

Encourager

Mid-South District LCMS | October 2018

Focus for October

Celebrating Lutheran Heritage

Autumn has arrived and the seasons are changing. One thing remains the same, the Lord Our God is never changing.

This month our Lutheran heritage is observed and celebrated with Oktoberfests and Reformation Day services that will allow congregations and schools to connect with their communities.



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



Heritage

Colossians 1:21-23: And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven and of which, I Paul became a minister. ESV

Webster defines it this way: **Her-it-age** (her'-I-tij): noun
1. Property that is or can be inherited; 2. (a) Something handed down from one's ancestors or the pastor, as

a characteristic, a culture, tradition, etc. (b) the rights, burdens, or status resulting from being born in a certain time or place; birthright. Where were you baptized? The doctrine of the Church's faith was firmly in place. Where were you confirmed? The doctrine of our faith was firmly in place. What kind of church building did your family go to for worship? The doctrine of our faith was firmly in that place. Today, we're called to proclaim the heritage of the doctrine of our faith that is still firmly in place.

The rich heritage of our faith is founded on sharing the boldness of our Lutheran Confessions of our Christian faith that has been given to us by God's grace and Spirit. We

may all recall the names and faces of those who helped form the foundation of what has made any of our congregations as a strong example of a Christian worshipping community. The mosaic of your home congregation may have been different than mine, but Finns, Germans, Dutch, Swedes, Norwegians, Dane and many other immigrants began to populate the vast expanse of farms and communities of our new country. Merchants, farmers, teachers, traveling salesmen... all came together for worship, to be baptized, confirmed, fed on God's Word and Sacraments, to be married, and be buried – all the while embracing the precious gift

of our heritage of faith and Confessions.

But, our heritage goes farther back – beyond the Lutheran Church's that started in the United States in 1847. Our real faith heritage digs back more than 500 years ago, when the Reformation and a brave – maybe stubborn at times – Reformer by the name of Martin Luther began our tradition. Two years ago, the entire Lutheran world celebrated as we commemorated those 95 questions Luther nailed on the Wittenburg Castle Church door. But, for the next 30 years after October 31, 1517, Luther wrote thousands of letters, thousands of sermons and hundreds of books, defending the biblical

foundation of our Lutheran Confessions found in the Book of Concord that established this doctrine of our faith in which we firmly stand.

But, the heritage of this rich tradition goes back to the very mysteries of Holy Scripture that is thousands of years old. That is why, on the very early morning of February 18, 1546 – 30 years after the Reformation, Luther's good friend, Justus Jonas sat mournfully at the bedside of the dying Reformer. Luther was bed ridden having suffered an apoplectic stroke, leaving him almost speechless. Jonas knew his good friend was about to die and be joined into a blessed, eternal peace with God. Fearing his departure was about to happen, Jonas called out to Luther, ***"My dear reverend father, are you ready to die... trusting in your Lord Jesus Christ and to confess the doctrine which you have faithfully taught in his name?"*** Despite suffering with nearly complete aphasia, the great reformer sat up and shouted, ***"Ja Voll! – Yes indeed."*** Moments later, Luther breathed his last.

Luther's last writing concluded with an affirmation of faith: ***"Know that no one can have a satisfactory taste of Holy Scriptures, unless he has governed churches for hundreds of years, with the prophets, such as Elijah and Elisha, John the Baptizer, Christ and the Apostles. Do not assail this divine Aeneid. Nay, rather prostrate revere the ground that it treads. We are but mere beggars."***



Friends in Christ Lutheran Church in Bryant, Arkansas

(4305 Hwy. 5 North) invites you to attend OKTOBERFEST on Saturday, October 6 from 11 AM-2 PM. The event will benefit the Kids Closet, a community organization that provided clothing for over 500 children in need in the last year. So the only admission for OKTOBERFEST is a clothing item or other donation for the Kids Closet.

What's planned for OKTOBERFEST 2018?

There will be live polka music, a German meal, dessert sale, hot pretzels, games for kids, cotton candy, a hay ride and so much more!

Over 500 people enjoyed the fun last year; Friends in Christ hopes to see you there for the 2018 celebration!

Think about it! The heritage of our Christian faith accepts the impossible chemistry alchemy of a Jesus who turned water into wine... the incredible biology of God being born to a virgin mother...the unbelievable physics of Christ walking on water and calming a storm. Our faith *resounds* when we accept the evidence of life eternal when He raised the dead to life. Faith rejects logic and human reason when we stand in awe before the cross of a dying Savior, knowing that Christ dying on the Cross is the object and proof of our sins forgiven and our guarantee of eternal life. This is our faith in Jesus!

We're not quite sure what prompted God's Spirit to lead St. Paul to write his letter to the Colossians. Yet, it's clear that a deadly virus of thinking had already spread throughout the congregation... somehow reasoning that Jesus had to be something less than true God and true Man. So, St. Paul writes, *"Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God; He who created all things in heaven and on the earth; He is before all things, and in Him all things have their being."*

Paul makes it clear: Jesus Christ IS God... who donned the mask of human flesh... the Creator of all things, and in Him, we have life, our hope, and Salvation. He's not only the Head of the Church, His Body, but, He's the very foundation upon which God grants His daily and abundant blessings.

This blessed hope of life eternal is NOT about what we

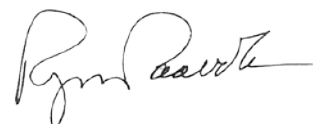
have to do; nor how we can bring ourselves to God... nor is even it **about** us... lest anyone can boast. This blessed Hope is **for** us. It means Christianity is NOT merely a religion – stifled by worldly definitions. Instead, Christianity is a body of faith... promised, proclaimed and enabled by a gracious God. St. Paul explains: *"You, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him ..."*

By our very nature, we're born sinners -- enemies of God, alienated from God by our carnal minds and actions. The contents of unregenerate hearts is steeped in sin. But, because God took on human flesh for the sole purpose to live the perfect life and offer His life to God as a sacrifice for our sin, we're now at peace with God by His grace.

Notice that St. Paul didn't dwell on the Colossian's sins, but rather defined the corollary of God's grace: *"He has now reconciled us... to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him."* Christ isn't made God and Savior by our assent. He is God and Lord by His very nature. Making Christ optional as just another choice in religions or denying Him as the only means of eternal life simply - tragically - denies the only name by which we are saved.

That's the divine peace Luther declared in the face of death. That's the confession of

the Lutheran Church and the foundation of all Confessional Lutheran's long, rich, and faithful history. Even during the times when our nation reels at the thoughts of continuous human tragedy... we may grasp for, but never obtain the means to end the evil and the carnage. We can never find solace in our collective fears and brokenness. But, as we continue in this sacred inheritance of Christianity, how fortunate for us to know, that with those who die in the true Christian faith...knowing the same blessed hope offered to the beloved Martin Luther centuries ago...that in an overflowing abundance of God's grace, received with the gift of faith, we can face each day in confidence in Christ Jesus; and in death, by faith firmly grasp the blessed hope of life eternal...*faith, stable and steadfastness, not shifting from the hope of the Gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven.* We keep this as our heritage. We continue faithfully to bear witness of the one and only Savior of the world. We share His message of peace and eternal joy that those who live in fear and darkness, may come to live in Christ's eternal Light.



~ CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE DISTRICT ~



29 Years of Service

On September 2, 2018 **Pastor Mike Miller** and his wife Jennifer were recognized for their **29 years of faithful pastoral service**. Pastor Miller was installed at **Redeemer Lutheran Church in Harriman, TN** on August 27, 1989.

Baptism Celebration

We baptized a beautiful baby recently. Her name is Rhea Willa Duncan. Seen here with father Stephen and mom Heather. **Christus Victor Lutheran Church – Knoxville**



Congratulations

Mid-South District Education Executive Allen Piepenbrink presents the **National Lutheran School Accreditation** certificate to **Faith Lutheran Church in Collierville, TN**. Pictured are Pastor Rob Harbin, preschool director Dina Foshee and Allen. Congratulations for having an exemplary preschool.



PREVIEW SERVICE ANNOUNCED FOR RESTORATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

After several months of searching for a worship space, Pastor JD Zischke is pleased to share that Restoration Lutheran Church has a home—for now, at least. Fayetteville-based market research firm Field Agent has graciously offered the use of its home office building for the worship services of Restoration Lutheran Church. Pastor Zischke explained that the offer came about after a conversation with one of the company's founders regarding the struggles of finding a worship space for Restoration. The company representative noted that two other churches had previously started by using the Field Agent headquarters for worship—and that they would love for Restoration Lutheran Church to be the third!

Pastor Zischke was pleased to accept this generous offer. Now he and those who have been gathering as Restoration Lutheran Church are excited to announce that a **preview service will be held on Sunday,**



Sign up to receive a weekly update from Restoration Lutheran Church at info@restorationlutheran.com. You can also follow them on Facebook (@Restoration Lutheran Church) or visit their website at restorationlutheran.com.

October 28 at 10 a.m. in the new worship space (2429 N. Gregg Avenue in Fayetteville). In its initial phase, Restoration will gather for worship the fourth Sunday of each month until the group grows large enough for a weekly service. The Field Agent facility will be made available for Restoration Lutheran worship until the church outgrows the space. Pastor Zischke and those gathering as Restoration Lutheran Church look eagerly to that next milestone!



The headquarters of Fayetteville-based market research firm Field Agent will serve as the worship home of Restoration Lutheran Church.

Mid-South District 2018 CARE-VAN

November 2-3, 2018

Locations and Coordinators



Loading Friday and Saturday, November 2-3, 2018
 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.

Arkansas

CITY	Location for YRC Freight	Contact Person	Pastor of Church
Fort Smith, AR	First Lutheran School 2407 Massard Road Fort Smith, AR 72901	Mr. Lou Fellwock 1-479-646-5462	Rev. John Merrill 1-479-785-2886 (church) jfmerrill@gmail.com
Little Rock, AR	Grace Lutheran Church 5124 Hillcrest Little Rock, AR 72205	Rev. James Walter 1-501-663-3631 (church) 1-501-240-7729 (cell) walter@aristotle.net	Rev. James Walter 1-501-663-3631 (church) 1-501-240-7729 (cell) walter@aristotle.net
Springdale, AR	Salem Lutheran Ministries 1800 West Emma Avenue Springdale, AR 72762-3905 Only Saturday - Nov. 3 (9a.m.-12p.m.)	Ms. Darlene Diercouff 1-479-751-9500 (church) ddiercouff@aol.com	Rev. Mark Krause 1-479-751-9500 (church) 1-479-841-4898 (cell) mekrause40@aol.com

***There will not be a truck at Pilgrim this year. *Please drop off your boxes at Pilgrim the week of October 28-31.*

***Pastor Shewmaker will bring all boxes to the truck at Immanuel, Memphis.

Jonesboro, AR	Pilgrim Lutheran Church*** 1812 South Rains Jonesboro, AR 72401-5046 Drop off boxes at Pilgrim during the week prior to Care-Van Drive	Rev. Russell Shewmaker 1-870-935-2001 (church) 1-870-897-4443 (cell) pastor@pilgrimlutheran.us	Rev. Russell Shewmaker 1-870-935-2001 (church) 1-870-897-4443 (cell) pastor@pilgrimlutheran.us
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Tennessee

CITY	Location for YRC Freight	Contact Person	Pastor of Church
Chattanooga, TN	Cross of Christ Lutheran Church 3204 Hixon Pike Chattanooga, TN 37415 Only Friday, Nov. 2 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)	Ms. Lanette Bagley 1-423-344-9324 1-423-653-6673 (cell) laja40@yahoo.com	Rev. Barry Hildebrandt 1-423-877-7447 (church) 1-423-255-4746 (cell) church@cocluth.com
Hermitage, TN	Emmanuel Lutheran Church 1003 Hickory Hill Lane Hermitage, TN 37076	Ms. Debbie Cox 1-615-364-3160 dscox316@hotmail.com	Rev. Keith Enko 1-615-883-7533 (church) 1-615-812-5955 (cell) keithenko@yahoo.com
Knoxville, TN	Christus Victor Lutheran Church 4110 Central Avenue Pike Knoxville, TN 37912-0312	Mr. Tim Rearick 1-865-719-1123 (cell) timrearick1@yahoo.com	Rev. William Ondracka 1-865-687-6622 (church) 1-734-368-1703 pastorbill@christusvictorknoxville.org
Memphis, TN	Immanuel Lutheran Church 6319 Raleigh LaGrange Road Memphis, TN 38134-6907	Ms. Diane Reimold 1-901-679-0626 dianereimold@hotmail.com	Rev. Will Miller 1-901-373-4486 (church) millerpw@live.com

TANZANIA MISSION TRIP 2019

Plans are in the works for 2019

The 2019 trip will again focus on outreach to the Sukuma tribe, in a group of villages, located in the South East Of Lake Victoria Diocese (SELVD).

Bishop Makala will determine in which area we will work. The Sukuma are the nation's largest tribe, comprised of 6 million people. Most of the people believe in superstitions, magic, ancestor worship and traditional religions. They are comprised mostly of farmers, merchants, builders and traditional doctors living in the countryside.



Mission teams from the Mid-South District LCMS have been going to the Northwest region of Tanzania for over 16 years. Tentative plans are for a trip in late May but the the time of the trip could depend on those who are interested in going. We typically end with a safari for those interested. For more information contact Bob Allen, phone 270-535-7370 or email rjallen@prodigy.net.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING



The date for the next S.E.T. (Safe Environment Training) Your Faith Community is Thursday, Dec. 13th and Friday, Dec. 14th.

Registration opening soon. Learn more about the topic of child abuse, the spiritual impact it can have on a child's faith, and ways to provide reassurance, safety, and a sanctuary within the walls of your organization.

Contact Melanie Halbrook
Children's Advocacy Center of Benton County
2113 Little Flock Dr. Little Flock, AR 72756
Office: (479) 621-0385
Fax: (479) 621-0467
www.cacbentonco.com
AR Child Abuse Hotline: 1-844-SAVE-A-CHILD

So Much More Than A Feeding Program

Many times people see our work as just a feeding program to those small bodies who are so hungry. But I see it as so much more. Yes, Trinity HOPE does provide the necessary food physically for the children to combat malnourishment, but the food also shows the children compassion and love, which opens their hearts and minds to Jesus. Experiencing this first-hand, I've seen their eyes light up and their faces fill with pure joy when they arrive at school and see the fires going, knowing their hunger pains will soon be relieved. Each time this assures me that Trinity HOPE is more than just a feeding program. It opens the doors and allows us to share God's love with them each day. Once they accept Christ into their lives and begin their Christian walk, those meals continue to witness to them that the One True God does care and love them. This allows the local pastors to use the feeding program as an evangelism tool, reaching the families and neighbors of these children and continue to nurture those relationships with God's Word in church and at home. Did you know that many of our feeding program directors are pastors? It was



our connection with the local Lutheran Pastors in Haiti that fostered the first school being fed by Trinity HOPE and continues to allow the program to grow and expand. Trinity HOPE now feeds over 24,000 meals each day to 120+ Christian schools throughout Haiti. Trinity HOPE is a humanitarian project but with a direct link to the Gospel!



www.trinityhope.org

Prayer Summary, September 2018

Following is a list of all the people that have appeared on the Mid-South District website prayer list www.mid-southlcms.com during the month of September 2018.

PRAYER CONCERNS

MRS. SUSAN ELSEROAD (wife of Rev. Richard Elseroad, Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN)
REV. NORM GROTELUSCHEN (Germantown, TN, MDS President – Emeritus)
MRS. ALISON HAWKINS (Mid-South District Office)
REV. RICHARD MAYER (Pea Ridge, AR)
MR. RICHARD MEYER (Bella Vista, AR)
MR. DAVID OESCH (Jackson, TN)
REV. DAVID RUBKE (Tullahoma, TN)
REV. ERIC AND KATIE RUDSENSKE (Concordia Lutheran Church, Jackson, TN)
REV. MERLIN SEPMEYER (Crossville, TN)
MRS. SUE ANN TOOPES (wife of Rev. Andy Toopes, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Bowling Green, KY)
MS. AMY WALTERS (sister of Julie Tyler, Mid-South District Office)
THE MOTHER OF MS. MICHELE LAYNE (ECE Director, St. John's, Fayetteville, AR)

We pray especially for the Southeastern District and all those residing within as they recover from Hurricane Florence.

Our deepest sympathies to:

Rev. Clifford Herd (Emeritus, Chattanooga, TN) as his wife, Nancy Herd, passed away on Saturday, September 1st.

Rev. Richard Snow (Nebraska District President) and family as they mourn the loss of his mother, Myrna Snow, who passed away on Wednesday, September 5th.

Rev. Kevin Wilson (Ohio District President) and family as they mourn the loss of his mother-in-law, Esther Weidenbach who passed away on Tuesday, August 28th.

The family of Ryan Paavola (President Paavola's cousin) who passed away on Sunday, September 23rd.

CALL UPDATE

ORDAINED MINISTERS

PENDING: Rev. Reed Shoaff, Sole Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, London, AR, has been issued a call to serve as Pastor at St. John Lutheran Church, San Benito, TX.

IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS

Bella Vista Lutheran Church, Bella Vista, AR – Associate Pastor
Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN – Pastor
Mid-South District – Executive Director for Missions and Ministry

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

ACCEPTED: Mr. David Stuckwisch, DCE (St. John's Lutheran Church and School, Stuttgart, AR) has accepted the call to serve at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Appleton, WI.

IN THE CALLING PROCESS

Avilla Christian Academy, Alexander, AR – Director of Parish Music
Christ Lutheran Church and School, Little Rock, AR – Athletic Director



CONGREGATIONAL MISSION COMMITMENTS

Mission Commitment Receipts as of 08/31/18 (8 Months)

Anticipated Amount (66.67% of budget).....	\$1,054,274
Actual Receipts.....	<u>998,277</u>
Over (under) anticipated amount	(\$55,997)

Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (8 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions	\$282,816
Allocated to Tanzania	16,667
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts).....	<u>698,794</u>
Total Receipts.....	\$998,277

Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year

Comparison (8 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 08/31/18.....	\$998,277
Actual Receipts as of 08/31/17	<u>\$1,043,113</u>
Over (under) prior year receipts	(\$44,836)



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 & Executive Director for LCEF Vice President*

Allen Piepenbrink, *District Education Executive for Education and Preschools*

Alison Hawkins, *Executive Assistant to the District President*

Rena McElwain, *Communications & Marketing Specialist*

Carolyn Metzger, *Finance Assistant*

Julie Tyler, *Administrative Assistant for Missions and Education*

Contact the Mid-South District

1675 Wynne Road

Cordova, TN 38016

PHONE: 866.373.1343 / 901.373.1343

FAX: 901.373.4826

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ON TWITTER - "[@midsouthLCMS](https://twitter.com/midsouthLCMS)"

Contribute

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 25, 2018** to Rhonda, webmaster@mid-southlcms.com