

# Encourager

MARCH 2024

Mid-South District LCMS



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

### "The Three Nails"

In one week before Holy week, I conducted three funerals and visited several others in the hospital who are seriously ill. It seemed that death was a welcomed visitor to those who had struggled so severely... welcomed, because as one of my dear friend Peter put it, "I'm tired of being sick but excited about being home with Jesus. Those were his last words despite his desire to stay with his loved ones. Wanting to leave behind the pain and be at home with Jesus was a blessed assurance that we, as Christians can embrace by faith. But leaving behind those whom they loved.

The death of Jesus on Good Friday was even more difficult for those who loved Him. His death

came immediately on the heels of a glorious, triumphant entrance into Jerusalem a few days earlier. His violent, tragic death wasn't a welcomed visitor. It wasn't to relieve the pain of a long suffering illness. His death wasn't aided with oxygen or medication. He was given nothing to ease the pain and help the breathing. But the death of Christ Jesus was an agonizing, suffocating, naked tragedy on a crude rugged cross.

St. John declares: *"So they took Jesus, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place call the place of the skull, which is called in Hebrew - Golgatha. There they crucified Him, and with Him, two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them."* There's no mention of Simon of Cyrene, the

spectator who was pressed into service to help Jesus carry His cross; no mention of the conversations Jesus had with the criminals; no mention of Jesus' cry of despair as He was forsaken by God; and there's no mention of the dramatic earthquake and the ripping open of the Temple curtain like mentioned in the other Gospels. All we hear from John's Gospel is the stark reality of a young Man, walking toward a hill outside of Jerusalem to be tragically nailed to a cross and left to die naked and alone. We ponder those nails as silent witnesses of what Jesus did for us.

*"There they crucified Him,"* means they stretched Him out on rough wooden beams, impaled His hands and feet with spikes



and raised Him above the ground to hang until He died of suffocation or shock. Johann Sebastian Bach wrote in one of his symphonies, *"In the death of my heart; Your name and cross, Shine at all times and in every hour. Because of these I can be happy. Let this picture appear to me; As comfort in my time of stress, as You, Lord Christ, so freely; have sacrificed Your life for me!"*

Maybe that's why we call this Good Friday. But take a long, hard look at His death and realize, we didn't help... we didn't offer comfort or seek relief. You see, He died for us. I too, nailed Him to the cross. Maybe that's why John's Gospel is unique, saying, *"standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene"...* women who were closely related to Him. They stood - intimately related to Jesus - heart broken and grieving in the scene of despair and ugly suffering. Jesus, on fire with pain and suffering, looked over to these

women and said to His mother, *"Woman, behold your son!"* Then to the disciple whom He loved, He said, *"Behold your mother."* And from that hour, the disciple took her to his home."

In spite of the circumstances, (or perhaps because of the circumstances) Jesus sealed our Christian relationships - loving relationships. Ending relationships causes grief. Absence of relationships causes loneliness. Estrangement of relationships causes frustration and emotional injury. But enjoying close relationships is what gives contentment, peace and meaning in life.

Christ's words from the cross shows that loving, responsible, and caring relationships are most important to Jesus. It's why He offered His invitation to us, *"Follow Me!"* It was in our relationship with Him that His followers find our greatest joy and purpose. It's for the continuation of our relationship with Him in love and forgiveness that Jesus died. He didn't die so we could join

something, or to give some kind of intellectual assent for who He is. He died for us to live together loving and forgiving - in a personal relationship with Him and all His followers. He died so we will have a close and personal relationship with Him forever. It's the reason He became God Incarnate. Our everlasting peace with God is the reason He died on the cross.

His second word from the cross unique to John is a word of humiliation: *"Jesus said, 'I thirst.' A bowl of wine vinegar stood there, so they put a sponge filled with vinegar on hyssop and held it to His mouth."* What a horrible statement! Listen! He hung on a cross, the image of God's perfect love for us. It's a picture of unmerited and unconditional LOVE. But think about how the world takes offense to His perfect love. Think of how the world imposes deep suffering to Him who offered us His perfect love.

Being Christ's followers means that, when we see His perfect image of love, we're drawn to resemble that image of Him in our own lives to the rest of the world. Suffering happens - not because we seek it, but because perfect love is offensive to the decaying world. Turn to the cross and see the cost of perfect love. I also nailed Him to the cross.

The final words in John's Gospel is a declaration of a completed mission: *"When Jesus received the wine vinegar, He said, 'It is finished!'", and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."* Tetellestai! "It is finished!" It's a Greek emphatic meaning a goal is accomplished or ended successfully - nothing

more is to be done! It's why Jesus was born in Bethlehem, why He was raised in Nazareth, and was baptized by John. It's the reason He called disciples, healed the sick, and raised the dead. It's all a confirmation of questions He asked, "Who do people say that I am?" It's the reason for the time at the Mount of Transfiguration and why He said He must go to Jerusalem that "All the things said about the Son of man may be fulfilled." It's the reason why He celebrated the Last Supper, prayed in the garden, why He met the soldiers who came to

arrest Him, and why He was silent before the chief priest and Pontius Pilate.

*Tetellestai...* it is finished. Jesus' obedience to the will of our heavenly Father was His atoning sacrifice for a fallen mankind. Death was swallowed up in His death, so that we may have life! The rupture of mankind against God was repaired when God's own Son was ripped open for our sake. Our sins were left on the cross when God's wrath made Jesus the forsaken sacrifice of God. Three nails, one Man's suffering, the Son of

God's death. It is finished. It was my sin, my nail, my scourging and mockery that He suffered as well. I too, nailed Him to the cross. Do we have other nails we would pound into the cross too? Thanks be to God, *Tetellestai*, it is finished.

Your servant in Christ +  
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola



## Egg Dash Obstacle Bash

**Hosted by Christ Little Rock**  
**March 30, Saturday**

### You're Invited

An exciting Easter event for ALL ages and families! Join us for a FUN filled day as we build relationships and build bridges within our community to serve and share the love of Jesus!

### Volunteer

There are many ways to get involved through joining us on the Work Day or Volunteer on Event Day, donating A Thrivent Action Card or to the Impact Offering; [linaya@christlittlerock.com](mailto:linaya@christlittlerock.com) for more information.

### Dash Day

Egg Dash Races on March 30 will begin every 10 minutes within each half hour for various age groups, beginning with age 4 and under continuing up to age 12.

Each finisher will receive a candy treat and medal! The Toddler Course will be open during the entire event! Concessions are available for purchase from local

food trucks. Join us for one of our biggest events of the year! Contact [linaya@christlittlerock.com](mailto:linaya@christlittlerock.com)





*Mid-South District Wall of*

# HONORED WORKERS



## Donors Share Gifts to District Ministry In Honor of Professional Church Workers

In October of 2023, the Mid-South District observed "District Ministry Month," with an emphasis on Professional Church Workers and the numerous ways they are supported and encouraged through the ministry of the district. From recruiting efforts to tuition assistance, and from professional development to valuable grants for outreach, the ministry of the Mid-South District is strongly invested in its workers—both current and future. As such, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod members across the district were invited to also invest in our workers by sharing a gift to the IMPACT Fund of the Mid-South District. Where so moved, donors were invited to give those gifts in honor or memory of a cherished Professional Church Worker—or even a future worker. The Mid-South District thanks all those who shared gifts in support of district ministry. As gifts were received in honor of specific workers, those names were displayed on a virtual "Honored Worker Wall" on the Mid-South District website. The following Professional Church Workers were honored or memorialized through donor gifts:

### **In HONOR of —**

Rev. Andrew Abraham  
Rev. James G. Bauman  
Rev. John Beabout  
Rev. Robert Benke  
Rev. David Callies  
Mr. John Carpenter (*Seminary Student*)  
Rev. Kevin Conger  
Rev. Paul Donner  
Rev. Dan Elkins  
Rev. James Evers  
Mrs. Alane Evers, *Music Program Director*  
Mrs. Michelle Fischer, *Principal*  
Rev. Mark Goble  
Rev. Tim Henning  
Rev. Kenneth Lampe  
Rev. Ed Maanum  
Rev. Charles Neugebauer  
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola  
Rev. Larry Peters  
Rev. George Smith  
Rev. Andy Toopes  
Rev. Philip Young  
Rev. JD Zischke

### **In MEMORY of —**

Judith Bailey, *Director of Parish Music*  
Mr. Al Behnke, *Mid-South District & LCEF Staff*  
Rev. Al Boysen  
Rev. Dr. Wilbert E. Griesse  
Rev. Norman Groteluschen  
Rev. Clarence Helmich  
Rev. Donley Hesse  
Rev. Paul Martens  
Rev. John Reimold  
Mrs. Margie Reimold, *Teacher*  
Rev. Paul Henry Schmidt  
Rev. Henry Stoll  
Rev. Bruce Zagel

*Thank You for your generous  
and prayerful support of  
District Ministry!*

# CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS IN MINISTRY!

Congratulations to Rev. Albert Quoss (EM) on a half century of service in ministry! Although Pastor Quoss is officially retired, he preaches regularly for congregations in both northwest Arkansas and northeast Oklahoma. Prior to his retirement, he served Zion Lutheran Church in Waldenburg, AR.

A reception in celebration of this ministry milestone will be hosted at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Claremore, OK on Sunday, April 7, following the worship service. All who have been part of the ministry journey for Pastor Quoss are invited to attend!

REV. ALBERT QUOSS

## FIFTY YEARS IN MINISTRY

JOIN US FOR A RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE  
APRIL 7, 2024 · FOLLOWING SUNDAY WORSHIP

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

220 N. SEMINOLE AVE, CLAREMORE, OK 74017

## PRO-LIFE DAY IN NASHVILLE

March 19, 2024

On Tuesday, 19 March 2024 pro-life followers of Jesus will be gathering in our State Capitol to bear witness to God's gift of life from conception to natural death. As Lutherans for Life, you are invited to spend the day with us in Nashville as we pray for our legislators, visit their offices, and speak face to face with those whom God has divinely appointed. Our brothers and sisters in Arkansas and Kentucky might consider doing something similar at their own State Capitols. It would be a blessing for this to become an annual event in all of our districts as we let our lights shine in the places where all too often there is a famine for the Word of God -- our State Assemblies. At least one day of the year we can raise our voices on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves, and in repentance for the ongoing slaughter of the unborn.



And what a good day! -- on the church calendar, we will be commemorating most appropriately St. Joseph, Guardian of our Lord. We do well to ask God for the courageous faith of Joseph who with his life protected and provided for Mary during her pregnancy and for Jesus during his helpless infant years. As head of the holy family, he offers a wonderful example of faith and sacrificial love to all Christian husbands and fathers. *"Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is His reward"* (Psalm 127:3).

Details have yet to be worked out, so please watch for the Mid-South Minute as plans develop.

Pastor Paul Becker  
Concordia, Kingsport TN



# NEW BEGINNINGS FOR LIVING SAVIOR IN SPRINGDALE



The church family of Living Savior Lutheran Church in Springdale, AR celebrated the very special installation of a pastor on February 11, 2024. Retired pastor Rev. Roger Sterle had actually served the congregation in a temporary capacity since December 2021. Pastor Sterle and the congregation of Living Savior forged a strong bond over the two years that followed as the church underwent a major move. Formerly located in Lowell, AR, Living Savior's church property was sold in 2020, leading them to a temporary worship space in nearby Springdale—and a search for a new church home. Acquired later that same year, the new home would be a historic school building in Springdale. But a long re-zoning and renovation process had to happen first. Rev. Sterle and his wife, Shirley, were with

the congregation through much of this challenging time for Living Savior, making the May 2023 dedication of the new building a much-celebrated occasion for all! The natural next step for the church was to extend a call to

Rev. Sterle. Congratulations to Rev. Sterle and the congregation of Living Savior Lutheran Church as they continue their journey together in the Springdale community!



*Front row: Rev. Russell Shewmaker, Rev. Joshua Willadsen (regional VP and officiant), Rev. Roger Sterle, Rev. Chris Gorshe, Rev. Mike Meyer, Rev. Richard Mayer. Middle and Back: Rev. Albert Quoss, Rev. Brandon Martin, Rev. Eric Longman, Rev. JD Zischke, Rev. David Schmidt*



# SHARING THE LOVE OF CHRIST

## *One bowl of Rice and Beans at a Time*



Through the Trinity HOPE Haitian Feeding Program, 35 Feeding Program Directors visit over 260 schools in Haiti twice each month. They not only monitor the feeding program guidelines, but they share the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with each visit. One of our newest feeding program directors, Jean Dony Zidor, "Dony," works with 6 schools in Belle Anse. Belle Anse is a district located between the shore and mountains south of Port-au-Prince. The schools in this district straddle two worlds. Some are in populous, urban areas, and others are in the rural hills of Haiti.

Mare-Briole is a school of meager means with a tin roof, dirt floors, and walls made of wood and palm fronds. The mature trees that surround the school on this hillside provide some shade for the children while they're playing outside. Dony sees his "work" for Trinity HOPE less as work and more as a ministry. He described riding his motorcycle along a precarious road and across a river. After a storm the river is too swollen for him to

cross it. Nonetheless, he believes the children need to be fed and hear the Gospel.

Each time he visits the school, he offers a spiritual message. One particular day in January, he travelled to Mare-Briole for his bi-monthly visit. Prior to his visit, he prepared the message he wanted to share with the students and teachers. It was based on Psalm 91:14-15 *"Because He loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him."* As he traversed the river and the pathway to the school, he rehearsed the message he had prepared. Keeping in mind the Biblical passage and the points he wanted to emphasize.

However, as he began to discuss the issues the students experience daily and share the message with them, the Holy Spirit spoke to him and lead him to guide the students into learning about having a relationship with Jesus Christ. The following verses immediately came to him, John 1:12-13, *"But to all who did*

*receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor the ill of the flesh nor the will of man, but of God."*

At the close of the message Dony said he could see on their faces that they wanted to know more about Jesus, they were genuinely hearing and understanding His love for them. Afterwards, he talked to a professor who is also a pastor in the community. He wanted them to have the support of a local pastor as they learn more and grow in their faith. Sixteen students began being disciplined on this day in January. Dony realized that listening to the direction of the Holy Spirit causes miracles.

This is what it is like to serve the children impacted by the Trinity HOPE feeding programs. Through a bowl of rice and beans, the children are learning about the love of Christ every day.

To learn more about this ministry, visit [www.trinityhope.org](http://www.trinityhope.org). Thank you for being a supporter of our work.



615-394-4950

Trinity HOPE  
P.O. Box 2910

Lebanon, TN 37088

[www.TrinityHOPE.org](http://www.TrinityHOPE.org)

[admin@trinityhope.org](mailto:admin@trinityhope.org)

Platinum  
Transparency  
2023

Candid.



## 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering

The 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering is 18 months away, but plans are already underway to make this event successful. The Gathering will provide thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to be encouraged in their walk with Jesus Christ and learn about the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity.

A major part of Gathering's success is the thousands of volunteers—including Gathering Ambassadors—who dedicate their time and energy pouring into the youth participants and adult leaders attending. Gathering Ambassadors are humble servant leaders, age 26 and older, who are joyful, energetic, quick to listen, and safety-minded. They are fun, friendly, and flexible! Most of all, Gathering Ambassadors love Jesus and shine His light in all circumstances.

If you or someone you know would love to serve as a Gathering Ambassador, applications are open through March 15. To apply to become a Gathering Ambassador, visit [www.lcmsgathering.com/volunteer](http://www.lcmsgathering.com/volunteer). For more information, please contact the Gathering Ambassador Leadership team at [gatheringambassador@gmail.com](mailto:gatheringambassador@gmail.com).

*Thank you for considering serving in this way!*



More information on  
Gathering 2025  
[www.lcmsgathering.com](http://www.lcmsgathering.com)



# UPCOMING EVENTS



## Redeemer Lutheran Church (Nashville)

March 18, 2024

Join us and enjoy an evening with the Concordia Seminary St. Louis Laudamus Choir. Supper will be served at 6pm with Evening Prayer @ 7pm.

Please RSVP to [info@redeemernashville.org](mailto:info@redeemernashville.org) or call 615-646-3150 if you plan to attend supper. Include your name and the number attending.



Jan Lohmeyer, Ph.D.  
Apologetics

## APOLOGETICS SEMINAR

APRIL 13, 2024

**The Board of Outreach** at Redeemer is proud to sponsor an apologetics seminar by Jan Lohmeyer Ph.D. The seminar will take place on Saturday April 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Dr. Lohmeyer will also give a presentation during the Sunday School hour on the 14th. More information on the presentation will come at a later date, but the seminar will be for both adults and children. Lunch is provided. Please RSVP to [info@redeemernashville.org](mailto:info@redeemernashville.org) or 615-646-3150 if you plan to attend. Include your name and the number attending. Dr. Lohmeyer's biography is shown below.

Dr. Jan Lohmeyer has taught Apologetics at churches and schools for 20 years. He has also worked for Concordia University – Texas as an Adjunct Professor in Education and English. He served on the Catechism Review Committee for the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. He has taught at every level in the Education system and has been a principal of 3 schools. He was commissioned by the LC-MS to write the *History of Lutheran Education in the LCMS* which was published in 2012. He has written the book ***The Unaware Church***, which explains how to teach Apologetics in the church and school. He has written numerous articles for a variety of journals, magazines and newspapers. He was commissioned by Concordia Publishing House to write a video series for teaching Apologetics in the Lutheran church. This video series was filmed in February of 2019. He is married to Rhonda Bolin Lohmeyer, a professional musician/songwriter, and they have three sons. He presently serves as a member of the LCMS Board of Directors.

## 2024 Faith of Our Fathers Conference

**April 12-13, 2024**  
**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Collinsville, IL**

We will learn about and discuss the Law of God. This conference is for both laity and pastors. It'll be an opportunity for good theology, fellowship, and some fun with fellow Lutherans! Learn more and register for the conference at: <https://your-grandfatherschurch.org/>



**THE FAITH  
OF OUR FATHERS**

## Leadership Development

**May 16-18, 2024**  
**Educator Leadership Academy**  
from Concordia University Irvine's  
Servant Leadership Institute

Open to all Education Professionals  
14 Interactive seminars led by prominent leaders in education & business; Personal leadership coach for the entire academic year and; Teams of three or more encouraged

**More info at [CUI.edu/ELA](https://CUI.edu/ELA)**



**CONCORDIA  
UNIVERSITY  
IRVINE**

## Leadership Development

**June 10-14, 2024**  
**High School Leadership Academy**  
from Concordia University Irvine's  
Servant Leadership Institute

Attention 10th-12th Graders!  
Week-long leadership development experience; Motivational keynote and breakout speakers; Team building activities; Experienced Leadership Coaches and more!

**More Info at [CUI.edu/HSLA](https://CUI.edu/HSLA)**



**CONCORDIA  
UNIVERSITY  
IRVINE**

## CTSFW offers class at Ascension Lutheran Church, Nashville, TN



**REV. DR. JOHN R. STEPHENSON**

### **How Knowledge of the Last Times Can Shape Us for the Present Times** **June 3 - 5, 2024**

Eschatology is the study of the "last things." In light of the global political and social turmoil of the past 5–10 years, many have cried, "Surely we are living in the last times!" How should we faithfully think of the last times? What are "the signs of the times?" How are Christians to live in the present hour? Specifically, how is a pastor or church leader to faithfully carry out his calling within the present context? In this course, Dr. Stephenson will move the class from the study of eschatology into discussion of many current issues facing the church.

**Information & Registration**



# Save the Date!

## LWML Mid-South District Convention

June 7-9, 2024  
Memphis, TN



Registration information & much more available at  
[midsouthlwml.org/district-convention](https://midsouthlwml.org/district-convention)

### CTSFW Christ Academy

June 16-19, 2024

**Applications are open** for Christ Academy High School, held on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary. High-school-aged men and women interested in Lutheran theology, worship, and service to the Church, please contact Christ Academy Staff. Click links below.

[Christ Academy Timothy School](#)

[Christ Academy Phoebe School](#)

### Seminary Extension Class

June 26-28, 2024

Grace, Little Rock is pleased to host another seminary extension class next summer. Grace will be hosting Rev. Dr. Jim Bushur from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne.

Mark your calendars if you would like to attend; more information coming soon.

### 2024 Institute on Liturgy Preaching & Church Music

July 9-12, 2024

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod will host the 2024 Institute on Liturgy, Preaching and Church Music, set for July 9-12, 2024, at Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward, Neb.

[More information at \[lcms.org/2024-worship-institute\]\(https://www.lcms.org/2024-worship-institute\).](https://www.lcms.org/2024-worship-institute)

### 2024 Lutheran Youth Workers Conference

July 21-24, 2024

The 2024 National Lutheran Youth Workers Conference (**NATIONAL24**) will take place in New Orleans, LA. NATIONAL24 is a stand-alone Youth Ministry practitioner conference, but also provides an opportunity to prepare for the 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering. For more information visit: <https://www.lcmsgathering.com/national24>

## The Henkel Conference 2024

August 1-20, 2024 || [Registration Now Open Online](#) || [Conference Details and Information](#)

# Prayer Summary, February 2024

Following is a list of all the people that have appeared on the Mid-South District website prayer list [www.mid-southlcms.com](http://www.mid-southlcms.com) during the month of February 2024.

## PRAYER CONCERNS

**REV. RONALD HALAMKA** (Waxahachie, TX)  
**MRS. ALISON HAWKINS** (Mid-South District Office)  
**MRS. MARY ANN HERD** (wife of Rev. Clifford Herd, Hixson, TN)  
**REV. ED MAANUM** (First, Knoxville, TN)  
**REV. TOM SAYRE** (Emeritus, St. John's, FL)  
**REV. TOM MOORE** (Emeritus, Cordova, TN)  
**REV. HENRY THOMPSON** (St. Luke, Malvern, AR)  
**REV. NEIL VANDERBUSH** (Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN)  
**REV. TIMOTHY HENNING** (Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Mena, AR)  
**REV. MARK HASS** (Candidate) Sallisaw, OK  
**MRS. NORMA MOORE** (wife of Rev. Tom Moore, Emeritus, Cordova, TN)  
**MR. ZAC ENKO** (son of Rev. Keith Enko, Emeritus, Lebanon, TN)  
**MRS. AMY YOUNG** (wife of Rev. Philip Young, Redeemer, Nashville)  
**MRS. LILIAN MAKALA** (wife of Rev. Emmanuel Makala, Bishop Emeritus, Tanzania)

**Our deepest sympathies to Christi McMinn** (spouse to Rev. David McMinn) and family on the recent passing of her mother Deloris.

**Our deepest sympathies to Vicar Larry Kiem** (Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Sharps Chapel, TN) and family on the recent passing of his mother.

## CALL UPDATE

**ACCEPTED:** **Rev. Roger Sterle**, Emeritus, accepted the Call to serve as *Pastor to Living Savior Lutheran Church, Springdale, AR*. Installation took place February 11, 2024, 1:30PM.

**Rev. Daniel Hawkins**, Missionary-at-Large, Mid-South District, serving GracePoint Lutheran Church, Atoka, TN accepted the Call to serve as *Pastor to GracePoint Lutheran Church, Atoka, TN*. Installation took place February 18, 2024, 3:00PM.

**DECLINED:** **Rev. Jared Hartman**, Pastor to St. Paul Lutheran Church, Wisner, NE, has returned the Call to serve as *Pastor to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN*.

**Rev. Jake Bellinghausen**, Pastor to Grace Lutheran Church, Vestal, NY has returned the Call to serve as *Pastor to St. John's Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR*.

**DECLINED continued:** **Rev. Leo Astrowski**, Pastor to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rock Island, IL, has returned the Call to serve as *Pastor to Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN*.

**Rev. Kirk Douglas**, Pastor to Trinity Lutheran Church, New Your Mills, MN, has returned the Call to serve as *Pastor to Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cabot, AR*.

**PENDING:** **Rev. Andre Frandle**, Colloquy Candidate, has received a Call to serve as *Pastor to Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN*.

## COMMISSIONED MINISTERS:

**PENDING:** **Ms. Ashley Kruse**, serving St. Paul's Lutheran School, Saint Joseph, MO has received a Call to serve as *3rd Grade teacher to First Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR*.

**Ms. Kelly Dressler**, serving St. Peter Lutheran School, Hemlock, MI has received a Call to serve as *1st Grade teacher to First Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR*.

**Dr. Joan Davis**, serving Redeemer Lutheran School, Salt Lake City, UT has received a Call to serve as *kindergarten teacher to First Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR*.

## VACANT CONGREGATIONS & MINISTRIES

**Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN- Pastor**

**Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN – Pastor**  
**Shepherd of the Hills, Horseshoe Bend, AR – Pastor \*\* Pending Call**

**Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN – Pastor**  
**Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cabot, AR – Pastor \*\*Pending Call**

**St. John's Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR - Pastor**

## IN THE CALLING PROCESS- COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

**Christ Lutheran School, Little Rock, AR – 7th/8th Grade Math Teacher**

**First Lutheran School, Fort Smith, AR – Teachers\*\* Pending Calls**

**Our Savior Lutheran Academy, Nashville, TN – Part time teachers ECC and After Care Program**

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Preschool, Bowling Green, KY – Teacher**

**Grace Lutheran Church Early Childhood Center, Little Rock, AR – Assistant Director**





## Congregational Mission Commitments

### Mission Commitment Receipts as of 1/31/2024 (1 Month)

Anticipated Amount (8.3% of budget)..... \$136,629  
Actual Receipts ..... 83,125  
Over (under) anticipated amount..... **(\$53,504)**

### Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (1 Month)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions ..... \$22,854  
Allocated to Tanzania ..... 2,083  
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts)..... 58,188  
Total Receipts ..... \$83,125

### Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (1 Month)

Actual Receipts as of 1/31/2024 ..... \$83,125  
Actual Receipts as of 1/31/2023 ..... \$77,469  
Over (under) prior year receipts ..... \$5,656

## SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

### Encourager Topics in 2024

We invite you to share your stories with us please email stories by **20th** to Rhonda, [webmaster@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:webmaster@mid-southlcms.com). Here's a look at the upcoming topics for 2024

- April- Volunteers
- May - Small Town & Rural Ministry
- June - Leadership

### 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](mailto: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*

**Missy Washburn,**  
*Executive Assistant to the District President*

**Renae McElwain,**  
*Communications & Marketing Specialist*

**Lisa Pennington**  
*Finance Assistant*

### Contact

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### Stay Connected With Us

ON THE WEB -  
"mid-southlcms.org"

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