



MID-SOUTH LUTHERAN

The cradle, the cross *and the crown*

There was never, nor will there ever be another person who was a human Child and also the Son of God. There'll never be another man who was wounded by Satan but also, thereby, crushed Satan and death.



Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola
District President

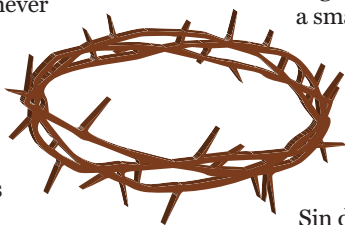
There'll never be another man who was anointed by God to be the Savior of mankind, but was crucified and killed by mankind. Yet there'll never be another judge of all mankind who Himself was judged guilty enough to die on the cross for us.

Stop to think about God's humility: He came from His throne in glory for the purpose of suffering and dying in our place. There'll be no other man who saves others, yet didn't save Himself. There'll be no other who had no sin Himself, but willfully became sin for everyone to suffer God's wrath for us. No one ever poured out oceans, rivers and seas, but when ravaged by God's just punishment against the sins of all the world would cry from the cross, "I thirst."

This Man is Jesus Christ; born in a humble stable in uncommon and lowly means. But at His birth, rejoicing at newborn life was short lived. This Child,

born of a virgin mother, came to this world for the sole purpose to die. When we celebrated Christmas Eve, we could almost imagine hearing the cooing of the tiny newborn Boy. He is the Christ Child — God in flesh, Immanuel. That serene picture of a quiet manger is interrupted by the realization that we will soon be observing Lent, when the One sent from God journeys toward the cross and the expiation of our sin. But why?

St. Paul answered that clearly: Christ died for our sins.



Sin begins at conception. It's like a small, quiet spring, growing wider and stronger until it becomes a tumultuous sea. Sin is the power that reversed the nature of man from the image of God to rebellious enemies.

Sin destroyed a perfect creation — a universe now destined to decay and die because of its devastating, evil flood. In the midst of a sin-filled world came the perfect sacrifice for the consequences of sin.

This is the truth about this Christ Child. Because of His willing obedience to carry out His Father's will, the shadow of the cross dominated the quiet scene of the silent night when He was born. The shadow of the impending cross never left Him. From the evil King Herod as a small infant to the Scribes and Pharisees who wanted to get rid of Him; from the agony of His bloody passion and sweat



in the Garden of Gethsemane to the crowds who turned from cheers into an angry mob that screamed for His blood — Jesus was always faced with a cross.

The Roman cross was the cruelest of the instruments of death, reserved for the worst criminals. Suspended between heaven and earth a victim agonized, hovering above death. No one whispered encouragement to alleviate the victim's fear. No one placed a cloth of cool water on the forehead that steamed with pain. There's only one way down from the cross — by the hands of those who carried the body to a grave. Scripture warns, "Cursed is the Man that hangs on the tree." Yet no other cross caused

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



John Hall 1939-2016



By **Renae McElwain**
LCEF Communications and
Marketing Specialist

Many hearts were saddened to hear of the passing of John Hall, founder of the

beloved charitable organization Trinity/HOPE and long-time friend of the Mid-South District.

John received his eternal reward on Nov. 3 following a brief illness — but preceded by many years of spreading joy and touching hearts with the love of Jesus.

John's obituary notes that his inspiration for establishing Trinity/HOPE can be found in Matt. 25:35:

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.”

And so Trinity/HOPE

began in 1999 with the mission of providing meals for children, teachers and cooks in Christian schools in Haiti. To date, more than 26 million meals have been served thanks to John's vision, the generosity of donors and the excellent stewardship of all those involved in carrying out the mission of Trinity/HOPE.

While our hearts are certainly heavy at the loss of this great servant of the Lord, joy surpasses sadness when we envision our brother John entering the gates of heaven and hearing those precious words, “Well done, good and faithful servant!



If you would like to honor John's life with a gift to Trinity/HOPE, please visit trinityhope.org.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

more pain and suffering than the Cross of Christ. His Cross was literally hell on earth. All of God's wrath against every sin of all mankind for all ages weighed on Christ's sacred body and wracked pain in His arms.

Jesus could have called legions of angels to foil His executioners. Yet He willingly remained on the cross for our sake. “He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross. He endured the cross, despising its shame for our sake.”

The debt He paid is for sin-stained debt we owe. Add up the sins of disobedience, neglect and our nature from all of mankind and we can begin to weigh the gravity of the divine, eternal and just wrath against each and every one sin — beginning with Adam and Eve to today. This is the weight of the cross our Savior bore. Our freedom, our hope, our promise of eternal glory was paid in full at the Cross of Calvary. Christ's resurrection proved God's satisfaction and our justification in the justice of God's Will.

But the cross is not the end. “At the

name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” Christ Jesus is the victor — by the cross! It's the Great and Joyous Exchange — the shame and depravity of our sin is taken to the cross by the One who satisfied the law perfectly on our behalf, True God and yet True Man who rejoins the perfect image of God through the means He entrusted to His Holy Christian Church. Holy Baptism washes and cleanses us from the sins into which we were born and the sins we commit. Holy Absolution offers God's own words of forgiveness of our confessed sins. The Holy Supper is where Christ reaches us with His grace to give us His forgiveness, His true body and blood, and the strengthening of our faith unto life everlasting.

Matthew Bridges' great hymn expresses our certain response: “Crown Him with many crowns, The Lamb upon His throne. Hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own; Awake my soul and sing, of Him who died for thee, and hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity.”

Some are still searching for Jesus in the cradle. It's empty because it served its purpose. Don't look on Calvary's ugly hill: Salvation's great price is already paid. Don't stoop nervously in a tomb because God's justification was complete. It stands forever empty. Instead, look for Jesus (well, until the day of His return in glory, majesty and honor); He will be found right here — in the means He's given to His Holy Christian Church.

The Cradle brought us the Son of God from glory. The cross brought the payment for our sins and all the sins of the world. But the crown of Christ will give us the final trumpet announcing the glory and majesty of our eternal peace with God in Christ Jesus. It won't just be a happy new year, but rather a joyous and victorious new life with Christ in His eternal Kingdom. “Crown Him the Lord of years; the Potentate of Time; Creator of the rolling spheres Ineffably sublime; All Hail Redeemer Hail! For Thou has died for me; Thy praise shall never fail, throughout all eternity.”

So — celebrate! Celebrate our new year because we can celebrate our new life in Christ Jesus, our Lord and blessed Savior.

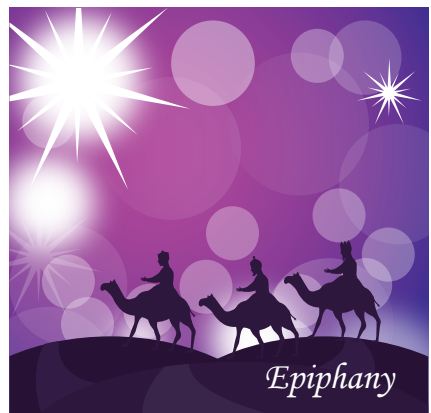


2017 resolutions

1. Take a 10- to 30-minute walk every day. And while you walk, smile. It is the ultimate anti-depressant.
2. Sit in silence for at least 10 minutes each day. Buy a lock if you have to.
3. When you wake up in the morning, complete the following statement, "My purpose is to _____ today."
4. Eat more foods that grow on trees and plants and eat less food that is manufactured in plants.

5. Try to make at least three people smile each day.
6. Don't waste your precious energy on gossip, energy vampires, issues of the past, negative thoughts or things you cannot control. Instead, invest your energy in the positive present moment.
7. Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a college kid with a maxed-out charge card.
8. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
9. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
10. Remember that you are too blessed to be stressed.
11. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
12. Make peace with your past so it won't spoil the present.
13. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. No one is in charge of your happiness but you.
15. Frame every so-called disaster with these words: "In five years, will this matter?"
16. Forgive everyone for everything.

17. Don't worry about what other people think of you.
18. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
19. Remember that God heals everything.
20. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends will. Stay in touch.
21. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
22. Each night before you go to bed, count your blessings and thank God for them.



Congregation mission commitment receipts as of Oct. 31, 2016 (10 months)

Anticipated amount (83.33% of budget)	\$1,384,183
Actual receipts	1,293,745
Over (under) anticipated amount...	(\$90,438)

Use of mission commitment receipts (10 months)

Allocated to Synod for world missions	\$367,290
Allocated to Tanzania	20,833
Retained for district ministry/mission support (70% of receipts)	905,622
Total receipts	\$1,293,745

Mission commitment receipts comparison (10 months)

Actual receipts as of Sept. 30, 2016	\$1,293,745
Actual receipts as of Sept. 30, 2015	\$1,374,043
Over (under) prior year receipts(\$80,298)

CLASSICS OF WORSHIP FROM THE 1941 LUTHERAN HYMNAL

Great God, We Sing That Mighty Hand (#119) Lyrics, 1755 • Music, 1828

Great God, we sing that mighty hand
By which supported still we stand.
The op'ning year Thy mercy shows;
Let mercy crown it till it close.

By day, by night, at home, abroad,
Still we are guarded by our God,
By His incessant bounty fed,
By His unerring counsel led.

With grateful hearts the past we own;
The future, all to us unknown,

We to Thy guardian care commit
And, peaceful, leave before Thy feet.

In scenes exalted or depressed
Be Thou our Joy and Thou our Rest.
Thy goodness all our hopes shall raise,
Adored through all our changing days.

When death shall interrupt our songs
And seal in silence mortal tongues,
Our Helper, God, in whom we trust,
In better worlds our soul shall boast.

RURAL AND SMALL-TOWN MISSION



Many congregations today are concerned about shrinking membership and fewer children and families in worship. There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution. However, congregational leaders attending the Engaging Your Community (EYC) event — a February training opportunity for professional and lay leaders — will be encouraged as they see new opportunities for engaging their communities and are filled with hope for the future.

LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission (RSTM) exists to support and encourage congregations in rural and small-town settings in their work to engage their communities with the love of Christ.

In partnership with the Mid South District, RSTM invites congregations to this event, to be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4, at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church (1461 Sparta Hwy, Crossville, TN, 38572).

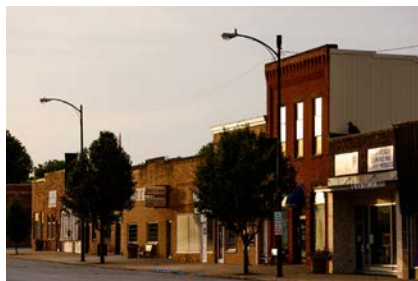
This event is geared for single and multi-point parishes in rural and small-town settings. Congregational leaders will consider ways they can serve the unique needs of their particular communities. Participants will identify personal and congregational assets and plan for using their resources to engage their respective communities.

One of the important themes of the event will be on building and strengthening partnerships as multi-point parishes and individual congregations

explore ways to work together for the needs of their communities.

The Mid South District and LCEF, along with the Rev. Todd Kollbaum, RSTM director, will help each congregation to go home with some practical approaches on engaging and touching the community with the Gospel. Each congregation will receive personalized demographics for their community — an invaluable resource.

Please register early. Registration information is in shaded column at right.



EVENT DETAILS

Engaging Your Community

An event to support and encourage rural and small-town congregations

- ▶ Saturday, Feb. 4
- ▶ Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
1461 Sparta Highway,
Crossville, TN 38572

Presenters

- ▶ Rev. Todd Kollbaum
Director, LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission
- ▶ Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola
President, Mid-South District

Learn, share and enjoy

- ▶ Bible studies
- ▶ Community demographic studies
- ▶ Identifying your congregational strengths
- ▶ Community outreach ideas
- ▶ Table discussions
- ▶ Fellowship

Cost: \$25 per person*
Register by Friday, Jan. 27:



Online
[calendar.lcms.org/
event/engaging-your-
community-
crossville-tenn](http://calendar.lcms.org/event/engaging-your-community-crossville-tenn)



Email
rstm@lcms.org



Phone
888-463-5127

**Registrants are responsible for their own accommodations, if desired.*

LWML CONVENTION

A time to CELEBRATE!

By Julie Keck
Media/Marketing, LWML
Mid-South District

Have you started making your summer vacation plans? Take a trip to the South-west and you can add to your itinerary attending the national Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) 37th Biennial Convention June 22-25 in Albuquerque, N.M.



LWML will celebrate its 75th anniversary and it will be quite the Diamond Dazzle party!

The convention theme is "Jesus Christ Above All" from Phil. 2:9:

"Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name."

Each convention attendee will be

- ▶ **ENCOURAGED** through worship and Bible study;
- ▶ **EQUIPPED** to share God's message of salvation; and
- ▶ **ENGAGED** in celebrating God's faithfulness while serving the Lord with gladness.

All the convention details and registration form will be in the winter 2017 issue of *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* magazine, or go to lwml.org/2017-convention.

If you are not able to attend the convention but would like to participate, consider making a special donation of \$7.50, \$75 or more in honor of the LWML's 75th anniversary.

Hope to see you in Albuquerque!

It's hunting season in South Dakota



The Main Street Living television ministry, affiliated with the LCMS South Dakota District, provided a pheasant hunt on Nov. 4 for some of the program's preachers. Among the hunters — and preachers — was the Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, Mid-South District president. The hunt was a success and Paavola brought home evidence. The birds' beautiful feathers continue to glorify God in floral arrangements and crafts. From left, (front row) the Revs. Christopher Esget, LCMS fifth vice-president; Dale Sattgast, South Dakota district president emeritus; David Knepelkamp, White, S.D.; (back row) Paavola; Nabil Nour, LCMS fourth vice-president; Joshua Baumann, Pierre, S.D.; Terry Liebel, Burke, S.D.; and Michael Kumm, LCMS Board of Directors chairman.

ROOTS OF AMERICAN LUTHERANISM

Augustus is oldest U.S. Lutheran church

In the early 1700s, immigrants hungry for a better life in the "New World" began settling in the British colonies, including "Penn's Woods" (present-day Pennsylvania). In 1717, the predominantly German settlement of Providence (now Trappe) developed in Montgomery County along the trail of the Perkiomen Creek. Lutherans in early Providence worshiped under the care of itinerant preachers, some with dubious credentials. They prayed for "their own" shepherd to lead the flock.

After several years of waiting for a permanent pastor, the Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg arrived from Germany in 1742 and settled in Trappe. In 1743, the congregation began building the "Old Trappe Church," using native stone and materials gathered by hand. In September 1743, the first services of Augustus Lutheran Church were held in the building, and it was dedicated in October 1746.

The "Old Trappe Church" stands today as a testament to the hard work and

dedication of our ancestors. It is the oldest unchanged Lutheran church building in continuous use in the United States. Services are held in the original building every Sunday.

Weddings and funerals are frequently held in this Lutheran landmark.

The current church building, known to members as "The Brick Church," was begun in May 1852 to accommodate the growth in the congregation and to make use of the "state-of-the-art technology" of the time.

Burials in the cemetery date from 1729. The oldest legible tombstone is dated 1736. The cemetery was consecrated in 1738 and includes the graves of many prominent people, including Muhlenberg, the patriarch of American Lutheranism, who is buried under a marble slab outside the north wall of Old Trappe Church with his wife, Anna.

Visit augustustrappe.org for more information.

Why I became an LFCU member

By Ken Krueger

CEO, Lutheran Federal Credit Union

As I think about the history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), I see a tradition of innovation. On Oct. 2, 1930, for example, the first Lutheran Hour radio program was aired, spreading the Gospel message using the young technology of broadcast radio. The program continues today and is broadcast across the world in more than 80 languages.

As another example, in 1952 the International Lutheran Layman's League ventured into television with "This Is the Life." This television series for 36 years featured dramatizations of contemporary problems and how they were resolved using a Christian solution. These are but two examples of a history of innovation in the LCMS, a tradition that continues today in the Lutheran Federal Credit Union (LFCU).

In December 2014, after years of research and planning by the leaders of the LCMS and the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), LFCU was chartered by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), which both regulates the financial soundness of LFCU and insures its accounts. Put differently, the NCUA gave LFCU the "go ahead" to move forward. And move forward it has! Since its "official" opening earlier this year, more than 1,600 members of the LCMS also have become members of LFCU.

I am one of those individuals. Admittedly, I am a board member and CEO for LFCU, so it might be easy to assume that there is a link. In fact, there is! I am both a member of LFCU and now its CEO for the same reason: I love the mission, ministry and savviness of LFCU!

Let me be more specific. LFCU was formed to benefit the members, organizations and ministries of the LCMS. Every member and organization of the LCMS, on some level, engages in financial transactions, including transactions



The Rev. Ken Krueger was appointed CEO of Lutheran Federal Credit Union, effective Nov. 14. He previously served as pastor of Grace Celebration Lutheran Church, Cordova, Tenn.

in savings accounts, checking accounts, credit cards, home loans, auto loans or personal loans. Structurally, a credit union offers its individual and organizational members a substantial advantage over engaging in these same financial transactions with a for-profit bank. As a federally chartered non-profit organization, a credit union is not beholden to disinterested shareholders, but rather to its members — those who save with or borrow from the organization. A credit union does not pay dividends, taxes or salaries to board members. Rather, it uses its structural advantages to offer benefits to its members, such as competitive savings and loan rates.

But that still is not the full reason I love LFCU. What I truly love about the innovation that is LFCU is that it is an entity of and for the LCMS. When members of the LCMS use LFCU for their financial transactions, funds are kept within the LCMS. When funds are kept within the LCMS, members and ministries benefit.

Let me give you an example. Nearly every adult has at least one credit card. Credit card companies are in business because credit card transactions generate fees. When LCMS members use an LFCU credit card, a portion of those fees are kept within the LCMS, creating the ability to fund ministries. Furthermore, while bank-based credit cards often charge interest rates of 21 percent or more, the LFCU offers a flat rate of 8.99 percent.

Obviously, reducing the interest rate by half is better for an LCMS member! Furthermore, even those individuals who always pay their bills in full and never carry a credit card balance contribute to the LCMS by engaging in transactions that they would do anyway, transactions that keep funds within the church so that they might benefit ministries that proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Currently my wife, Amy, and I have a savings account, a checking account, a credit card and two auto loans through LFCU. We have done this partly because LFCU provides competitive rates and great benefits to us. But even more so, we have done this because LFCU is a blessing of and for the church. Put differently, LFCU is an innovative win-win!

Know Your Bible: Creation

This month of new beginnings, at the start of a fresh new year, is a good time to revisit God's work in creating our world. Do you remember what happened on each of the seven days of creation?



1. First Day (Gen. 1:3-5)
2. Second Day (Gen. 1:6-8)
3. Third Day (Gen. 1:9-13)
4. Fourth Day (Gen. 1:14-19)
5. Fifth Day (Gen. 1:20-23)

6. Sixth Day (Gen. 1:24-31)
7. Seventh Day (Gen. 2:2)

Answers

1. Light was separated from darkness.
2. The sky was separated from the firmament.
3. Land and vegetation were created.
4. The sun, moon and stars were created.
5. Fish in the water, birds in the air were created.
6. Creatures of earth were formed; then man and woman.
7. God rested from all His work on the seventh day.

The Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Ordained ministers celebrating anniversaries in 2017



65 Years

Rev. Robert Miskimen (em)
Bella Vista, Ark.

60 Years

Rev. Paul Donner (em)
Paducah, Ky.

Rev. Donley Hesse (em)
Mena, Ark.

Rev. Herbert Klepatz
Nashville, Tenn.

Rev. John Schulz (em)
Knoxville, Tenn.

55 Years

Rev. Wesley Toncre (em)
Conway, Ark.

Rev. Fred Hagemeyer (em)
Lakeview, Ark.

50 Years

Rev. James Evers (em)
Oak Ridge, Tenn.

45 Years

Rev. Peter Ave-Lallemant
Faith, Fairfield Bay, Ark.

Rev. William Barthel (em)
Loudon, Tenn.

Rev. Paul Baumann (em)
Paragould, Ark.

Rev. Gary Heckmann (em)
Cookeville, Tenn.

40 Years

Rev. Jan Munch (em)
Athens, Tenn.

Rev. Don Schmidt
Messiah, Memphis, Tenn.

Rev. Roland Schutz (em)
Benton, Ark.

35 Years

Rev. Gary Carstens (em)
Mena, Ark.

Rev. Keith Enko
Emmanuel, Hermitage, Tenn.

Rev. Stewart Marshall
Trinity, Pine Bluff, Ark.

Rev. Richard Mayer (em)
Bentonville, Ark.

30 Years

Rev. Steven Harmon
Bethlehem, Johnson City, Tenn.

Rev. H. Christopher Sheets
Good Shepherd, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Rev. Russell Shewmaker
Pilgrim, Jonesboro, Ark.

25 Years

Rev. Jon Bischof
St. Matthew, Corning, Ark.

20 Years

Rev. Mark Goble
Christ the King, Memphis, Tenn.

Rev. Mark Louderback
Beautiful Savior, Olive Branch, Miss.

Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola
Mid-South District President

Rev. Andrew Smith
Heavenly Host, Cookeville, Tenn.

15 Years

Rev. Tracy Nelson
Our Savior, Nashville, Tenn.

Rev. Chad Philipp
St. Paul, Gillett, Ark.

Rev. Kenneth Shaw
Trinity, Gallatin, Tenn.

10 Years

Rev. Daniel Hauser
Christ, Little Rock, Ark.

Rev. Robert Portier
St. Paul, Sevierville, Tenn.



Rev. Gregory Truwe
Concordia, Jackson, Tenn.

Rev. David Vandercook
Shepherd of Peace, Maumelle, Ark.
Trinity, North Little Rock, Ark.

5 Years

Rev. Mark Bushuiakovish
Grace, Knoxville, Tenn.

Rev. William Stevenson
Trinity, Dyersburg, Tenn.

Rev. Joshua Woodrow
First, Chattanooga, Tenn.

*Well done, good and faithful
servants!*

CELEBRATIONS

CHRIST THE KING, MEMPHIS

Welcoming...



Comfort Dog Job, trained by Lutheran Church Charities of Northbrook, Ill., was the picture of calm at his Passing of the Leash ceremony at Christ the King, Memphis, on Oct. 16. Job and his handlers have begun ministering to the Memphis and Mid-South District community, including a visit to the neighborhood fire station, sharing the mercy of Jesus Christ to those in need of compassion.



Chili Bowl, auction raise funds for Trinity/Hope



Deadline for the March issue is Jan. 15



Digital files, sent via email, are preferred. Email submissions to lw@mid-southlcms.com, or mail via U.S. Postal Service to:

Judy Otto
150 N. Maury St.
Holly Springs, MS 38635

Our submission deadline is the 15th of each month, two months before publication.

Christ the King recently held the third annual "Chili Bowl for a Goal," a lunch and silent-auction fundraiser benefiting Trinity/HOPE and the CTK-supported school in Mandou, Haiti. Folks enjoyed 23 different kinds of chili, ranging from beef to chicken to vegetarian and some specialty recipes including delicious smoked pork. Yum!

More than 150 guests bid on a remarkable display of nearly 200 donated auction items, including original crafts from the people of Haiti, and were visited by Job, CTK's new comfort dog, and entertained by CTK's own Beatles.



Special guests were Keith Logan of Trinity/HOPE and LaFleur Jores of Haiti.

The event was coordinated by Caroline Johnson and CTK's Faith in Action Committee, and garnered more than \$4,400 for Trinity/HOPE and the school in Haiti.

▲ A guest surveys the available auction items.

◀ From left, Keith Logan of Trinity/Hope and LaFleur Jores or Haiti were special guests.

Articles on this page were written by **Genie Swan**, Community Relations, Christ the King Lutheran Church. Photos are by **Caroline Johnson**.