



# SET IN STONE

Newsletter of the 20th Regular Convention of the Mid-South District, LCMS • June 28-30, 2018 • Memphis, Tennessee

**FRIDAY - AM,  
JUNE 29, 2018**

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- *Who's Here?*
- *Returning from Tanzania*
- *Meet the Publicity Committee*

## Inspiring Worship Service Opens Convention

The house "rocked!"—the Lord's house, that is. Thursday evening, a packed sanctuary filled with pastors, delegates, and congregation members joined in song, Sacrament, and profession of faith acknowledging our Lord and Savior as our Rock, Fortress, and Salvation. The Rev. Dr. Herbert Mueller, First Vice President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, served as both proclaimer and teacher, as he denoted the difference in the Greek words petros (a shifting, rolling rock, i.e., Peter), and petra (immovable enduring formation, that is, Peter's confession of faith) and urged those gathered to build on that same foundation, continuing to spread the good news of the Gospel to those who need to hear it. The choir, brass, organ, and timpani enhanced the chosen hymns, under the direction of Jeremy T. Warner and Chris Cardona. Offerings received from congregational representatives as well as individual worshipers were designated for the reduction of education debt incurred by current pastors and commissioned workers (the offering total will be shared in the Friday afternoon edition of *Set In Stone*). It was a memorable service, a high point of the Convention, and a "rock-solid" beginning to the 2018 Mid-South District Convention.



*Thank you to Caroline Johnson for providing photos from the Opening Service.*

## District's Deacon Program Evolves A Follow-Up from the 2015 Convention

At the 2015 Mid-South District Convention, delegates voted to restructure and amend the District's Deacon Program by developing guidelines for Deacons who were currently conducting Word and Sacrament Ministry to either apply for Colloquy or enroll in an LCMS seminary Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program by July 2016. The resolution called for the District to establish an SMP/Colloquy scholarship fund specifically for Deacons seeking ordination, and specified that beyond July 2016, no applications for Deacons working in Word and Sacrament Ministry would be accepted.

It further specified that:

- 1) An Ad Hoc Task Force would be assembled to guide the transition process through implementation of these changes so that no congregation would be left without specific ministry and full worship opportunities;
- 2) Synod would continue to review and continue to make recommendations regarding Deacons and the conducting of Word and Sacrament Ministry; and
- 3) Deacons currently doing visitation outreach and worship lay assistants would continue without change.

*MORE, Pg. 2 ►*



District's Deacon Program (continued)

2018 Update:

Set in Stone had the opportunity to talk with District President Paavola about the current status of the evolving program.

"We are more than halfway through all the men who were faithfully, and with dedication, taking care of congregations as licensed lay deacons," he said. "Concerns that were raised for us were that there would be congregations that would ultimately end up closing because they did not have a qualified and ordained pastor, and that concern has been effectively addressed. There are no congregations that will have any difficulty because we have made the process so adaptable that everyone will continue to have Word and Sacrament ministry on a continuing basis because of this."



In June of 2017 the Mid-South District office hosted over 15 deacons for a special "colloquy intensive" course to instruct and prepare those who would seek to apply for admission to the pastoral ministry by colloquy.

At this point, he notes, three men have progressed through the Synod's certification and successfully been ordained through the colloquy process, with four more awaiting their ordination/installation dates. Of the 43 deacons who were potential candidates for the SMP or Colloquy path to ordination in 2015, 18 have taken advantage of the opportunity.

He pointed out that the restructuring of the deacon program actually began with Synod resolution 406A (from 2013) and its recommendations for regularizing Word and Sacrament ministry across the LCMS—which was followed by a further resolution at the 2016 Synod meeting.

"Ultimately there were just over 500 men and women who were involved in Deacon programs across the Synod. About half that number were individuals who were doing Word and Sacrament ministry. It appears now that we are well on our way to achieving the resolution's goals, as our two seminaries provide a

one-week intensive course that prepares the men for the colloquy interviews, and gets them ready to serve as ordained pastors in their communities."

In addition, Concordia University systems will be developing additional educational opportunities for men and women interested in doing visitation, hospital visits or similar outreach, to better prepare them for those ministries, as well. Watch for announcements concerning these opportunities in the near future.

In the final edition, Set In Stone will share an interview with a Mid-South District deacon recently ordained through the colloquy process.

WHO'S HERE THIS YEAR?

80 PASTORS  
95 LAY DELEGATES  
26 ADVISORS  
22 GUESTS

Mid-South District Presidents Emeriti Share Greetings

In Thursday's opening session to the Convention, delegates were welcomed by inspiring messages from Emeritus Presidents Rev. Norman Groteluschen and Rev. David Callies. Unable to attend, President Emeritus Rev. Kenneth Lampe's written greeting to the delegation was shared by Pastor Callies.



Rev. Norman Groteluschen was the District's 2nd President, serving from 1985-1991.



Elected in 1991, Rev. David Callies became the District's 3rd President. He held the office through 2003.

The Story of Tanzania and the Mid-South District

Special Report from Mr. Allen Piepenbrink

I had the privilege of being a part of one of the two teams from the Mid-South District that went to Tanzania this year. I have been to many countries over the past 23 years doing some sort of work for the Lord, but this was the best experience I have had. Being able to witness to people who recognize Jesus as the Savior of the world and then get baptized into the faith was an awesome experience. Over the years many teams have begun the work of saving people and then turned that work over to the Holy Spirit who continues the work through the Lutheran Church of Tanzania. The enthusiasm of the young Tanzanian evangelists and pastors for the work of sharing the Gospel was inspiring.

The history of the work of the Mid-South District in Tanzania goes back to 2003 working with the East of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELVD). Then in 2013 the South East Lake Victoria Diocese (SELVD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania was formed and the focus of our support of SELVD changed to supporting the pastoral training center located in Negezi, Tanzania and supporting advanced degree training of SELVD pastors at the seminary in Fort Wayne. This was done through the World-Wide Seminary Initiative of the LCMS, the Mid-South District, and Concordia Seminary Fort Wayne. Since 2013 this partnership has been successful in training 38 pastors and 113 evangelists.

The other form of support for Tanzania has been annual mission trips to share the Gospel message in remote villages. Since 2013 over 11,500 people have been baptized. The new congregations that developed where the evangelism took place have

begun building churches, some with land purchased with the help of Mid-South District Congregations.

The Gospel outreach was done this summer as well and several new churches were established. These small church plants then begin the process of cleaning land, digging foundations, making bricks and building a church building. Assistant Bishop Trafaina Aseri Nyya said that the church members will first try to build their music program to attract village members to the worship service. So, if you are musically inclined (or not) and would like to help them purchase things like: a generator, keyboard, mixer, microphones, speakers and stands, please do so. Often the greatest need for these small congregations is raising money to finish the building with a roof. Bob Allen has told me that a small church roof costs about \$4,000 and a large church roof costs about \$5,000. Please consider donating to this worthy cause. You can use GoFundMe or send checks to the district office marked Tanzania Music or Tanzania Roof. Imagine putting up a church building for less than \$20,000!

In the past, our district has also provided food to the needy, given bikes and motorbikes to pastors and evangelists, held eye glass clinics, provided water purification kits to schools and congregations and of course sent thousands of prayers to our Father in heaven for the continued spreading of the Good News in Tanzania. Please pray for this worthwhile ministry.



Rev. Will Miller (Immanuel Lutheran - Memphis) baptizes a child.



A town leader gives up his pagan charms.

A Brief Summary of the Work Done In Tanzania



Year	Village or Villages Near	# Baptized
2004	???	
2005	Worked with Bishop Bomani	728
2006	???	
2007	The District of Sengerema	667
2008	The District of Bariadi	680
2009	Ukerewe Island in Lake Victoria	489
2010	The towns of Kahama and Mwadui	800
2011	Negezi	1090
2012	Kayenze and Mwadui in Ilmela District	2200
	Subtotal	6654
2013	Bariadi District villages	1254
2014	Salawe	1093
2015	Meatu District	1512
	Maswa (Ascension Lutheran - Wichita, KS)	834
	Itilima and Bariadi with Bishop Malasusa	1000
	Kishapu District villages and eye glass clinic	1347
2017	Maswa District Mwakidiga and Mbalagane	1736
2018	District of Ulowa	587
	6 villages in Itilima district	2158
	Subtotal	11,521
Total # Baptisms		18,175

Bible Trivia:

What is the shortest verse in the Bible\*?

- a) 1 Chronicles 1:25
- b) Luke 17:32
- c) John 11:35
- d) Revelation 20:4

\* King James version

Check the Friday PM Set In Stone for the answer!



## President Paavola Shares Vision and Hope in Report

Mid-South District President Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola shared his report to the Convention delegation on Thursday afternoon. His address combined both a retrospective look at what has been accomplished in the District and the vision for what can be done for God's Kingdom in the years to come. Working through specific points in the vision, President Paavola emphasized the need to not only implement efforts that strengthen our District's ministries, but that encourage individual LCMS members to confidently share the Gospel with those around them. In particular, he noted the "Each One, Reach One" evangelism emphasis, which is being shared across the District through a strong partnership with the Lutheran Women's Missionary

League (LWML) in the Mid-South, under the leadership of District LWML President Diane Reimold.

While a strong emphasis was placed on individual evangelism as well as community outreach by ministries themselves, President Paavola also shared the encouraging news that, despite double-digit declines in membership for many mainline Christian denominations across the U.S., the Mid-South District LCMS has actually seen a slight increase in baptized membership. In his concluding statements, President Paavola stressed, "Our future is bright! Our outlook is bold! Our goals are lofty because Christ leads our way."



## Keeping Order Get to Know Our Parliamentarian



The Mid-South District is pleased to once again welcome parliamentarian Charlotte Buchanan from Nashville, TN. A member of the National Association of Parliamentarians, Charlotte has been a professional parliamentarian for over 20 years and is serving in this capacity for her second Mid-South District Convention. When assembling for discussion, elections and voting on official organization business and policy, the expertise of a parliamentarian is essential for

consultation on rules of order and proper procedure. Charlotte emphasizes that as a parliamentarian, she represents an organization and its individual members/delegates equally. Therefore, if you have any questions or concerns regarding proper procedure or rules of order, be sure to see Charlotte.

### NOTABLE QUOTE...

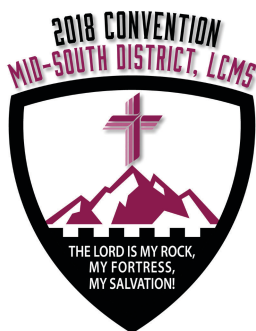
HE WHO DOES NOT LIKE WINE, SONG AND WIFE,  
REMAINS A FOOL FOR THE WHOLE OF HIS LIFE.

*MARTIN LUTHER—THEOLOGIAN*



### Your 2018 Publicity Crew

Meet the group who proudly brings you the daily convention newsletter and video highlights: (L to R, upper) Patrick McElwain, Renae McElwain, Genie Swan, Diane Reimold, (L to R, lower) Sheila Adcock and Judy Otto. Special thanks go to Rev. David Callies (not pictured) who is advising this year's Publicity Committee.



### In the Next Issue —

The next issue of *Set in Stone* will be published Saturday morning, June 30, featuring coverage of:

- Election Results
- Address from LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison
- Meet Mid-South District Church Planter, Rev. JD Zischke