in 2008, and she remains a part of the planning committee and is also a past presenter. She also served on the advisory committee for the Seminary’s Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) during its inception in 2002. She has served as chairman of the LCMS Black Ministry Church Planting Task Force (1996–2003) and also served on an LCMS convention resolution task force (2016–19). Additionally, she has presented several LCMS Rural and Small-Town Mission webinars.

Wolff has authored articles for the Lutheran Woman’s Quarterly and Bible studies for Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) groups. She also has contributed articles to Lutheran Mission Matters (formerly *Missio Apostolica*) and has written Lenten devotions for Lutheran Hour Ministries, where she was a MissionU witnessing facilitator for 14 years. She was instrumental in making the LCMS docu-movie *The First Rosa*, about the pioneer Lutheran educator and missionary Rosa Young (LCMS, 2014), where she served as the unit production manager.

In 2020, Wolff presented at the Theological Convocation on Race Relations at the Seminary in St. Louis. She also has been a guest on KFUE’s radio show “The Coffee Hour” periodically over the last six years. From 2020–22, she also served on a church worker recruitment committee.

Active in the LWML most of her life, Wolff has served in local, district, and national roles within the organization. During her term as LWML vice president of special focus ministries (2015–19), Wolff started the Deaf Ministry Outreach Program to encourage hearing women to learn basic American Sign Language (ASL) and deaf culture, and to encourage and welcome deaf women into active participation in LWML groups. She

currently serves as chairman of the 2021–23 Nominating Committee.

A frequent visitor to the Seminary campus, Wolff is known by many former and current students as “Auntie Kaye” for her frequent mentoring, support, and commitment to them. Wolff and her husband, Rev. Paul A. Wolff, live in Southfield, Mich. They worship at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Dearborn, where Rev. Wolff serves as the assistant pastor. Kaye Wolff is learning ASL and enjoys cooking and eating, dressing in cultural attire, traveling, and music. She and her husband have three grown children, five granddaughters and one great-granddaughter. They enjoy frequent visits with those family members who live close by.

This article was originally published in the 2023 commencement page of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo.



Photo courtesy of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo.

Are You Crazy?

As of today, over \$25,000 has been given, but since all gifts will be matched up to \$40,000 through our Michigan District’s International Ministry Initiative of the **Here**

We Stand campaign, that means close to \$15,000 is still available for the 100% match! Crazy, right?! Please prayerfully consider being a part of this important Ride4Change to help take a child through school and make an impact on lives for eternity through the love of Jesus. To be part of the change, follow this link: donorbox.org/cofa-scholarship-2. ■

Rev. Marc N. Schwichtenberg is the Senior Pastor at St. John Lutheran Church and School in Rochester.

For a podcast interview with Rev. Schwichtenberg about the bike ride challenge, visit michigandistrict.org, click on Podcasts.



Photo courtesy of Rev. Schwichtenberg

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Calendar of Events

For more information about these and other events visit:
michigandistrict.org/events

DECEMBER 2023

- 24–26 Christmas Weekend
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 New Year's Eve

JANUARY 2024

- 1 New Year's Day
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 9 Board of Directors Meeting
New Life, Swartz Creek
- 21–27 National Lutheran Schools Week

FEBRUARY 2024

- 3 Theological Conference
Our Savior, Lansing
- 14 Ash Wednesday
- 15–16 Snow Tire Conference
Frankenmuth
- 24 Parish Nurse Conference
Frankenmuth

MARCH 2024

- 2 Pre-Retirement Conference
Holy Cross, Flushing
- 2-3 State Basketball Tournament
Lutheran High North, Macomb
- 18 Board of Directors Listening Event Metro West
Trinity, Monroe
- 19 Board of Directors Meeting
Trinity, Monroe
- 24 Palm Sunday
- 28 Maundy Thursday
- 29 Good Friday
DISTRICT OFFICE CLOSED
- 31 Easter Sunday

APRIL 2024

- 12–14 The Katie
DoubleTree by Hilton, Bay City
- 20 Community Worship Network
Our Savior, Lansing
- 28–30 Office Personnel Conference
DoubleTree by Hilton, Bay City

Calls and Roster Update

ORDAINED

Calls Accepted

Rev. Robert Bartz (Three Rivers, MI) to IIM, Emmaus, Wauseon, OH
Rev. Dr. Douglas Krengel (Cypress, TX) to Sole, Immanuel, Bridgman
Rev. Colin Ford (Traverse City, MI) to, Associate, Mount Olive,
Columbia, SC
Rev. Jonathan C. Meyer (Edmond, OK) Sole, St. Matthew, Grand Rapids

Transferred Into District

Rev. Kurt C Klingbeil (Van Wert, OH) from Ohio District
Rev. Tyge Zucker (Red Wing, MN) from Minnesota South District

Transferred Out of District

Rev. Robert Bartz (Three Rivers, MI) to Ohio District
Rev. Timothy Eichberger (The Villages, FL) to Florida-Georgia District
Rev. Colin Ford (Traverse City, MI) to Southeastern District
Rev. James Weist (Traverse City, MI) to Montana District

Resigned from the Roster

Rev. Matthew Starner

COMMISSIONED

Change of Status

Eberhard, Charlotte (St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth) to Candidate
Hildebrand, Laura (Christ, Stevensville) to Candidate
Hoerner, Miriam (Trinity, Utica) to Candidate
Major, Cynthia (St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth) to Emeritus
Pfeil, Nathanael (Holy Cross, Saginaw) to Candidate

Transferred Out of District

King, Carole (Candidate) to South Wisconsin District
Lewis, Lori (Reinstated) to Missouri District

Removed from Roster

Ennis, Jacob
Krueger, Bethany

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



Michigan District
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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