

# Encourager

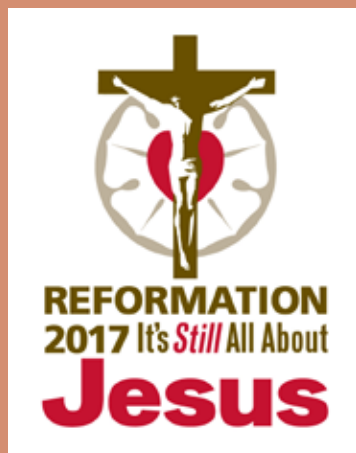
Mid-South District LCMS | October 2017

## Focus for October

500th Anniversary of the  
Reformation

*This October, as LCMS churches observe the 500th anniversary of the Reformation we are excited to witness the many ways each congregation celebrates and reaches out into their community to mark this special occasion, "It's still all about Jesus".*

*We hope you will join in the celebrations with the Mid-South District's weekend events, October 13 & 14.*



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



Happy Reformation! That's right, on October 31, 1517, a professor of theology and Catholic monk named Martin Luther nailed 95 questions - propositions - on the door of the Chapel at Wittenberg Castle Church. The sound of a hammer hitting a nail not only rang on the streets of Wittenberg, but sounded a revolution that has changed the world for five centuries. The revolution returned God's Word to a proper understanding of God's grace. The Reformation had tremendous implications for the universal Church. It's pretty obvious, as we're worshipping God's pure grace 500 years later, how a bold and sometimes outspoken monk created a tidal wave of events we still see in orthodox

Lutheran churches and around the world!

But if we look at the Reformation, or read about it, or watch television shows related to it, we'll notice that all kinds of changes took place in the world because of Martin Luther's stand against the church's misguided leadership and false teachings in the church in his days. People will quickly talk about the cultural change that went along with getting the Bible into the hands of the common people in their own language. Sociologists will boldly talk about how much society changed for the better when someone finally challenged the Pope and the leadership of the church. Educators will praise the change in educational philosophy that went along with educating all people so they could, in turn, educate the members of their households. There is so much that we can talk about! But, what is the Reformation all about in the first place?

We need to remember the main point of the Reformation: It wasn't about education, or sociology, politics, or culture.

Luther simply wanted the Church to return to the Gospel. He didn't want to start a new church. He wanted to reform the church that had abandoned the purity of God's Word for the sake of the mundane. That's what the Reformation should still be about today. Of all the 95 Theses, there's one that stands out: Thesis 62 – "The true treasure of the Church is the Most Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God." Certainly, it's not unusual that, today, we hear about the Gospel, God's grace, forgiveness of sin, and Christ's righteousness given by God all the time. But, the Reformation invites us to go beyond the routine and "drill down" to experience the magnitude of the chain of events that had to all come together to bring us to this day.

It all started when a young Luther was set to go to school to become a lawyer. But, to his father's great disappointment, young Martin opted, instead to become a monk. Luther was a monk – one who studied hard, who began a relentless pursuit for a personal peace with God that had long evaded him. He agonized as he read in Paul's

letter to the Romans, *"Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin."* God's Law was clear! By our nature and by our deeds, we are condemned sinners.

The more Luther learned about the depth of his sin, the more he tried to fix the problem of his sin. He didn't just confess his sins, he sat with his Confessor for hours trying to recall every sin he did. He treated his body horribly with fasting, self-flagellation, and sleeping in snow, trying desperately just to punish himself for his sins. But the more he tried to please God, the more he realized his worthless efforts. As he soon discovered how his personal righteousness lacked any possibility for comfort and peace in his life, he became increasingly despondent and angry with God. In his deepest despair, Luther wrote, "How could God set up such strict rules, all the while knowing we would never be able to satisfy Him, that we would always fall short."

But his studies continued as he read through the Scriptures. God's Word clicked as he read Psalm 51. Luther began to see another side to God.

God holds us to standards of holiness and faithfulness that we cannot achieve on our own. The only appeal we have before God is to appeal to His grace and mercy. God is the only means by which our sins are forgiven. Psalm 51 reads: *"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions."*

The central message of the Gospel is that God forgives His people through the merits of our Savior, Jesus Christ – justification. Christ's righteousness is our only hope and assurance for peace with God. All of Luther's efforts – penance, visiting ancient relics, self-punishment – were sin in themselves, since those seek satisfaction before God who sees only the perfect, atoning sacrifice of Christ as sufficient for our redemption. The Gospel message changed Luther's agonizing search for self-righteousness. He re-discovered that it is God Who gives salvation, not as a prize, but as a free gift through the merits of Jesus Christ, by faith by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

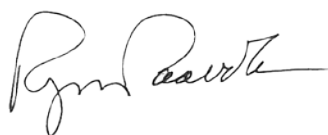
This is why we celebrate the Reformation. We have the truth! Not just the Law that condemns and shows us our sinfulness, but we have the Gospel truth that God gave Himself to take away our sins, and bring us the hope of eternal life. God sent His Son to suffer and die for our sins. Luther later coined this as the "Joyous Exchange" where our wretched sinfulness



is exchanged for the perfect righteousness of Christ for us.

St Paul's letter to the Romans says, *"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith."*

The Reformation message is simple. It's not about us, nor is it about Martin Luther. It's all about Jesus and what He has done for us and our eternal salvation and peace with God. What we celebrate in the Reformation, as we join millions of Lutheran around the world, is completely about what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. We thank God for returning people to the Good News of Christ, our Savior, and we can continue to share with people who still live in darkness, that they may be led by the Spirit into the marvelous Light of Christ.



## New Members Received



Three families of the newest members of Grace Lutheran Church (Clarksville, TN ) are pictured. They were received Sunday on Sept. 17 and welcomed with a new member potluck. What is notable is counting the children. These three families include 8 children. Grace has welcomed more than 30 infants, toddlers, youth, and adults into the Kingdom by Holy Baptism so far this year. Pastors are the Rev. Larry A. Peters and Daniel M. Ulrich; DCE is Jo-Ann Thomack.

## Church Planting (AR)

Rev. JD Zischke presenting his plans for a church plant in Northwest Arkansas. There were 40 people from seven different Fayetteville circuit congregations. Rev. Zischke began his work in July 2017.





# Mid-South District Set to Host a Weekend of Special Reformation Events

The Mid-South District is excited to host two outstanding events to mark the Reformation's 500th Anniversary:

- **Reformation Choral Concert** on Friday, October 13 (*University of Memphis Rose Theater*)
- **Oktoberfest** on Saturday, October 14 (*Immanuel Lutheran Church & School – Memphis*)

The Choral Concert will feature over 75 voices and instrumentalists, including students from the University of Memphis Collegiate Choir and members of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. Through both Lutheran hymns and Bach classics, the evening will be a true celebration of the Reformation. The event is free and open to the public. A large, multi-denominational audience from across the Mid-South community is expected.

Through the Oktoberfest event, the Reformation celebration will be expanded to include the whole family! This day of fun will include traditional German food, locally brewed beer, an Oompah band and great attractions for kids like a bounce house and face painting. There will also be an auction of themed baskets, a "Luther photo booth," and even a Luther costume contest! Immanuel's sprawling campus will offer a great setting for the festival and we appreciate the use of their facility and volunteers. Tickets for this day of fun are \$10 for adults (includes food and beer/beverage) and \$5 for ages 4-12 (includes food), with festival-goers under age 4 admitted free of charge.



*The Reformation Choral Concert singers and conductor Jeremy T. Warner assembled for a special "rehearsal retreat" at Grace Celebration Lutheran Church (Cordova) in mid-September.*

While these are District-sponsored events for the enjoyment of all our congregations and the community, both events are being coordinated by amazing volunteers. Special thanks is extended to Charlie Gemeinhardt of Christ the King Lutheran in Memphis for orchestrating the many details of the Choral Concert. Likewise, the Oktoberfest event would not be possible without the leadership of Diane Reimold at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Memphis. Both events are also generously sponsored by Thivent Financial—and for that we are most grateful!

**Want to attend one of these great Reformation events? Visit [reformation.mid-southlcms.org](http://reformation.mid-southlcms.org)**



## Congregations Across the District Marking the Reformation's 500th Anniversary

With the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation happening on October 31, ministries across the Mid-South District have a multitude of events planned to mark the occasion. Through these events, congregations have the opportunity to both celebrate Luther's legacy and invite others to learn more about the Gospel through the Reformation story. Following are just a handful of the Reformation events coming up across the District. For details on any of the activities listed, visit **reformation.mid-southlcms.org** and click on "EVENTS" at the top of the page.

### LUTHER'S ACHIEVEMENT

**October 1 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

*Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Crossville, TN*  
A free presentation on the Monumental Significance of Martin Luther in Honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation Given by Rev. Dr. Eric Phillips.

### MARTIN LUTHER: THE IDEA THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

**October 4 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

*Hosted by Peace Lutheran Church in Conway, AR*  
One Night Only! A viewing of the Martin Luther documentary at the Conway Cinemark theater.

### GOSPELS TO CROSSVILLE PROJECT

**October 7 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

*Coordinated by Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Crossville, TN*

To celebrate the greatness of the Reformation in Christian history, some of the pastors of Crossville are collaborating for public readings of the Four Holy Gospels.

### ON THE TRAIL OF MARTIN LUTHER – TOUR OF GERMANY

**October 11 - October 21**

*Coordinated by Faith Lutheran Church, Collierville, TN*  
An 11-day adventure that includes time in Mainz, Worms, the Gutenberg Museum, Erfurt, Wartburg Castle, Lutherhaus, Eisleben, Dresden, Leipzig, St. Thomas Church, Wittenberg, St. Mary's Church and Berlin.

### IMPACT OF THE REFORMATION

**October 12 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

*Hosted by Concordia Lutheran Church in Kingsport, TN*  
Jake MacAulay of The American View will give a free public lecture with Q&A at Kingsport's Renaissance Center. In addition, Concordia Lutheran Church's October sermons will have a special focus on the Reformation.

### MARTIN LUTHER: THE IDEA THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

**October 19 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

*Hosted by Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church in Maumelle, AR & Trinity Lutheran Church in North Little Rock, AR*

One Night Only! A viewing of the Martin Luther documentary at the Regal McCain Mall Stadium 12 & RPX.



### 9V BATTERY GIVE AWAY

**October 21 @ 9:00 am - 11:30 am**

*Hosted by Peace Lutheran Church in Cherokee Village, AR*  
Peace Lutheran is commemorating the 500th anniversary with a two-prong approach: first, they are giving away 500 9 volt batteries on Oct. 21 to the community in generous celebration, encouraging everyone to make sure their smoke alarms are functioning properly at the usual daylight savings time. Smoke alarms "sound the alarm" when danger is present, just as Martin Luther and Christians valuing God's Word still today "sound the alarm" to

their communities to take God's Word seriously and heed its healing message. This will open the door to invite the community to attend the Luther movie Peace will be showing the next weekend in their fellowship hall.

### **"HERE I RUN" 5K**

**October 28 @ 8:00 am**

*Hope Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, AR*

Hope Lutheran Church is organizing a day of activities and events as an outreach to the community and to raise funds for the Jacksonville area First Responders. The day will commence with the "Here I Run" 5K, starting at Hope Lutheran and continuing through established Jacksonville neighborhoods.

### **SONGS OF THE REFORMATION**

**October 28 @ 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm**

*Concordia Lutheran Church in Kingsport, TN*

A special Evening Prayer service and Hymn Sing with Dr. David Hendricksen, followed by a reception.

### **REFORMATION ANNIVERSARY & POTLUCK**

**October 29 @ 8:30 & 11:00 am, potluck @ 12:15pm**

*Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis, TN*

A Reformation Anniversary with services of Word and Sacrament enveloping the Five Solae, as well as majestic music featuring timpani and trumpets. Reverend Charles Neugebauer will serve as proclaimer and Reverend Mark Goble as the liturgist. The congregation will then gather for a Reformation Potluck, with brats and kraut and homemade sides and desserts. It is rumored Martin Luther may appear! We hope to see many friends and former members join the CTK family for our celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

### **500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION HYMN SING AND DINNER**

**October 29 @ 2:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

*Ascension Lutheran Church in Madison, TN*

A hymn sing and history of known and not-so-well-known hymnody from the 16th century as led by organist Minae Hayashi. Dinner follows the hymn sing.

### **MARTIN LUTHER: THE IDEA THAT CHANGED THE WORLD**

**October 29 @ 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm**

*Peace Lutheran Church in Cherokee Village, AR*

Peace Lutheran will show the new Martin Luther movie in their fellowship hall, free of charge. The community is invited and free popcorn and drinks will also be provided.

### **REFORMATION HYMN FESTIVAL**

**October 29 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

*First Lutheran Church in Chattanooga, TN*

This hymn festival celebrates the writings and musical contributions of Martin Luther. Several of the Chattanooga circuit LCMS congregations are leading the congregation in Luther's hymnody, tracing the church year from Advent through Reformation. Rev. Gilbert Pingel is the liturgist and Dr. Sarah Harr is the hosting music director and organist. A reception will follow the service in the Fellowship Hall.

### **VISIT FROM ANCIENT HISTORY EXPERT DR. PAUL L. MAIER**

**November 17 @ 12:00 pm - November 19 @ 12:00 pm**

*Faith Lutheran Church in Collierville, TN*

Dr. Maier, Professor of Ancient History at Western Michigan University, is one of our country's leading authorities on the biblical world and a widely acclaimed author and speaker. Dr. Maier's seminars explore the life of Martin Luther, the background of his reform efforts, and many other 16th century reformers.

*This 8' x 4' banner was proudly displayed during the months of August, September, and October in front of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis.*







**Recognition gala for retiring CEO of LCEF, Rich Robertson.** Rich is retiring after 8 tremendous years as the LCEF chief executive director and President. Among his accomplishments include the development of the Lutheran Federal Credit Union, three new LCMS districts to the LCEF family, and unprecedented support for innovative missions and ministries with the Kaleidoscope initiative. The gala was held September 15 at the Marriott Airport Hotel in St. Louis.



**Where to donate and how to volunteer** in the wake of [Hurricane Harvey](#) & [Hurricane Irma](#)

An [update from Pastor Mark and Sandy Eisold](#), missionaries in Florida



**Bishop Emmanuel Makala met with the Council of Presidents** of the LCMS on Monday, September 18th. He is a member of the largest Lutheran diocese in the Tanzanian Evangelical Lutheran Church which has over 6.5 million members, second only to the 7 million Mekane Yesus Lutheran body in Ethiopia. He will also visit Memphis where the Mid-South District has been a strong supporter of the SELVD (South East of Lake Victoria Diocese).



*Pastor Clayton Sellers, Jenny Whitely, and Pastor Rob Harbin*

## Faith Lutheran Church

On August 27, 2017, Jenny Whitely was installed as Worship Leader and Missional Minister at Faith Lutheran Church in Collierville, TN. Jenny comes to Faith from St Stephens Lutheran Church in North Carolina where she served as a Music Director. She has a BS Degree in Elementary Education, a Lutheran Teacher Diploma and an Associate of Fine Arts in Music and Music Education. Currently, Jenny is completing a program in Mission Ministry through LCMS. She is also serving at Faith Lutheran Preschool as a Music Teacher.

# Circuit Visitor Biannual Meeting Highlights

## LCMS President Attends for Day of Discussion



LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison was a special guest at the August 29 meeting of the Mid-South District Circuit Visitors. The group meets at the District office twice each year to share insights and encouragement, as well as learn about new resources and initiatives for congregations. The visit from President Harrison offered a great opportunity to show how District-wide activities and efforts complement those taking place at the Synod level. The Circuit Visitors were also honored to welcome Rev. Dr. Daniel Preus, LCMS Fifth Vice President, who accompanied President Harrison for the day's discussions.

The August meeting also provided an opportunity for Circuit Visitors to learn about the Family Ministry initiative currently being developed in the Mid-South District. Professor Ben Freudenburg (shown presenting) of Concordia Center for the Family shared information on how the initiative will emphasize ministry and evangelism that starts in a family's home.



Attendees and presenters of the August Circuit Visitors Meeting included (FRONT, L to R) Rev. Darrell Kobs of the Fort Smith Circuit, Rev. Don White of the Stuttgart Circuit, LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, LCMS 5th VP Rev. Dr. Daniel Preus, Rev. Gil Pingel of the Chattanooga Circuit, (BACK, L to R) Rev. Kevin Conger of the Little Rock-N Circuit, Rev. Michael Miller of the Knoxville Circuit, Rev. Mark Goble of the Memphis Circuit, Mid-South District President Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, Rev. Ken Shaw of the Nashville Circuit, Rev. Gerald Meyer of the Middle TN Circuit, Rev. Steve Harmon of the Johnson City Circuit, Rev. Joel Krogen of the Jonesboro Circuit, Rev. Larry Peters of the Paducah Circuit, DCE Tessa Brasher of St. John-Lafe, Professor Ben Freudenburg from Concordia Center for the Family and Rev. Clayton Sellers of Faith-Collierville.



# Church Planting in the Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese of Tanzania

*On this Rock I will build my Church (juu ya mwamba huu nitalijenga kanisa langu)*

Contributed by Bob Allen

Two months after the Mid-South District mission team left the little village of Mwakidiga in May 2017 the members of that new congregation joined together to clear land, dig a foundation, make bricks and build the church you see in the photo below.

In May we met with this small group of believers who shared with us their vision of the land they wanted to purchase to build their church. There was no other church in this little village in Lalago Parish in the Maswa District and they wanted a church where they could worship.

This group of 20 to 30 believers met with the Mission team from the Mid-South District LCMS each morning for 3 days to pray for success in our outreach. Each morning teams of Americans, Pastors/intrepreters, evangelists and guides from the congregation were sent in all directions of the compass to homes in the village to share the Good News. (Habari Njema)

When we left the village on Wednesday evening well over 500 people had been baptized and land had been purchased for the Church.

In the months of June and July Pastor Geoffrey Tenga, Pastor of Lalago Parish and the subparish of Mwakidiga, and Evangelist Fredrick and District Pastor Odolous Gyunda began instructions to catechize all new members of this brand new congregation.



*Group of believers praying for the land to be purchased and to build a church.*



*The land was purchased, cleared, foundation dug and bricks made - the church being built.*

## Congregational Mission Commitments

### Mission Commitment Receipts as of 08/31/17 (8 Months)

Anticipated Amount (50% of budget) .....	\$1,048,763
Actual Receipts.....	<u>1,043,113</u>
Over (under) anticipated amount .....	<b>(\$5,650)</b>

### Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (8 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions .....	\$296,267
Allocated to Tanzania .....	16,667
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts) .....	<u>730,179</u>
Total Receipts .....	\$1,043,113

### Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (8 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 08/31/17 .....	\$1,043,113
Actual Receipts as of 08/31/16.....	<u>\$1,047,818</u>
Over (under) prior year receipts .....	<b>(\$4,705)</b>

# Mid-South District 2017 CARE-VAN

November 3-4, 2017

## Locations and Coordinators



Loading Friday and Saturday, November 3-4, 2017  
 Friday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
 (time for drop-off donations may change according to church)

**Call church to verify the time**

**you will be bringing your LWR items so someone will be there to help you.**

**Please package boxes properly. Thank you.**

### Tennessee

CITY	Location for YRC Freight	Contact Person	Pastor of Church
Chattanooga, TN	Cross of Christ Lutheran Church 3204 Hixon Pike Chattanooga, TN 37415 <b>Only Friday, Nov. 3 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)</b>	<b>Ms. Lanette Bagley</b> 1-423-344-9324 1-423-653-6673 (cell) <a href="mailto:laja40@yahoo.com">laja40@yahoo.com</a>	Rev. Barry Hildebrandt 1-423-877-7447 (church) 1-423-255-4746 (cell) <a href="mailto:church@cocluth.com">church@cocluth.com</a>
Knoxville, TN	Christus Victor Lutheran Church 4110 Central Avenue Pike Knoxville, TN 37912-0312	<b>Mr. Tim Rearick</b> 1-865-719-1123 (cell) <a href="mailto:timrearick1@yahoo.com">timrearick1@yahoo.com</a>	Rev. William Ondracka 1-865-687-6622 (church) 1-734-368-1703 <a href="mailto:pastorbill@christusvictorknoxville.org">pastorbill@christusvictorknoxville.org</a>
Hermitage, TN	Emmanuel Lutheran Church 1003 Hickory Hill Lane Hermitage, TN 37076	<b>Mr. Bruce Palmer</b> 1-615-594-6160 (cell) <a href="mailto:robertpalmer@tds.net">robertpalmer@tds.net</a>	Rev. Keith Enko 1-615-883-7533 (church) 1-615-812-5955 (cell) <a href="mailto:keithenko@yahoo.com">keithenko@yahoo.com</a>
Memphis, TN	Immanuel Lutheran Church 6319 Raleigh LaGrange Road Memphis, TN 38134-6907	<b>Ms. Diane Reimold</b> 1-901-679-0626 <a href="mailto:dianereimold@hotmail.com">dianereimold@hotmail.com</a>	Rev. Will Miller 1-901-373-4486 (church) <a href="mailto:millerpw@live.com">millerpw@live.com</a>

### Arkansas

CITY	Location for	Contact Person	Pastor of Church
Fort Smith, AR	First Lutheran School 2407 Massard Road Fort Smith, AR 72901	<b>Mr. Lou Fellwock</b> 1-479-646-5462	Rev. John Merrill 1-479-785-2886 (church) <a href="mailto:jfmerrill@gmail.com">jfmerrill@gmail.com</a>
Springdale, AR	Salem Lutheran Ministries 1800 West Emma Avenue Springdale, AR 72762-3905 <b>Only Saturday - Nov. 4 (9 a.m.-1 p.m.)</b>	<b>Ms. Darlene Diercouff</b> 1-479-751-9500 (church) <a href="mailto:ddiercouff@aol.com">ddiercouff@aol.com</a>	Rev. Mark Krause 1-479-751-9500 (church) 1-479-841-4898 (cell) <a href="mailto:mekrause40@aol.com">mekrause40@aol.com</a>
Little Rock, AR	Grace Lutheran Church 5124 Hillcrest Little Rock, AR 72205	<b>Rev. James Walter</b> 1-501-663-3631 (church) 1-501-240-7729 (cell) <a href="mailto:walter@aristotle.net">walter@aristotle.net</a>	Rev. James Walter 1-501-663-3631 (church) 1-501-240-7729 (cell) <a href="mailto:walter@aristotle.net">walter@aristotle.net</a>
Jonesboro, AR	Pilgrim Lutheran Church 1812 South Rains Jonesboro, AR 72401-5046	<b>Mr. Rory Pomerantz</b> 1-870-275-0146 (cell) <a href="mailto:eulis89@aol.com">eulis89@aol.com</a>	Rev. Russell Shewmaker 1-870-935-2001 (church) 1-870-897-4443 (cell) <a href="mailto:pastor@pilgrimlutheran.us">pastor@pilgrimlutheran.us</a>



## FREE + PROPERTY

By Rev. Josh Woodrow  
*Bridge City Community Church*

Those two words are rarely, if ever, seen together. The combination becomes even more rare when the two parties involved are city government and a church. Yet, God has affirmed your commitment to BCC and our community work through an unprecedented offer by Donna Williams, Head of the Office of Economic and Community Development.

For years, I have seen flowers of urban decay flourish in South Chattanooga – vacant lots, dilapidated duplexes, standing dead homes from decades past. For years, I’ve been begging the city to let me have some foothold in the neighborhood. For years, you have trusted BCC with your resources and prayer for one single phone call.

Eviction as a blessing. Eviction is probably too strong of a word. However, it’s how I felt when I received notice that BCC was named in an internal audit because of malicious complaints made by a single member of the community. We were put on notice at the rec center where we’ve met since day one. What were we going to do? Where would we go? Would this be the end? As these thoughts ran through my mind I received a surprising question from a department at city hall that I had been pestering for years: “We would like

to deed you property in South Chattanooga. Would you like a list of available lots?”

The voice of Donna Williams rang in my ears as she affirmed your commitment to us, *“I wouldn’t have picked up the phone if we didn’t value the important work you do in the community.”* I felt my stomach turn as the emotional roller coaster climbed up the ladder of uncertainty only to race downward with the thrill of anticipation for the future.

We are just beginning the process of conveyance in which the City of Chattanooga will deed us the

property located at 3300 Brannon Ave free of cost. Yes, you heard me right. You are receiving a piece of land with a modular building on it free and clear. Your investment into our ministry to the community has been affirmed and

rewarded. God has provided an answer to a prayer we’ve had since the beginning: a physical testament to our longterm commitment to justice, mercy, and reconciliation in South Chattanooga. If everything goes to plan then we could potentially be moved in by Christmas! Keep an eye out later this fall for more details on the conveyance and a video tour of the new BCC base of operations!

**“Eviction  
as a  
blessing.”**





# Little Missionaries

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8*



**TRINITY HOPE**  
HAITIAN FEEDING PROGRAM

Just as the words in Acts 1:8 states, **WE** are called to be Jesus’ witnesses throughout the world...even to the ends of the earth. Five hundred years ago this month, Martin Luther fulfilled that calling through the nailing of his 95 Theses, impacting the world forever. Today, that witnessing continues with missionaries in far away lands and by you and I in our own neighborhoods and communities. For Trinity HOPE our “ends of the earth” is Haiti, where we feed over 24,000 hungry children, teachers and cooks every school day in 118 Christian schools throughout the country. The kids that receive these meals are truly the “real missionaries” of their country...learning about the love of Jesus in their school and then going home

and sharing the Good News with their parents. With many of the parents regularly practicing Voodoo, the Truth they are learning from their children opens the door for eternal life in heaven.

As we give thanks to God for the work of Martin Luther, please also give thanks for these “little missionaries” in Haiti. Just as God used Martin Luther to change the world in 1517, He continues to use all of His men, women and children today to reach the lost. Thanks be to God! If you’re interested in learning how you can help Trinity HOPE feed more children in Haiti, please visit our website at [www.trinityhope.org](http://www.trinityhope.org).



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# Prayer Summary, September 2017

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 September 2017.

## PRAYER CONCERNS

**APAR NATHANIEL BOL** (daughter of Rev. Nathaniel Bol, South Sudan Evangelical Lutheran Church)  
**MS. SHERRY COSTELLO** (secretary at Trinity, Pine Bluff, AR)  
**MS. SARA FEURESTEIN** (daughter of Rev. Donley Hesse, Mena, AR)  
**MRS. NANCY HERD** (wife of Rev. Cliff Herd, EM, Chattanooga, TN)  
**REV. DONLEY HESSE** (Emeritus, Mena, AR)  
**MR. ADAM JANSEN** (brother of Rev. Nathan Jansen, Burns, TN)  
**MR. RICHARD MEYER** (Bella Vista, AR)  
**MRS. MEGAN NAVRATH** (daughter of Rev. Carl and Gwen Wenck, Grace, Murfreesboro, TN)  
**REV. KURT REINHARDT** (Stratford, ON)  
**REV. DAVID RUBKE** (Tullahoma, TN)  
**REV. MERLIN SEPMEYER** (Crossville, TN)  
**MR. LEE SMITH** (Smithville, TN)  
**MRS. CHLOE SWANSON** (wife of Rev. Herb Swanson, Lamar, AR)  
**MRS. SUE ANN TOOPES** (wife of Rev. Andy Toopes, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Bowling Green, KY)  
**ADDIE JO WEATHERLY**  
**MRS. MARGARET WENCK** (mother of Rev. Carl Wenck, Grace, Murfreesboro, TN)

**Our deepest sympathies to Dr. Glenn and Susan Nielsen** (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis) on the loss of their son, Matthew, who passed away on Wednesday, September 6, 2017.

## CALL UPDATE

### ORDAINED MINISTERS

**ACCEPTED:** **Rev. Paul Baumann**, Paragould, AR, has accepted the call to serve as **Pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Paragould, AR.**

**Rev. Don Coulter** has accepted the call to serve as **Pastor at Athens Lutheran Church, Athens, TN.**

**Rev. Timothy Henning**, Russellville, AR, has accepted the call to serve as **Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Mena, AR.**

**Rev. Edward Schmidt**, Rifle, CO, has accepted the call to serve as **Pastor at First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN.**

**Rev. Alebachew Teshome**, Nashville, TN, has accepted the call to serve as **Associate Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Thompson's Station, TN.**

**Rev. Neil Vanderbush**, Christ Lutheran Church, Lubbock, TX, has accepted the call to serve as **Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR.**

**DECLINED:** **Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford**, Zion Lutheran Church, Mayer, MN, has declined the call to serve as **Executive Director of Mission and Ministry at the Mid-South District.**

**PENDING:** **Rev. Chad Kendall**, Lowell, IN, has been issued a call to serve as **Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN.**

### IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS

**Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN – Pastor**

### COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

#### IN THE CALLING PROCESS

**Belvoir Christian Academy, Chattanooga, TN**  
– Principal

**First Lutheran Church and School, Fort Smith, AR**  
– Principal

**First Lutheran Church and School, Knoxville, TN** –  
Principal and Kindergarten Teacher

## SHARE YOUR REFORMATION EVENT WITH US



The Mid-South District has established a webpage to serve as “information central” for Reformation-related events and news happening in celebration of the 500th anniversary. If your congregation has an event to be included on the site, please email [webmaster@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:webmaster@mid-southlcms.com) with a link to the event on your church website. Visit the site at [www.reformation.mid-southlcms.org](http://www.reformation.mid-southlcms.org) to see the great events already listed.

## Staff of the Mid-South District, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod



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### Stay Connected With Us

ON THE WEB -  
“mid-southlcms.org”

ON FACEBOOK -  
“Mid-South-LCMS”

ON TWITTER -  
“@midsouthLCMS”

### Contribute to The Encourager -

The Encourager is a monthly newsletter from the Mid-South District LCMS. If you would like your article or event published in the next Encourager, please email it by October 20, 2017 to Rhonda, [webmaster@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:webmaster@mid-southlcms.com)