

# Encourager

MAY 2024

Mid-South District LCMS



A Message from  
Rev. Dr. Roger  
Paavola, President

## “Getting Real in the Church”

II Corinthians 4:7-11

One of the strangest phenomena I encounter in counseling families is the sense of belonging. From the very beginning of our lives, we seek and work on belonging to someone or something worthwhile. Marriage, family, neighborhoods, social organizations, and churches are organizations that fulfill that longing within our human spirit to belong. In one sense, the search for belonging goes back to our first parents - Adam and Eve who had once belonged to the family of God - created in His image - but lost their belonging and their belongings when they fell into willful sin. St. John of Chrysostom wrote in the third century, “My soul will not be at rest, until it finds its rest in You, O God.”

And that, my friends, is the difference between the Church and all the social organizations people turn to in order to find their “belonging.” Belonging to the Church is a fulfillment of the seminal need within our souls that can find no rest, until it finds its rest in Almighty God.

So, what is a Church... a long list of names from our church roster, an organization out to get your name and dollars into a fancy building, or a club for financially well-to-do elitists? Well, the Bible describes Church membership quite differently - at least in the true Christian Church. We pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ and receive new members as the Lord gives the increase. We need to understand what their new membership with us means to

them and what impact it has on our lives, as well as theirs. We can never be the same as we were before they arrived. We’ll never be the same as we were before. This world is dynamic - ever changing - and when we place our lives in the hands of Almighty God, things are going to happen in a big way.

St. Paul says Church members are ordinary people... you and me. He writes, “*We have this Gospel treasure in earthen vessels,*” clay pots... ordinary ground down dirt. We’re ordinary people who sin, who get hurt, and who struggle with the Old Adam within us. But we’re all clay pots - some made so finely - like fine China that might crack easily if handled in a not-so-gentle manner. Other ones are sun-dried mud,

hardened with dirt and grime, but who crumble easily even if bumped. But we're all clay pots and that's why we all have the same limitations, the same problems... the same cracks and fractures.

St. Paul is being realistic. It's humbling to realize that our beginning and belonging starts with the same basic ingredients. Our purpose, designed by God, according to St. Paul isn't to make ourselves great, but to be of service to others and to God. Our first purpose, as clay pots, is to be filled by God with all His blessings, so He can spill us over and serve Him, serve others, and build up His kingdom.

So, Paul goes on to say, *"We have this all sufficient power in us, so that people will see that the power for our life comes from God."* If a pot is made out of dirt, then, it stands to reason that the value of what it represents lies within it as it serves and who formed it. Some people describe their lives, "Empty without Jesus," because that's what they are. They suffer from this lack of belonging; an emptiness because there's no real peace without Jesus Christ. When our goals disappear, meaning disappears. When meaning is gone, purpose is gone. And when purpose is gone, life is dead. Emptiness and despair run over the top of those who struggle trying to find identity and belonging.

But, even within a church, there are people who can't find purpose or relevancy. They come because they're

drawn by some kind of culture, friendship, or family. Serving in a church accomplishes some new activities for them. So they begin to move into places of control and participation within a church. But emptiness can remain because the sufficiency and purpose of their lives is hollow - nothing inside - because they haven't had Jesus Christ fill their empty clay pot.

Like clay pots, we're created to hold something. Genesis says that "something" is the breath of life and the image of God... His light and life within us. Without God our lives are hollow and meaningless, unfilled. God created us from the dirt of the earth. He breathed life into our souls. So, when we're formed into Christ - as earthen vessels, the Living, breathing Christ brings us back to life again. He IS the life within us, as Christians.

But don't be confused. There are some who have the idea that Jesus jumps inside after there's been some class, or they go through some ritual. Then there are those who've been around for such a long time that everyone considers them to be THE members because... they just belong. But being a member of the true Christian Church means opening ourselves up - letting Christ fill us with His life, so He can fill us with life and purpose.

But St. Paul also says that there are some cracked pots. In fact, he writes, *"We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed, sometimes in doubt, but never*

*in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, badly hurt at times, but not destroyed. At all times, these mortal bodies of ours face the struggles of life and death, just as Jesus did - so that everyone can see the life of Jesus revealed in our bodies."*

It's hard to admit we're cracked, fractured by original and actual sin. But we know it. We may try to gloss over it, glue our broken parts back together, cover them up, or hide them. We may try to live by our own self sufficiency and search for our inner self. When that happens we truly find nothing but emptiness and the reasons why so many cracks and crumble happen under the burden of carrying their own weights of life.

Paul says afflictions, doubts, persecutions, and being hurt are merely the examples of the burdens that come from outside of ourselves that will shatter our family, our relationships, and even our own person. But Paul says, for the Christian, those kinds of things don't have victory over us. Jesus takes the chains of afflictions, removes the shadows of doubt, lifts us up in the persecution and shows us - in the most dramatic way - that being hurt as a Christian shows the life and death of Jesus Christ is alive within us. *"My grace is sufficient for you,"* God told Paul when he was persecuted and hurting.

Christ's victory is our victory. So, our ego, our pride, our filling ourselves up with hot air have to be crucified in Christ - put to

death, so that the life of Jesus can fill us up, heal our cracks, and let His glorious Light shine in a new life for us. Here Paul concludes, saying, *“For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh.”* Through Baptism we die with Christ. We become living members of His body when He fills us with the Holy Spirit who calls and enlivens us for new life. He transforms our ordinary lives into vibrant, extra-ordinary lives of service to Him and to those He has entrusted to our

keeping. Sure enough, we admit our weaknesses, but, in Church membership, we also declare the wonders of the mystery of the life we share in common union with our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ.

I pray our Church membership isn’t something taken lightly – just like it would be in some social organization. I pray your church membership and attendance is our honest, sincere desire to be filled anew by God’s marvelous grace and mercy. And I pray that if anyone have some cracks,

some imperfections that have been glazed over, that God’s Spirit speaks to let you know of the love, forgiveness, mercy and grace that is ours through Jesus Christ... who fills us with His grace, mercy, salvation, and power for the sake and in the name of our blessed Savior Jesus Christ.

Your servant in Christ +  
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola



## Welcome Rev. Joshua Schooping

The **Rite of Installation** was held for **The Rev. Joshua Schooping** on Sunday, April 14, 2024 at St John’s Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR. Participating in the Rite were (Lower R-L) Rev. Wayne Schuett, Emeritus; Rev, Darrel Kobs, Emeritus; President Roger Paavola; Rev. Joshua Schooping; Rev. Joshua Willadsen, Fort Smith; Rev. John Truede, Emeritus; Rev. Richard Davenport, Fort Smith.



Top row (R-L) Rev. Timothy Henning, Mena; Rev. Joshua Ralston, Augsburg; Rev. John

Merrill, Fort Smith; Rev. Thomas Bartsch, Lamar; Rev. Jason Zirbel, Greenwood.

## Congratulations Rev. Shemwell



Rev. Charles Vincent Shemwell, pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Johnson City, TN, has **successfully defended his Master of Sacred Theology (STM) thesis at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW)**. Congratulations!

His thesis was entitled, "The Hero of Enlightenment Stood on his Head: A Study of the Eighteenth-century Struggle against Traditional Lutheran Catechesis and Johann Georg Hamann's Defense in Three Socratic Texts." The thesis was supervised by colleague Dr. Roland Ziegler (thesis advisor) and reviewed by the readers of the thesis committee, Prof. John Pless and Dr. Gifford Grobien. Getting into rather tough and challenging German primary sources of Hamann, even for the German natives, Vincent has masterfully presented Hamann's apologia of the traditional catechesis when the passivity of catechumen, particularly represented by the question-and-answer format of Luther's catechism, was being replaced by instructions that highlighted the use of reason. This thesis engages in the philosophical background of the past centuries that had helped move the church's catechetical tradition away from the rhythm of God's speaking/our hearing, and His gifts giving/our being given to of His gifts. It was refreshing to know more about Johann Georg Hamann. Another superb study and STM thesis. *STM program is very proud of Vincent's scholarly achievement for the sake of the church. Once again, congratulations!*

### 2024 Mid-South District Early Childhood Educator's Conference

June 17-18, 2024

[Register online now](#)

June 17-19, 2024

## Preaching Retreat

**REGISTER HERE**

**RETREAT DATES:**  
Monday, June 17 to  
Wednesday, June 19, 2024

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION**  
**Conference Only: \$175 CAD**  
**Conference + Accommodation: \$300 CAD**  
We have reserved a block of rooms in a Brock University dormitory at a special rate of \$125 (total) for Monday and Tuesday nights.

**REGISTRATION AFTER APRIL 30th**  
**Conference Only: \$200 CAD**  
**Conference + Accommodation: \$325 CAD**  
We have reserved a block of rooms in a Brock University dormitory at a special rate of \$125 (total) for Monday and Tuesday nights.

**Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary**  
470 Glenridge Ave • St. Catharines, ON L2T 4C3  
reception@concordia-seminary.ca • 905-688-2362

[www.concordia-seminary.ca](http://www.concordia-seminary.ca)

## Inviting Guests to Church

### *CTK provided invitations for members to hand out*

Inviting guests to Easter services at your church is an easy, natural thing to do. Right? Easter is such a joy-filled Sunday: the choir sounds great, the Pastor is pumped, family members gather from in and out of town. It's an occasion to be shared, and to shout together, "He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"

Then why is it so hard?! Some people are tongue-tied when it comes to inviting friends or coworkers to join them in worship. What should be simple causes sweaty palms and the tendency to gaze out the nearest window instead of making that all-important eye contact. Help!

At Christ the King, we try to make it as easy as possible to reach out and invite others to worship the Savior. Our Easter Invitation Cards were full of information about Holy Week services and included a QR code to our website and contact information. Each parishioner was handed three of these 4"x4" double-sided cards and challenged to find three people who needed to hear the saving Word of God. More cards were available in succeeding weeks leading up to Easter. The children of our Preschool and Elementary School were given cards as well, with an extra to invite a friend.

It's easy to hand someone an invitation card with a smile or put the card in an envelope with a personal note or leave it alongside your tip at a restaurant. We put evangelism outreach in the hands (literally) of every member and prayed that the Holy Spirit would encourage and bless their efforts.

—Genie Swan  
Coordinator, Community  
Outreach Dog,  
Job Comfort Dog Team  
Christ the King Lutheran  
Church



You're invited to celebrate

# EASTER

Christ the King Lutheran Church  
5296 Park Avenue Memphis

Sunday, March 31  
7:00 8:30 11:00am

[www.ctkmemphis.com/easter](http://www.ctkmemphis.com/easter)

### SHARE EASTER AT CHRIST THE KING!

**You are encouraged to use these cards to invite your friends, family, neighbors, community helpers – and anyone else with whom you wish to share the joy of Easter – to join us at Christ the King Lutheran Church for our Easter morning services on Sunday, March 31!**

**\* Experience the growing Light of the Sunrise Service at 7AM as a new day and our new life in Christ is realized.**

**\* Celebrate the Joy of the Resurrection at the 8:30 and 11:00AM services.**

**\* Stop by the Fellowship Hall between 9:45-10:45AM for a light breakfast.**



*This is a wonderful opportunity to invite people to experience worship and fellowship at Christ the King!*

For more details about our Holy Week and Easter services, check out the Easter page on our website at [www.ctkmemphis.com/easter](http://www.ctkmemphis.com/easter)



## MID-SOUTH DISTRICT WELCOMES CANDIDATES FROM 2024 CALL DAY AT CONCORDIA-ST. LOUIS



CHRISTINA CHILDERS



MATTHEW LYNCH

CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS



On April 23, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis students took part in Call Day, receiving first calls to pastoral and diaconal ministry, or assignments as vicars and deaconess interns. The Mid-South District is pleased to receive the following candidates:

- **Christina Childers**—Grace Lutheran Church in Knoxville, TN (Deaconess)
- **Matthew Lynch**—Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis, TN (Associate Pastor)

## It's Not Too Late to Join LUTHERAN SUMMER MUSIC 2024!

Good  
News!



We've added  
spots for  
LSM 2024!



Lutheran Summer Music (LSM) is looking forward to an incredible year and has been able to add extra spots for this summer! Final openings are available for the four-week Full Session (June 30-July 28) for students in grades 8-12 who play clarinet, flute, horn, oboe, trumpet, euphonium, violin, or string bass. Contact LSM Admissions for questions at: [admissions@lutheransummermusic.org](mailto:admissions@lutheransummermusic.org).

For more information or to apply, visit [LSMacademy.org](http://LSMacademy.org).

## MID-SOUTH DISTRICT WELCOMES CANDIDATES FROM CTSFW 2024 CALL DAY



*Pictured are (L to R) District President Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, Pat Paavola, Koh Yamamoto, Marie Yamamoto, Heather Cox, Patrick Cox, Amanda Martin and James Martin.*

On April 24, students received their first call into the pastoral ministry at the annual Candidate Call Service of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana (CTSFW). We are pleased to announce that the following candidates have been assigned to serve congregations in the Mid-South

District:

**Patrick M. Cox II**—Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN (Pastor)

**James S. Martin**—Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN (Associate Pastor)

**Koh M. Yamamoto**—Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN (Pastor)

## LIME PARTNERSHIP WITH STATE UNIVERSITY

*“It is with joy and happiness that we inform you that a partnership between one Department in the State University located in Fianarantsoa and LIME was signed by both parties last March. This was effected during the celebration of the 25th anniversary of that Department. The name of the Department in English SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION.*

*Your brother across the ocean, Joseph”*



# TRINITY HOPE REACHING HAITIAN CHILDREN IN DIRE TIMES



At this point, trying to explain the current conditions in Haiti is very much a moving target. However, knowing our donors are fully invested with their prayers, financial support, and genuine concern for our brothers and sisters in Haiti, we want to be forthcoming with the latest information we have. Right now, the headlines are changing by the hour and conditions continue to deteriorate rapidly.

At this point, it is impossible to know exactly where the political upheaval will land. However, there are several points we DO know with absolute certainty.

First, God is a merciful God and He is still in control. We so often do not understand the twists and turns God allows in our lives, but we know God never abandons

His people (*"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."* Deuteronomy 31:8). We must continue to trust His plan and His timing.

Second, throughout all this chaos, we are still feeding thousands of children every school day. Although the gangs' antics are impacting the entire country, the most dangerous areas are somewhat concentrated to those areas around Port au Prince (see map). Outside of those areas, most schools are continuing to operate at a basic level and, at this time, we are able to continue the feeding programs in 247 schools (out of 271 we expected to feed this year). Thanks be to God for His protection over the children and our staff.

Third, in all the darkness Haiti is now facing, God is allowing Trinity HOPE to be a reminder to the people that *true hope* is found only in Jesus Christ. While these children receive this critically needed meal of rice and beans, they are also being fed the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. They need this spiritual food, as well as the physical food, more than ever right now. (*"Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"* John 8:12).

Most everything in Haiti is incredibly volatile right now. We stay in very close contact with our staff in Haiti, reminding them that their safety is paramount. To date, God has consistently provided His protection over them, and has always enabled us to find a way to buy the food we need. It hasn't always been every ingredient we would normally buy, and it certainly hasn't been at the prices we desired, but He has always provided. We give Him thanks for this! God created and called Trinity HOPE to feed His children every school day, and our commitment is to continue this important work as long as He enables us to do so, giving Him ALL the glory for this wonderful blessing.

PLEASE continue your steadfast prayers for all those in Haiti. We know the fight is already won, and the future of all Believers are secure through Jesus Christ. Pray that God will use Trinity HOPE, along with the entire body of Christ throughout Haiti, to share this message with great urgency to all those we are blessed to serve. For more information, or to help support the work we are doing in Haiti, please visit our website ([www.trinityhope.org](http://www.trinityhope.org)). Thank you for allowing us to serve God alongside you.



615-394-4950

Trinity HOPE  
P.O. Box 2910  
Lebanon, TN 37088  
admin@trinityhope.org  
www.TrinityHOPE.org





# Coming UP

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

May 16-18, 2024

Educator Leadership

Academy (Concordia University)

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

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



## HOW KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAST TIMES CAN SHAPE US FOR THE PRESENT TIMES

June 3-5, 2024

CTSFW offers class at Ascension Lutheran Church  
Nashville, TN

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

## LWML MID-SOUTH DISTRICT CONVENTION

JUNE 7-9, 2024



Plans continue to be finalized for the LWML Mid-South District Convention in Memphis on June 7-9. We are excited to have Kaye Wolff as our Keynote Speaker. Kaye has served in many positions in LWML and was instrumental in the production of the movie "The First Rosa". She even had a part in the movie! Friday and Saturday

business sessions and opening Worship Service will be held at Christ The King Lutheran Church. Anyone can attend the Friday Worship service without registering for the convention. The Saturday evening banquet and entertainment will be held at the Hilton Hotel on Ridge Lake Blvd., 5 minutes from the church. Convention and hotel information can be found at [www.midsouthlwml.org/district-convention](http://www.midsouthlwml.org/district-convention).

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

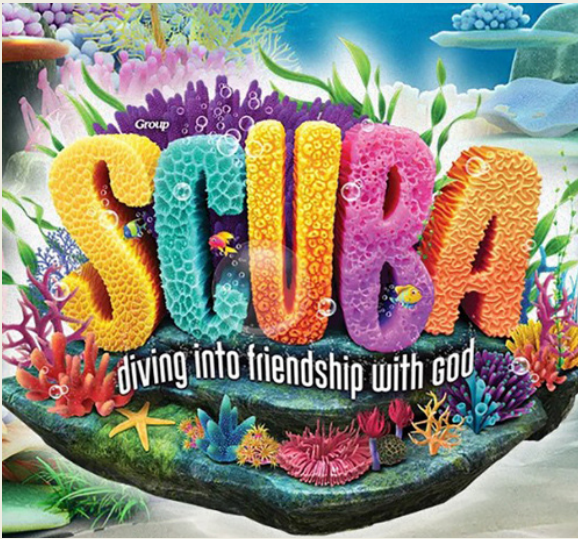
June 10-14, 2024

High School Leadership Academy  
(Concordia University)

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](http://CUI.edu/HSLA)





## Christ Little Rock VBS June 17-20

Join us THIS JUNE as we take a deep dive into an amazing undersea adventure!! Kids ages 3 - entering 5th Grade are invited June 17-20 for an amazing week at Christ Little Rock!! Each day from 9AM-NOON kids will explore the colorful ocean reef as part of SCUBA VBS!! Together we will learn that God is our forever friend who is real, who loves us, and who we can always trust. Kids can expect an awesome week full of exciting adventures, worship, games and hands-on Bible activities to help them grow in their faith and friendship with God.

REGISTRATION- <https://vbspro.events/p/events/clr2024>

### 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 19-20, 2024*

[Register Open](#)  
[Conference Details/Info](#)



ENDURE

### 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering

More information @ [www.lcmsgathering.com](https://www.lcmsgathering.com)

# Prayer Summary, April 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 April 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. DON HEFTA** (Faith Lutheran Church, Fairfield Bay, AR)  
**REV. MARK HASS** (Candidate) Sallisaw, OK  
**MR. ZAC ENKO** (son of Rev. Keith Enko, Emeritus, Lebanon, TN)  
**MRS. NORMA MOORE** (wife of Rev. Tom Moore, Emeritus, Cordova, TN)  
**MS. LILIAN MAKALA** (wife of Rev. Emmanuel Makala, Tanzania)

**Our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of MS. CHERYL TYLER** (mother-in-law to Renae (Marty) McElwain, Mid-South District Office

## CALL UPDATE

**ACCEPTED:** **Rev. Jonathan Petering**, Associate Pastor, Hope Lutheran Church, Friendswood, TX accepted the Call to serve as Senior Pastor to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN. Installation is planned for June 16, 2024.

**DECLINED:** **Rev. Neil Vanderbush** (Emeritus) returned the Call to serve as Pastor to Messiah Lutheran Church, Corpus Christi, TX.

**PENDING:** **Rev. Todd Bunge**, Pastor to Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Polk City, IA has received a Call to serve as Pastor to Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN.

**Pastor-Elect Koh Yamamoto** has received a Call to serve as Pastor for Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN.

**Pastor-Elect Matthew Lynch** has received a Call to serve as Associate Pastor for Christ the King Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN.

**Pastor-Elect Patrick Cox II** has been received a Call to serve as Pastor for Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN.

**Pastor-Elect James Martin** has received a Call to serve as Associate Pastor for Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville, TN.

**Rev. Neil Vanderbush** (Emeritus) has received a Call to serve as Pastor to Messiah Lutheran Church, Boerne, TX.

## CALL UPDATE continued

### COMMISSIONED MINISTERS:

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

**Ms. Emily Leising**, serving as DCE to Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN has accepted the Call to serve as DCE to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Medina, OH.

**DECLINED:** **Mrs. Michelle McMullen**, Candidate, Livingston, TX has returned the Call to serve as Director of Preschool and Early Childhood Programs to Salem Lutheran Ministries, Springdale, AR

**PENDING:** **Mr. Jonah Kaufmann**, DCE, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Bowling Green, KY has received a Call to serve as DCE to Christ Lutheran Church, Costa Mesa, CA.

**Mrs. Michelle Fischer**, Principal, Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Memphis, TN has received a Call to serve as Principal to Rochester Central Lutheran School, Rochester, MN.

**Mrs. Michelle Fischer**, Principal, Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Memphis, TN has received a Call to serve as Principal to Cross Lutheran Church and School, New Braunfels, TX.

**Christina Childers** (Deaconess Intern, Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN) has been issued a Call to serve as Deaconess to Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN.

## VACANT CONGREGATIONS & MINISTRIES

**Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN** – Pastor \*\*Pending Call

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Bowling Green, KY** – Senior Pastor

**Shepherd of the Hills, Horseshoe Bend, AR** – Pastor

**Christ Lutheran Church, Paris, TN** – Pastor \*\* Pending Call

**Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN** – Pastor \*\*Pending Call

**Our Savior Lutheran Church, Cabot, 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 **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 3/31/2024 (3 Months)

Anticipated Amount  
(25% of budget)..... \$409,886  
Actual Receipts .....392,364  
Over (under)  
anticipated amount (**\$17,522**)

### Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (3 Months)

Allocated to Synod  
for World Missions ..\$111,459  
Allocated to Tanzania .. 6,250  
Retained for  
District Mission/  
Ministry Support  
(70% of receipts)..... 274,655  
Total Receipts ..... \$392,364

### Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (3 Months)

Actual Receipts as of  
3/31/2024 ..... \$392,364  
Actual Receipts as of  
3/31/2023 ..... \$352,129  
Over (under) prior  
year receipts .....\$40,235

## 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

- June - Leadership
- July - Veterans
- August - Church Planting

### 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

1675 Wynne Road  
Cordova, TN 38016  
PHONE: 866.373.1343 /  
901.373.1343  
FAX: 901.373.4826

### Stay Connected With Us

ON THE WEB -  
"mid-southlcms.org"

ON FACEBOOK -  
"Mid-South-LCMS"

ON TWITTER -  
"@midsouthLCMS"

