

Encourager

Mid-South District LCMS | January 2021



*A Message from
Rev. Dr. Roger
Paavola, President*

TRADITION

Tra-di-tion – trə'diSH(ə)n - the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way. (*Oxford Collegiate Dictionary of the English Language*, 2009) Lutheran schools and education have been a tradition and were always a priority for Lutherans who migrated to the United States and Australia from Germany and Scandinavia. One of the first things they did was to create schools for their children. This strong educational tradition was handed down from Martin Luther himself. When The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod was founded in 1847, traditional Lutheran education was continued from the congregations that started with an education ministry prior

to the formation of the LCMS. The Synod started with twelve churches that operated a total of nineteen schools. Several of the churches operated a number of schools in the rural countryside so that students would not have to walk too far to school each day. In a letter to German councilmen, dated 1524, Luther writes, “By helping the youth we shall be helping ourselves and all men.” In other words, a well-ordered and stable society must have men and women who are professionally trained in their particular fields. It’s essential because, Luther wrote, “Where there were no people who have been made wise through the Word and the laws, there bears, lions, goats and dogs hold public office and head the economy.”

By and large, Lutheran schools are operated by individual

congregations. Some Lutheran schools are operated by groups of congregations, or associations. The schools are autonomous in that they call or contract their own teachers, select their curriculum, and establish their own fee structure. Most of the costs for providing early and secondary education were paid by the sponsoring congregation. With the economic situation that exists today most of the operating funds come from tuition and fees. Yet, tuition based private education faces an increased pressure to find other funding sources.

The LCMS operates the largest Protestant school system in the United States. As of the 2017-18 school year, the LCMS operated 1,127 Early Childhood Centers, 778 elementary schools, and 87 high schools. The LCMS also operates seven universities and two seminaries. These schools educate more than 180,000 students and are taught by almost 22,000 teachers. Lutheran schools in Hong Kong, mainland China, and Vietnam are operated or affiliated with the LCMS. By comparison, The Wisconsin Synod (WELS) operates 393 early childhood education centers, 304

elementary schools, and 29 high schools. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) operates 1,573 early childhood programs, 296 elementary schools, and 14 high schools as of December 31, 2018.

Lutheran schools have always had a prominent role in the Lutheran church. Martin Luther and Philipp Melancthon were professors at Wittenberg University. Melancthon focused on curriculum revision at the post-secondary level. Luther centered his attention on the lower academic levels. He stressed the education of children and assigned responsibility for this task to parents, the church, and public authorities. He advocated instruction in the vernacular for girls and boys and a curriculum heavy on religion and music.

Lutherans immigrating to America often brought with them a determination to educate children using a religious-based curriculum. Rev. Dr. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg arrived in America in 1742 to assist the scattered Lutheran churches and their schools, especially in Pennsylvania. In addition to assisting with parish schools, Muhlenberg conducted

one of the first "charity schools" in Pennsylvania. St. Matthew Lutheran School was established in New York City in 1752.

The emphasis on parish schools was even greater among the Saxon Lutherans who immigrated to the Midwest. Their goal was that every parish should support a school. So important were parochial schools to them that, when they organized what is now The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), "the establishment and support of congregation parochial schools" was listed as one of the primary purposes for the establishment of that Synod. The growth of the LCMS can be directly related to the presence of the education ministries.

Former education executive for Synod, Terry Schmidt, observed, "Lutheran schools have a reputation for offering high-quality education. Yet, the schools promise so much more. They are centered on Jesus and His amazing grace demonstrated on the cross for every child enrolled in our schools. It is uniquely Christ's care as God's Word is infused daily into the lessons and curriculum of our Lutheran schools that make the ultimate difference." Rev.

**Sent
to
Serve**

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK



Dr. Daniel Paavola, a theology professor at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, Wis., adds, "Lutheran education at all levels teaches and lives out the Gospel message of God's salvation through Christ."

Our objective in the Mid-South District is to grow education ministry opportunities, following the pattern from the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation, and its advent into the American landscape. We continue to pray for our education ministries, our workers, and the congregations that support this vital link to our communities and around the world.

Your servant in Christ +
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola



CITATIONS

"Educating our Children - The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod". www.lcms.org, April 2, 2018.

"LCMS School Ministry: 2017-18 School Year," December 15, 2019. WELS Numbers," December 15, 2019.

"ELCA Facts," Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, December 15, 2019.

SEWARD CONCORDIA NEIGHBORHOOD. June 12, 2009.

LUTHERAN EDUCATION: Why It Still Matters, Interest Timeinteresttime.org, September 27, 2018.



Sent to Serve



National Lutheran Schools Week

Jan. 24–30, 2021 • Theme: "Sent to Serve"

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" Matthew 20:28 (ESV).

National Lutheran Schools Week provides more than 1,900 preschools, elementary schools and high schools with the public opportunity to proclaim and celebrate God's work among us in schools of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

We thank God for the opportunity to provide excellent academic preparation for the children we serve. We are most grateful for the opportunity to share Jesus' amazing love with children and their families.

Please keep our schools, students, teachers and staff in your prayers throughout the coming school year and as they prepare for National Lutheran Schools Week.

INSTALLATIONS OF CROOM AND GRANADO



Front Row (L-R) Rev. Sawyer Meyer, Beautiful Savior, Olive Branch, MS; President Roger Paavola; Rev. Ricardo Granado; Rev. Michael Croom. Back Row (L-R): Rev. Mark Goble, Circuit Visitor and Associate Pastor at Christ the King Lutheran, Memphis, TN; Rev. Don Schmidt, Messiah Lutheran, Memphis, TN; Rev. Clarence Martin, Emeritus, Memphis, TN; and Rev. Brandon Martin, Salem Lutheran Ministries, Springdale, AR.

The installations of Rev. Michael Croom as Senior Pastor and Rev. Ricardo Granado as the Associate Pastor for Trinity Lutheran Church and Hispanic Ministries was held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Memphis on Sunday, November 29, 2020. Pastor Granado is from our sister synod in the Lutheran Church of Venezuela. He will be developing a church plant and outreach to the Hispanic community in the greater Memphis area.

*Welcome
to the
Mid-South District*

UPDATE FROM CHAPEL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



We received the piano donated by Gary Krueger "in memory of my good friend Tom McCaffery." The piano can't be placed in its final location until after the sanctuary is painted. We continue to pray for a pianist. The cross over the main entrance will be lit and the final lock for the main doors into the church has been installed!



EDUCATION – A WEAPON FOR CHANGE



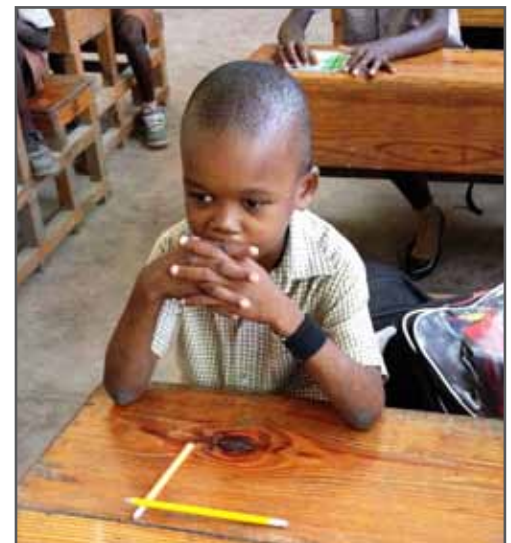
“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Those are the words of Nelson Mandela and they are so relevant for the future of Haiti. Where close to half of the adult population remains illiterate, change is critical in this country of 11-million people. That change must start with educating the next generation, with close to 40% of their population being under the age of 14 (compared to approx. 21% in the U.S.). Haitian parents must value education and strive for their children to stay in school. It is especially important for those parents that do not have an education themselves to understand this reality.

Haitian schools teach the children far more than just reading, writing and arithmetic. With many of the children living in remote, isolated areas, the school setting teaches them social skills, leadership, and how to work well with others. In addition, a very large number of the schools throughout

Haiti are directly associated with a local church, therefore teaching them the Good News of Jesus Christ. This equips the children to battle the influence of Voodoo, a very prevalent and dangerous problem in their communities. As the great philosopher Aristotle wisely said, “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” The combination of academic learning, social development, and Biblical truths fully prepare the child to become a future asset to their country.

However, if a child is malnourished or has not eaten recently, the learning process often falls on deaf ears. For that, God created the ministry of Trinity HOPE. Through the dedicated support of their many donors, Trinity HOPE now provides a nutritious noon meal to over 33,500 children, teachers and cooks *every school day* in 160+ Christian schools throughout Haiti. In addition, by continued blessings provided by God, Trinity HOPE

plans to add another 8,000 – 10,000 children to their feeding programs over the next 6 months. This meal is a tremendous incentive for parents to find a way to send their children to school, and helps the child better learn and retain their lessons. If you would like to help Trinity HOPE change the country of Haiti one bowl of beans and rice at a time, please visit our website at www.trinityhope.org, or call 615-394-4950 to learn more. Thank you for your support in 2021, and God’s Blessings on your New Year.



REV. NZELU ELECTED TO BE ASSISTANT BISHOP

Congratulations Pastor Yohana Nzelu. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania – South East of Lake Victoria Diocese through its general assembly elected Reverend Yohana Ernest Nzelu on 12/12/2020 at Agape Parish in West district (Kahama) to be the Assistant to the Bishop. He formerly worked as a Community Development Coordinator at East of Lake Victoria Diocese before going for theological studies. Reverend Yohana Nzelu has been a Pastor for fifteen years, he has been serving as a District Pastor for eight years and a headmaster at Mwadui Lutheran Secondary School for ten years. Rev. Yohana

Nzelu will be the second Assistant to the Bishop in this Diocese. The first Assistant to the Bishop Reverend Trafaina Nkya will retire at the end of December, 2020 and the Elect Reverend Yohana Nzelu will be installed as the Assistant to the Bishop at the middle of February, 2021. The Diocese will officially thank Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Trafaina Nkya for his service in that capacity for two periods of eight years at the end of April, 2021. Currently Rev. Yohana Nzelu prepares his dissertation defense for a Doctor of Ministry degree, at Concordia Theological Seminary,



Fort Wayne, Indiana. For more information keep on following elct-selvd.org.

TANZANIA MISSION TRIP 2021



We are making plans for a mission trip to Tanzania from the Mid-South District in 2021. We have a mission team from Christ the King Memphis who will be leaving at the end of May 2021 returning home on June 10. A second team from the Nashville area will be leaving on June 10 returning home on June 24th. The trips will consist of outreach and church planting in rural villages of the Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese (SELVD) and safari into the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater National parks after the mission

For more information contact the District office or Bob Allen
rjallen@prodigy.net • 270-535-7370

LIFE MINISTRY IN THE NEW YEAR

Life Sunday may be observed in your congregation on January 24, 2021. Again this year Lutherans For Life has set a theme and produced resources. The theme chosen is "From Indivisible to Indispensable!" based 1 Corinthians 12:22: "On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable." Visit <https://lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2021/> for ideas, bulletin inserts, and other materials.

There will be a Synod presence at the National March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Friday, Jan. 29. Plans are also underway for an opening Divine Service at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Alexandria, VA, at 9 a.m. For details and updates check the Synod's life ministry page, the *Reporter*, and Immanuel's website.

The biennial LCMS Life Conference will not be held in conjunction with the Life March. It is planned for later in the year of 2021. For this conference there will be an online participation option. Details will be published when they are available.

There is a Lutherans For Life youth (Y4Life) conference with the Life March in Washington, D.C., Jan. 28-30. It is open to all high school and college students. If interested, Contact Y4Life today as registration is supposed to close by Jan. 1. Those who are unable to attend may visit <https://y4life.org/event/life-week-2021-invisible-to-indispensable/> to be part of an entire Life Week of Y4Life online events.

If you haven't received the new document *Worship Resources for Life Ministry*, please download it at the Synod's life ministry page under the heading "Worship Resources." This tool provides an Introduction, a commentary on Lament and the Litany, appropriate Psalms for lament and praise, Scripture Passages that extol life, LSB Hymn recommendations for the topic of God's gift of life, Prayers for all life issues, and a couple of reprinted Sermons on life. The Prayers are very helpful, especially for those pastors who stick with the lectionary and do not alter their preaching on Life Sunday. The Prayer of the Church is a great opportunity to add a petition for the Lord to help

his Church proclaim the living God, the sanctity of human life, and the full life in Christ. The following is the comprehensive prayer for life included in *Worship Resources for Life Ministry*:

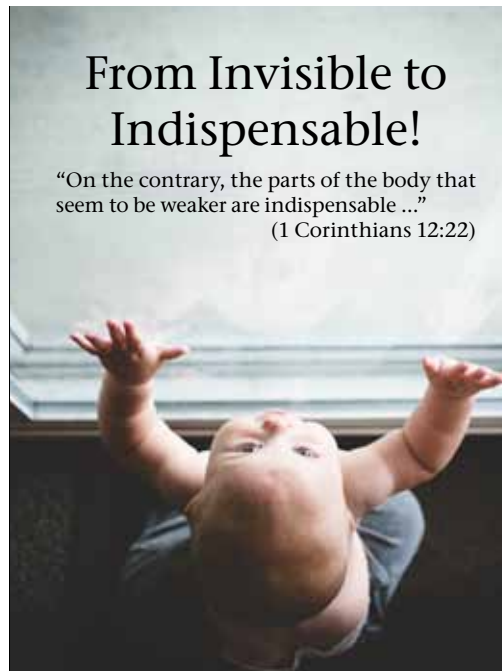
O God, Creator of life, You knit us together in the wombs of our mothers and You desire us to have life. So also Your only begotten Son took on our flesh in the womb of His mother and entered this world as all children of men do — except without sin — so that He might be one with us and make us Your children. Look in mercy and love upon all the precious lives of children yet unborn. Guard them

and give them growth, that they might come to the saving water of Holy Baptism and a saving knowledge of Your Son. Protect and guide all pregnant mothers, that they would treasure the new life they are given to bear and not be dismayed by fear of pain or cost. Strengthen all fathers, that they would protect and provide for both mother and child so that all would be cared for in this world. Encourage young people to get married, and encourage husbands and wives to desire the gift of children, that they might be fruitful and multiply according to Your gracious will. Finally, visit

with Your grace those who have committed awful sin by destroying life in the womb. Bring them to repentance, but do not let them sink into despair. Forgive and heal their souls, that they would trust in the Child of Mary who was killed for their sin and rose again to give everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Lord bless us all in this New Year as we preach, teach, and grow in the name of Jesus our life-giving Savior!

Rev. Philip Young
Mid-South District Life Coordinator





Treasurers' Workshops

Mid-South District

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

Register Online Now

The presenter for the Treasurer's workbook sessions will be Mr. Charlie Rhodes, Executive Director of Synod Accounting (retired). Angela Fowler will be the presenter for a brief afternoon session covering an overview of the new CPS Compensation Decision Tool as well as any QuickBooks issues or questions.

DETAILS

The morning session will be devoted to updates in the Treasurers' Manual (volume 1) with time reserved for specific questions and answers. It would be helpful for you to have a copy of the manual with you, either the CD, hard copy or online version. The afternoon session will focus on the CPS Compensation Decision Tool, how to use as well as interpreting the results along with QuickBooks issues and questions. Please email Angela with specific items that you would like for her to address regarding QuickBooks.

The Treasurers' Manual can be found on the LCMS website.

Register Online / Questions

[Register Online Now](#)

Contact Angela Fowler by e-mail afowler@mid-southlcms.com or telephone (866-373-1343)

January 2, 2021

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Volume 1

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. CPS Compensation Decision Tool/QuickBooks

Grace Lutheran Church, 9076 Middlebrook Pike

Knoxville, TN

January 9, 2021

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Volume 1

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CPS Compensation Decision Tool/QuickBooks

Grace Lutheran Church, 5124 Hillcrest Avenue

Little Rock, AR

January 16, 2021

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Volume 1

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CPS Compensation Decision Tool/QuickBooks

St. John Lutheran Church, 500 N. Cumberland Avenue

Russellville, AR

January 23, 2021

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Volume 1

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CPS Compensation Decision Tool/QuickBook

Mid-South District Office, 1675 Wynne Road

Cordova, TN

January 30, 2021

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Volume 1

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. CPS Compensation Decision Tool/QuickBook

Our Savior Lutheran Church, 5110 Franklin Road

Nashville, TN

Prayer Summary, December 2020

Following is a list of all the people that have appeared on the Mid-South District website prayer list www.mid-southlcms.com during the month of December, 2020

PRAYER CONCERNS

REV. RONALD HALAMKA (Waxahachie, TX)
MRS. ALISON HAWKINS (Mid-South District Office)
REV. DONLEY HESSE (Emeritus, Mena, AR)
REV. JOSEPH JACKS (Pastor, St. Philip, Chattanooga, TN)
MRS. NANCY LEE (Retiree, Mid-South District Office)
MRS. MEGAN NAVRATH (daughter Rev. Carl and Gwen Wenck, Grace, Murfreesboro, TN)
REV. CHRIS SHEETS (Pastor, Good Shepherd, Chattanooga, TN)
REV. NEIL VANDERBUSH (Chaplain*U.S. Army through the Board of International Missions*Our Savior, Searcy, AR)

Our deepest sympathies to

The family and friends of REV. JAMES WALTER

(Emeritus, Little Rock, AR; Mid-South District Board of Directors member and 2nd Vice-President – Region 2) who recently passed away.

We pray for all affected worldwide by the Coronavirus as we continue to navigate within this ever changing pandemic.

CALL UPDATE

IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS ORDAINED MINISTERS

ACCEPTED: **Rev. Michael Schleider**, Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church of Avilla, Alexander, AR, has accepted the Call to serve as Administrative Pastor to Mount Olive Lutheran Church and School, Milwaukee, WI

DECLINED: **Rev. Nathan Jansen**, Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Burns, TN, has returned the Call to serve as Pastor to Calvary Lutheran Church, Murraysville, PA.

PENDING: **Rev. Dr. Richard Davenport**, Candidate, Cincinnati, OH, has been issued a Call to serve as Pastor to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR.

IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS
Mid-South District – Executive Director for Missions and Ministry
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR – Pastor *A Call has been issued

IN THE CALLING PROCESS- COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

Zion Lutheran Church of Avilla, Alexander, AR – Director of Parish Music
Belvoir Christian Academy – Teachers

CONGREGATIONAL MISSION COMMITMENTS

Mission Commitment Receipts as of 11/30/2020 (11 Months)

Anticipated Amount (91.67% of budget)	\$1,410,723
Actual Receipts	<u>1,410,633</u>
Over (under) anticipated amount.....	(\$90)

Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (11 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions	\$400,273
Allocated to Tanzania	22,917
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts).....	<u>987,443</u>
Total Receipts	\$1,410,633

Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (11 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 11/31/2020	\$1,410,633
Actual Receipts as of 11/31/2019	<u>\$1,392,896</u>
Over (under) prior year receipts	\$17,737

Encourager Topics in 2021

The monthly Encourager features news from across the Mid-South District. If your congregation, school or ministry group has a story to share please email the articles and photos to webmaster@mid-southlcms.com by January 20, 2021. Here's a look at the upcoming topics for 2021

- February – Outreach
- March – Youth

Lutheran Witness Supplement

The monthly deadline is the 15th. Please email your original high resolution digital photo (.pdf or .jpg files only) and a short paragraph, to The Lutheran Witness Supplement editor, Judy Otto. Email: LW@mid-southlcms.com phone: 662-252-1004. Judy will always acknowledge receipt of your submission if it is sent directly to her.

MID-SOUTH DISTRICT, LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

Staff

Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola,
President

Angela Fowler,
Executive Director for Business & Finance

Paul Reaves,
Executive Director for Development & LCEF Vice President

Allen Piepenbrink,
Executive Director for Schools and Early Childhood

Missy Washburn,
Administrative Assistant to the District President

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Julie Tyler,
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Contact the Mid-South District

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ON FACEBOOK - "Mid-South-LCMS"

ON TWITTER - "@midsouthLCMS"

