

# Encourager

LUTHERAN  
SCHOOLS Week

January 27- February 2, 2019  
Mid-South District LCMS | January 2019



This month's *Encourager* features inspiring updates from our amazing Lutheran schools across the district as they celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week. The theme for 2019 is "Real. Present. God."

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We also celebrate the accomplishments and events that touched lives in our congregations through their events and celebrations.

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As 2019 kicks off and our education ministries prepare for the upcoming Lutheran Schools Week later this month – please keep our schools, students, teachers and staff in your prayers.

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



Jennifer Sinclair, a principal in the Elkton, Nebraska school district recently ordered all the candy canes in the school to be removed because they were offensive. She banned singing Christmas carols and decoration of any kind that are red or green. Her reason? Red and green are the colors associated with Christmas; candy canes are shaped like the letter "J" – reminding the person about Jesus, and they're red and white, which she reasoned reminded the person eating the candy cane of the blood Jesus shed for the sins of the world, and the white (she said) the symbol of Christ's resurrection. Bah humbug?!

It's safe to say that she was a little misinformed about Christmas and probably heard something about the candy canes when she was listening to a children's sermon (sort of!). There's changes happening in the world around

us. St. Paul already said that the story of Jesus was going to be offensive, so we shouldn't be surprised. He wrote, *"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.' Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."* (1 Corinthians 1:18-25, ESV)

Think about it, outside the sweet embrace of the Christian Church, things change. Things change and we may not even realize it. For example, think about something as common as food. The food we eat is very different from the food people ate generations ago. Our food is genetically modified. Chemicals

protect the seeds and ingredients from bugs, disease, and decay with pesticides and chemicals. Leave a loaf of bread out for a few days and watch what happens: Fresh bread we bake at home starts to turn green and fuzzy within a few days. But, not the bread you grab from the grocery store shelf. Some will argue that this is good, but others argue that it's not all that good. The fact remains that things in this world are always changing, and we might not always be aware of what's going on around us.

The Bible even says that we're always changing. Not just in the way we look, or the way we dress, but in our soul, and our inner being. Our level of trust in God, our level of hope from the forgiveness of sins, our level of desire to serve God – these things are always

changing inside of us, sometimes for the good, and sometimes for the "not so good." We're like clay - something very malleable. God is the one who changes us for good.

Christian education reminds us of the special way God shapes and changes us, and especially young lives through the power of his Word in Christian education. He is the Potter. We're clay in His hands. Scripture talks God dealing with Israel, who had been very faithful to God, hearing His Word and living according to it. But as a nation they began to fall away. Isaiah wrote: *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. We all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away."* (Isaiah 64:6) The people changed for the worse. But, God never changes.

What happened? Instead of staying in God's Word, allowing God to shape them, they pushed His Word away. A sinful world shaped them instead: Idol worship, materialism, immorality, selfishness. But, the same thing can happen to us if we ignore the Word of God and let a sinful culture shape us. Sadly, the same thing often happens to our Lutheran youth. For a few years, grade school students spend time in the Word in confirmation classes. God is the potter. He shapes those students. Then the students are confirmed. Some data shows that within five years, two-thirds of those students lose their connection to God and His Church. Materialism, immorality, selfishness take over and shape the young. Without even realizing it, they've changed,



## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for Heavenly Host Lutheran

2018-2019 marks the 25th anniversary for Heavenly Host Lutheran in Cookeville, Tennessee, and we celebrated in grand fashion at the end of September. Three events were rolled into one exhilarating weekend. The Eagle Run/Grandparents' Day kicked off Friday morning's activities on 9/28, and Heavenly Host Lutheran Church held its annual Oktoberfest on 9/29.

Perhaps the most interesting innovation to Heavenly Host this year isn't a student information system, iXL, or Google Classroom. It might be our new GaGa Pit, in which students love to play GaGa Ball. The construction lasted one morning, but the memories will endure.



and not for the good. It's not for a lack of training, but because of the influence of the world.

Yet, Isaiah records what he asks of God, *"Do not remember our sins forever."* Our Father looks down from heaven, and doesn't want us to be covered within the filth of sin. God reaches down from heaven and re-shapes us. He uses His law to cut away at our sin. Just like that first century potter who would dig clay out of the ground, and remove all the rocks and sticks that were stuck in that clay. Sometimes the potter stomps on the clay, pushing it through little holes in order to remove impurities.

But, by the same token, the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. Our Heavenly Father removes our sins through the merits of the sacrifice of His Son Jesus. He does "not remember our sins forever" because of His undeserved love in Christ Jesus. God, the Potter, takes our clay, purifies, and begins to shape us. The Potter has a plan for each of us.

Who is shaping our children? Who is the future of our church? The average school student will be away from home at high school from 7:30 until 3:30 – provided they aren't involved in some extra-curricular activities that keep them until 5:30 or later. Sporting event or concerts in the evening could mean they're gone until 9:30 or 10:00 at night. Who do we want shaping those young Christians who have been out of our homes for up to 15 hours in a 24-hour day?

The schools and ECC's of the Mid-South District provide a place where the Potter works His clay. His Word is present in so many different ways. The Potter shapes

His clay in our religion classes and chapel services. The students in science classes learn about God's creation. The Potter is at work. In history, students see the hand of God in world events. The Potter is at work. The music students sit at the feet of Christian teachers. Our athletes listen to a Christian coach. The Potter is at work. He talks with his Christian friends as they grow up together, going through life together. The Potter is at work, shaping and molding the young Christians. The students graduate or go on to advanced education with the full understanding of God's overflowing grace and their purpose of serving Christ and others.

May God continue to bless the education ministries that take place in the Mid-South District, and bless all the principals, leaders, teachers, and helpers in all of our education ministries. May God continue to bless and keep us and work in us, so that we may always reflect the fact that we are still and will always be God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Your servant in Christ –  
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola



## Thanksgiving & Quilts of Valor

On November 18, 2018, Trinity Lutheran Church in Pine Bluff, AR celebrated Thanksgiving with our Annual Thanksgiving meal. Following the Thanksgiving Meal, we gathered in sanctuary where our Local Quilts of Valor Group "Never Forgotten With Honor" joined us and presented 14 of our 19 Veteran Members present, with a quilt made for each one by a member

of the Quilts of Valor. The group started off the presentations with the Missing in Action (MIA) table where they set the table to remind us of the ones who are missing. Then Trinity's Choir sang "O Valiant Hearts", then the presentation of the quilts took place. If you would like to see the presentation you may see it on Trinity's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/trinityowr](http://www.facebook.com/trinityowr) under videos. This is a very moving presentation.

## Our Savior Lutheran Academy had a Busy Christmas Season



The children of Our Savior Lutheran Academy in Nashville, TN had a busy Christmas Season! Our students and families strive to make positive impacts throughout our local community. Some examples being: sharing the love of Jesus by Christmas Caroling for the residents of a local nursing home, collecting toys for children in need during our Toy Drive for our Metro Police Christmas Charities and collecting food for families we adopted at a local elementary school with our Blessings in a backpack program. Our Savior's ministry not only touches the lives of the families and children who come through our door, but we reach out and set an example by spreading God's love throughout our community!

## God *IS* indeed Real and Present

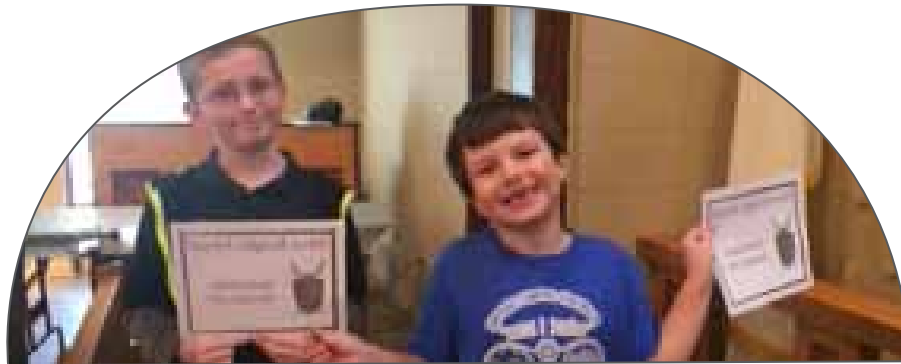
Christ Lutheran School in Little Rock, AR wants our community to know that God *IS* indeed Real and Present. Our school and church families generously purchased and wrapped Christmas presents for 55 children currently in foster care. From infants to teenagers, we hope and pray they feel the joy and love of our Savior and know He cares for them. Our school theme this year is "Just Jesus", our reminder that He alone saves and His grace is sufficient for us. Our Real and Present God calls us to be His hands and feet for the people around us!





## Concordia Christian Academy

Concordia Christian Academy is a family of learners and servants. We learn using many hands-on activities from objects in phonics to explorations in Mystery Science. We are so thankful to the Northeast Arkansas LWML for funding our Character Formation Project. The students learn of the inner character through studying the Bible and applying that in their lives. We celebrate students each month who demonstrate good character with the "Silver Knight" award. This year in chapel we have supported Trinity Hope and Lutheran World Relief to purchase animals. We have also locally supported a homeless project and a troubled youth group. With the help of Thrivent we were able to prepare and serve a Thanksgiving meal to supporters in our congregation. We are thankful for the opportunity to share the love of Christ in school, with family, and into the world.



## Cross-Grade Family Groups Makes an Impact



1st Lutheran School in Fort Smith spends time daily in cross-grade family groups. Using family groups have strengthened bonds between students and exemplifies what it means to be part of the 1st Family. While in our family groups, we use the Christian Character Formation Project to experience what it means to live as a child of God in today's world. All students are growing in their understanding of walking as a child of God. We have especially seen a significant impact in the lives of several new students who had never heard the Word of God prior to this school year!





## GO, JIM, GO!

Students, parents, and faculty at Christ the King Lutheran School in Memphis showed true servant hearts as they participated for the first time in the "Go, Jim, Go" fundraiser for Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. Every year since 2006, News Channel 3 meteorologist Jim Jagers has ridden his bicycle 333 miles across the Mid-South, raising more than \$800,000 for the children of Le Bonheur. CTK students and parents enthusiastically supported Jim's ride by raising \$2,000! When he visited the school during his ride across the Mid-South, Jim declared that amount totally amazing for a first-time school participant. Students, faculty, staff, and parents turned out for Jim's visit to the school in October, cheering him on as he finished his fundraising ride. We look forward to participating again in support of the families served by Le Bonheur. Thank you, CTK, and Go, Jim, Go!



# 2

## SR. HIGH RETREATS COMING UP IN FEBRUARY

Senior High School students across the Mid-South District have two great mid-winter retreats to choose from in February 2019

**IN THE WEST**  
@ Lutheran Camp on  
Petit Jean Mountain  
~ Feb. 15-17 ~



**IN THE EAST**  
@ Fall Creek Falls  
~ Feb. 22-24 ~

The LinkT Retreat will take place February 15-17 at the Lutheran Camp on Petit Jean Mountain in Arkansas. Theme verse is John 10:14-15 *"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep."*

The "early bird" registration is \$105 per person, with a deadline of January 15. Registration will increase to \$130 per person after the January 15 deadline.

Watch for more information to be shared soon on the LinkT website at [www.linktyouth.com](http://www.linktyouth.com), or contact Paul Easterday at 248-613-9172 or [pauleasterday@gmail.com](mailto:pauleasterday@gmail.com).

Spread the word about the 2019 Mid-Winter Retreat for Sr. High Youth, coming up February 22-24 at beautiful Fall Creek Falls in Tennessee. Youth leaders from Our Savior Lutheran Church in Nashville and Grace Lutheran Church in Knoxville are joining forces to reach out to all surrounding congregations within the Mid-South District-and they have an exciting weekend planned for all who attend!

The cost to participate in the retreat is \$50, which covers lodging, food and retreat materials. DCEs and youth leaders interested in signing their group up are asked to use the [REGISTRATION LINK](#) to provide some general information for planning purposes. For complete details on the Mid-Winter Retreat, please read the letter from Pastor Christensen, lead retreat coordinator. Watch for more on the Mid-Winter Retreat to be shared on the District website.





## School in Haiti



In the U.S. we all are blessed to have the opportunity to go to school regardless of where we live or how affluent we are. This is something I never gave much thought when I registered my children in public school and 12 years later thankfully watched them walk across stage to receive their high school diploma. Post-graduation education was optional and where we spent much more energy and time planning. Would they go to college or a trade school?

This is not the case in all countries, especially Haiti. Even though the U.S. and Haiti constitutions both require free public education be offered to everyone, all similarities stop there. Haiti has great ideas and goals but they lack the infrastructure or financial means to provide free education. This leads to about 90% of the primary schools being privately

run by churches, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) and local communities. The number of secondary schools is much smaller and again mostly private.

The school buildings are few and many schools will use the local churches or be held in open-air buildings with only tarps for shade and protection from the rain. The resources available in school are also very minimal; most use blackboards instead of books as their primary means to teach the children. School locations are not evenly distributed across the countryside. They can be up to 2 hours from the homes of many students whom walk to school.

Trinity HOPE is called to work with primary and secondary schools sponsored by Christian organizations in Haiti. This partnership with the schools allow all to see the importance of providing a daily meal that enables the children to learn and attendance to increase. After seeing the results, schools are willing to expand the school's business plan to help financially with the feeding program.

Even though the schools are few, have limited resources, and may be a far distance from the student's homes, the students have a strong desire to learn. This opens the door to

the opportunity to share the love of Christ with them and their families. Providing a hot nutritious meal of their favorite food, rice and beans with a red sauce makes a huge difference in attendance and advancement to the next grade level. If you would like to help us expand God's Kingdom in Haiti by providing a hot nutritious meal to the school children, please visit our website to learn more – [www.trinityhope.org](http://www.trinityhope.org).

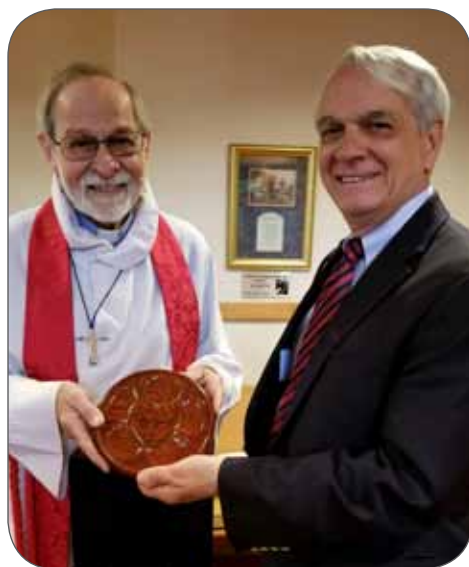






## Pastor Brian's Run for Freedom is Big Success!

Rev. Brian Truog, senior pastor of Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, finished the RunLoco marathon on December 1 and raised over \$6000! The money raised will go towards the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty in Washington D.C. and the Bridge City Community Urban Mission in Chattanooga. *"My recovery has been easier than expected. I am back to running shorter distances,"* said Pastor Truog.



## Pastor Hildebrandt Celebrates 45 years of ministry

Pastor Barry Hildebrandt, Cross of Christ in Chattanooga, TN was recently recognized for his 45 years of ministry. The congregation presented a hand carved Luther Rose to him in appreciation for his many years of service. Larry Zehnder, President of the congregation, is shown with Pastor Hildebrandt admiring the Rose, which was displayed for the congregation after the service.



*Hand carved Luther Rose*



## A Great Sign for Sharps Chapel

The congregation of Chapel of the Good Shepherd in Sharps Chapel, TN is excited about the blessing of property acquired in late 2018, where the ministry will build a permanent structure. In December, Congregation President Jeff Landis and church member Jeff Garretson (pictured) installed an eye-catching sign to share the excitement with the community and proudly proclaim the site as Chapel of the Good Shepherd's future home! We look forward to more great news from Chapel of the Good Shepherd as plans to build unfold.



Join us for a Treasurers' Workshop. We have five dates to choose from where we will be training on the Treasurers' Manual. Write down your specific questions on the registration form. This is an interactive workshop for all to learn and contribute

Please mark your calendar to attend one of the Mid-South District Workshops. The Presenter for the Treasurer's sessions will be Mr. Charlie Rhodes, Executive Director of Synod Accounting (Retired).

## The conferences will be held on the following dates and places

**January 5, 2019** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 1  
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 2  
*Grace Lutheran Church*  
*9076 Middlebrook Pike ~ Knoxville, TN*

**January 12, 2019** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 1  
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 2  
*Grace Lutheran Church*  
*5124 Hillcrest Avenue ~ Little Rock, AR*

**January 19, 2019** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 1  
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 2  
*St. John Lutheran Church*  
*500 N. Cumberland Avenue ~ Russellville, AR*

**January 26, 2019** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 1  
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 2  
*Mid-South District Office*  
*1675 Wynne Road ~ Cordova, TN*

**February 2, 2019** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 1  
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch (provided)  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Treasurer's Manual – Vol. 2  
*Our Savior Lutheran Church*  
*5110 Franklin Road ~ Nashville, TN*

### Details

Both sessions will be devoted to training on portions of the Treasurers' Manual (volumes 1 and 2 – both have been updated) with time reserved for specific questions and answers.

It would be helpful for you to have a copy of the manual with you, either the CD on your laptop or a hard copy. Hard copies of volume 2 will be available at the workshops.

### Register Online

Go to the website: [www.mid-southlcms.com](http://www.mid-southlcms.com) and click on "Treasurers' Workshop Online Registration"

### Questions

Contact Angela Fowler by e-mail ([afowler@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:afowler@mid-southlcms.com)) or telephone 866-373-1343.



# That They May Know

On Reformation Day, Wednesday, October 31st, I took a group of eleven people from my congregation to the movie "Gosnell: The Trial of America's Biggest Serial Killer." The title sounds like a horror film, not something that sanctified Lutherans should be watching. It is, in fact, a horror film about the carnage of abortion, and Lutherans should definitely see it so that they may know what is happening in this unholy industry and that they may tell others.

The film does not use a whole lot of shocking images of death, just shocked faces. That was the biggest impact for me in viewing this very important film: the faces of people who didn't know but now knew. From the detectives to the prosecutor to the jury members, nobody had any idea what went on inside Gosnell's abortion clinic or any other abortion clinic. They didn't know until they heard the testimony of the workers and saw for themselves, or saw the photographs.

Perhaps the movie's most damning argument against abortion is the testimony of a doctor who sits on the witness stand and describes the legal way to kill and remove an infant in the womb. This doctor's face is also telling as she is in horror that Dr. Gosnell would kill moments after birth. It is a powerful display of rationalizing shades of evil.

There were many things I didn't know prior to seeing the movie. One particular piece of information I didn't know is that the Grand Jury concluded "political reasons" accounted for why the Pennsylvania Department of Health stopped mandatory state inspections of abortion clinics. This is how Gosnell operated his clinic illegally for so long.

Many people have never heard of Gosnell or the case that resulted in his conviction. That's why the movie was made. If you are not completely in the know, then I urge to you to do a little research. Start with the two articles in the LCMS Reporter and the LCMS Statement on the conviction:

Movie review: 'Gosnell: The Trial of America's Biggest Serial Killer'

<https://blogs.lcms.org/2018/movie-review-gosnell-the-trial-of-americas-biggest-serial-killer/>

Reporter in 'Gosnell' movie based on LCMS member Mollie Ziegler Hemingway

<https://blogs.lcms.org/2018/reporter-in-gosnell-movie-based-on-lcms-member-mollie-ziegler-hemingway/>

The Kermit Gosnell Verdict: Implications for Pro-Life Lutheran Christians - A statement by LCMS Life Ministries

<https://blogs.lcms.org/2013/the-kermit-gosnell-verdict-implications-for-pro-life-lutheran-christians/>

Also consider hosting a movie watching event when the film comes out on Netflix, Amazon, or DVD. It is important that people know.

In our ongoing effort to proclaim life as God's gift and to proclaim the fullness of life in Christ, I also encourage you to observe **Life Sunday on January 20, 2019**. Lutherans For Life has materials available. This year's theme is "From Age to Age the Same," based on Isaiah 46:3b-4: "[You] have been borne by me from before your birth, carried from the womb; even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save." You can find all the free downloads here: <https://www.lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2019/>

The Lord bless your proclamation that many may know the Truth and be set free!

Rev. Philip Young

*Mid-South District Life Coordinator*



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Students play on the playground with their teacher at Our Savior Lutheran Preschool in St. Charles, Mo. Our Savior is renovating their Early Childhood Center with an LCEF loan.

## Your investments with LCEF help make LCMS ministry happen.

Over the last 40 years, our investors have made it possible for Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) to support the work of tens of thousands of Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod individuals and ministries through loans and ministry support services.

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**800-843-5233** to learn more.



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## An Update From Madagascar

*Ed. Note: Below is an email from Rev. Joseph Randianasolo of Lutheran Institute of Managerial Enterprise (LIME) giving an update and thank you to President Paavola and the District for all the help and equipment received.*

"Finally, we got things together: printers, video projector, computers chairs and tables. The tables and chairs just came yesterday late afternoon. There were unexpected expenses which forced us to cut the numbers of computers from 15 to 10, the numbers of tables from 30 to 20 and consequently the numbers of the chairs from 60 to 40 to meet these unexpected expenses.

We had to bring an expert on up to date printers and video projector from Fianarantsoa to Antananarivo to choose them and to test them at the stores themselves in Antananarivo to avoid chinese copies. Back in Fianarantsoa, this expert had to initiate our computer man how to use them.

For the tables and chairs, we asked the factory to make larger tables for multiple uses (like tables for eating in case the school organize a paid eating party and so on) and to paint them to protect them from insects. In addition, we had to pay the delivery to LIME. The factory is located 5km away from LIME.

For the computers, we bought two small speakers for each computer to allow students to listen in silence their lessons and researches. All of these unexpected expenses forced us to reduce the numbers of the above items. Thank you and thank you Brother. May Jesus bless you."

Rev. Joseph  
Randianasolo  
*Lutheran Institute  
of Managerial  
Enterprise (LIME)*



*More photos may  
be seen on the  
[District's website](#)*



## —The Lutheran Witness— Special School Edition

Attention Principals,

It is that time of year once again when we are seeking information from you for *The Lutheran Witness Supplement* highlighting the ministries in our Lutheran schools. The theme for 2018-2019 Lutheran Schools Week is "Real, Present, God" Psalm 46.

The Mid-South District elementary schools will appear in the April 2019 issue of *The Lutheran Witness*. This annual section has been well received across the District. We hope to have you send us your information ASAP.

**Deadline**-Picture and a short paragraph highlighting a school event/activity. **Due Monday, January 15, 2019**

Please email your original high resolution digital photo (.pdf or .jpg files only) and a short paragraph, to The Lutheran Witness Supplement editor, Judy Otto.

Judy will always acknowledge receipt of your submission if it is sent directly to her. If you don't receive an email reply that means she did not receive the information. Please call if you have any problems.

Judy Otto. Email: [LW@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:LW@mid-southlcms.com)  
Phone: 1-662-252-1004

Thank you in advance for your cooperation,  
Allen Piepenbrink  
*Executive Director for Schools and Early Childhood*

# Prayer Summary, December 2018

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 December 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)

**MS. MICHELE LAYNE** (ECE Director, St. John's, Fayetteville, AR)

**REV. RICHARD MAYER** (Pea Ridge, AR)

**MR. RICHARD MEYER** (Bella Vista, AR)

**MR. DAVID OESCH** (Jackson, TN)

**REV. DAVID RUBKE** (Tullahoma, TN)

**REV. MERLIN SEPMAYER** (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)

## CALL UPDATE

### IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS ORDAINED MINISTERS

**ACCEPTED:** **Rev. Michael Croom, Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Hopkinsville, KY**, has accepted the call to serve as Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN.

**Rev. Travis Ferguson, Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN** has accepted a call to be Pastor of Family Connections at Christ Lutheran Church Ministries, La Mesa, CA.

**Rev. William Miller, Senior Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN** has accepted a call to serve as Senior Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church & School, Lincoln, NE.

**Rev. Reed Shoaff, Sole Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, London, AR**, has accepted the call to serve as Pastor at Salem Lutheran Church in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**Rev. Neil Vanderbush, Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR** has accepted a call to serve as Chaplain in the U.S. Army, reporting for training January 9th in South Carolina.

**DECLINED:** **Rev. Randy Loux, Military Chaplain of the LCMS Board for Mission Services**, has been issued a call to serve as Pastor of Waikoloa Lutheran Church, Waikoloa Village, HI.

### IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS

**Bella Vista Lutheran Church, Bella Vista, AR – Associate Pastor**

**Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR – Pastor**

**First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN – Pastor**

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR – Pastor**

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

**St. John Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR – Pastor**

**Mid-South District – Executive Director for Missions and Ministry**

## COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

### IN THE CALLING PROCESS

**Avilla Christian Academy, Alexander, AR – Director of Parish Music**



## A Look Ahead at the Encourager in 2019

Throughout the year, the monthly *Encourager* will feature news from across the Mid-South District on specific topics. If your congregation, school or ministry group has an update that fits with one of the monthly emphasis topics please email the articles and photos to [webmaster@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:webmaster@mid-southlcms.com).

### Here's a look at the upcoming topics for 2019

- January - Lutheran Schools Week; Congregations celebrate/looking ahead
- February – Outreach
- March – Youth
- April – Volunteers
- May – Small Town & Rural Ministry
- June – Leadership
- July – Veterans
- August – Stewardship
- September – Church Planting
- October – Celebrating Lutheran Heritage (Reformation)
- November – Thankfulness
- December – Highlights of 2019

## Congregational Mission Commitments

### Mission Commitment Receipts as of 11/30/18 (11 Months)

Anticipated Amount (75% of budget).....	\$1,449,627
Actual Receipts.....	<u>1,377,474</u>
Over (under) anticipated amount .....	(\$72,153)

### Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (11 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions.....	\$390,326
Allocated to Tanzania .....	22,917
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts) .....	<u>964,232</u>
Total Receipts .....	\$1,377,474

### Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (11 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 10/31/18.....	\$1,377,474
Actual Receipts as of 10/31/17 .....	<u>\$1,401,633</u>
Over (under) prior year receipts .....	(\$24,159)

## 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*

**Renae 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

### Stay Connected With Us

ON THE WEB - "[mid-southlcms.org](http://mid-southlcms.org)"

ON FACEBOOK - "Mid-South-LCMS"

ON TWITTER - "@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 **January 24, 2019** to Rhonda, [webmaster@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:webmaster@mid-southlcms.com)