

Encourager

Mid-South District LCMS | April 2019

Volunteers from around the Mid-South District

"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35 (NIV)

This month we focus on volunteers who bless others with their service. They may not always be seen but their presence, time and hard work always shines the light of Christ.

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



People for God!

The amazing story of the Exodus is a bit of a puzzle to me. When God delivered His people from the bondage of their Egyptian oppressors, He saved them from the pursuing army, and provided all they could eat every day. Now, it wasn't an exquisite meal or even a buffet at Golden Corral. But, despite, "Aww Mom, it's manna... again?!", the king's army couldn't stand in their way. Their clothing didn't wear out, and they got water from a solid rock, among other great miracles. But, what's so puzzling is described in Joshua 14, they were on the brink of entering the Promise Land, and all they would've needed to do was go in, destroy the Canaanites, and take over!

Moses sent 12 volunteers to check out the land and report

back on how to proceed. They went into Canaan, as far as Hebron. But, in Hebron they saw descendants of Anak, a gigantic group of people who towered over an average Israelite. In the Valley of Eschcol, they cut down a cluster of grapes that took two men to carry it because it was so large. After exploring the land, they returned to report back to Moses.

It was like this: "OK, Moses, which do you want first, the good news or the bad? The good news was that there was a land of plenty, bountiful and lush, flowing with milk and honey. Just look at the size of these grapes we brought back!" So, what's the bad news? The people are giants! They live in fortified cities and they have powerful armies to protect them. But, one of the men who was named Caleb said, *"Let us go into this land at once, we can certainly conquer these people."* Caleb remembered the Lord's promise: the miracle of sparing the Israelites from the Egyptian army, the manna on the desert floor every day, pillar of fire and cloud that led the people every day. The giants of Canaan were nothing – mere dwarfs in

the sight of God. But, the other volunteers said the land was too well fortified and the people's strength was like that of giants. *"Next to them, we were as small as grasshoppers."* Who won this debate?

The volunteers who didn't want to press forward won. Moses said, *"As surely as I live, not one of these people will ever see the land God promised to our forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. But, because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he explored, and his descendants will inherit it."* As a result of disbelief, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for another 39 years!

Under Moses and Joshua's leadership, the Israelites entered the Promise Land after a needless 40 year journey. Caleb said, *"You know that what the Lord said to Moses, the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me... when Moses sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. I brought him back a report according to my convictions, but my brothers who went up with me, made the heart of the people melt with fear... Now then, just as the Lord promised, he has kept me alive for 45 years since that time, so here I am today, 85 years old! I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me... Now give me this hill country that the Lord promised me that day."*

In more recent history, we've heard how the explorer, Ponce De Leon was sent to discover the Fountain of Youth. He

thought he found it in Florida. If you've visited Florida you either see people still seeking the Fountain of Youth, or ample evidence that it isn't there at all! Caleb discovered his source of vitality: The Lord God. The prophet Isaiah puts it this way: *"The Lord gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and the young men stumble and fall. But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar as on the wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint."* As we age, we wonder where our strength has gone. Parts begin to wear out. Joints creak and muscles ache. It's called the aging process. Despite the creams, injections, clothing, or any other gadget concocted by mankind, the march of time remains the same.

The tragedy is that someone has arbitrarily put age 62 or 65 as the time when a person may retire. Really?! Caleb was 85 when he started his new home! Joshua was over 90 when God sent him to do battle against his enemies. Grandma Moses painted her first portrait at 85 years! Michelangelo was 89 when he finished his masterpiece. Galileo was 73 when he made his great scientific discoveries. Benjamin Franklin was 89 when he helped forged the United States Constitution. John Glenn returned for a trip into space at the age of 75. Caleb is an example of volunteers who never give up but follow

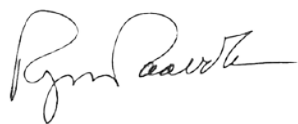
the Lord into their wilderness by faith. At the age of 89 years, Caleb and his children defeated the Anakites and settled in the land the Lord had promised.

Fortunately, spiritual strength doesn't depend on our physical condition. We can still serve the Lord and our neighbor in any condition. Even from a sick bed, a nursing home, or a shut-in's apartment, we can be a strength and example of faith in God's grace to others. The faith which is ours by God's grace is undimmed in our old age. The vision of God – although our eyes may be dimmed – becomes clearer. We're ready for the battle against temptations and all the assaults of Satan – a giant adversary, reduced to a defeated dwarf by God's grace and mercy. God has led us every day, feeding us on the manna of His provision for our journey.

In Ecclesiastes 12, God describes us... aging, but sustained by God. *"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, 'I find no pleasure in them.'... when the keepers of the house (our bones) tremble, and the strong men stoop; when the grinders (teeth) cease because they are few' and those looking through windows (bad eyes) grow dim; then the doors to the street are closed and the sound of grinding fades (indigestion); when men rise up at the sound of the birds (can't sleep) but their song grows faint (loss of hearing); when men are afraid of heights (leadership in work) and*

the dangers of the street (personal protection); when the almond tree blossoms (graying hair) and the grasshopper drags himself along (crippled walk) and the desire is no longer stirred (love making). Then man goes to his eternal home and mourners go to the streets. Remember him – before the silver cord is severed."

This life is simply a journey for us Christians. But, we're never too old (or too young!) to volunteer to help the next generation see the faithfulness to God. Trusting in His promise and deliverance we keep going knowing that God lifts us above all our difficulties. Where's the guarantee? Simply, "No merit in me do I bring, but, simply to Thy Cross I cling." Praise be to the Lord of life who offers His grace, mercy, forgiveness and love throughout this journey, and to life everlasting in Him.



Rev Dr Roger Paavola



Student Teachers Serving at Immanuel in Memphis

Immanuel Lutheran School in Memphis is honored to have three student teachers from Concordia University Nebraska serving at its school from early March to late April this semester. A "blessing" was offered for these student teachers at Immanuel's Sunday morning worship services on March 17th. Alison Ebel (left) is working with Ms. Glanzer in 2nd grade, Neleigh Lehr (center) is working with Mrs. Pudwell in 4th grade, and Jadyn High (right) is working with Mrs. Williamson in 1st grade. These young ladies are working on their bachelor degrees in elementary education. Alison's hometown is Billings, Montana. She is a student assistant coach for the Concordia tennis team and an acapella choir member. Neleigh's hometown is Duncan, Nebraska. She is interested in special education. Neleigh has taught Vacation Bible School and has served as captain of the Concordia dance team. Jadyn's hometown is Bertrand, Nebraska. She has taught English, PE, and Science to students in China and is a member of Concordia's 2019 women's basketball national championship team in NAIA Division II.



"Many Hands Make Light Work"

This old adage is certainly true when it comes to Christ the King's membership pitching in to show "holy hospitality" at Room in the Inn each month. For eleven months out of the year, CTK provides an evening meal, breakfast, and snacks, as well as fellowship and assistance to the guests for Room in the Inn at the neighboring Colonial Cumberland Presbyterian Church. It takes around 30 volunteers each month, providing over 100 volunteer hours.

Averaging about 12 -15 men and women each month, guests come to us through the Room in the Inn screening and enjoy a wonderful night of fellowship, dinner, and a comfortable place to sleep. Volunteers cook and serve dinner, make beds, clean the kitchen, assist guests in choosing items from the Clothes Closet and hygiene room, staff the showers, spend the night as Shepherds, strip the beds and launder the linens, prep and serve breakfast, and deliver the guests downtown.

It does indeed take a village each time CTK serves our unsheltered neighbors. We look forward to the day in the not-too-distant future when our planned building expansion allows us to host our own Room in the Inn. For more information, contact Clarice Hunt (huntcet@netscape.net) or Christy Hill in CTK's church office (901-682-8404 or churchoffice@ctkmemphis.com).



District Now Accepting Applications for Student Financial Aid

To support the education efforts of individuals pursuing a full-time career in church work, the Mid-South District is pleased to once again offer opportunities for student financial aid. To be considered for financial assistance, a student must be a member of good standing in a Mid-South District congregation and be enrolled in a seminary or university to prepare for full-time service to the Church as a rostered worker. Rostered workers are pastors, teachers, deaconesses and Directors of Christian Education.

To be considered for the student financial assistance program, you must first inform the Mid-South District Office that you are or will be a student enrolled at a synodical school. This information may be sent via email to Julie

Tyler (jtyler@mid-southlcms.com) or in a written letter (Attn: Julie Tyler / 1675 Wynne Road / Cordova, TN 38016). All related forms, including the financial aid application, are on the [District's website](#). **The application deadline is June 15, 2019.**



Chapel of the Good Shepherd Welcomes New Member

On Sunday, February 24, Chapel of the Good Shepherd in Sharps Chapel, TN welcomed Anne GlenSherrill through adult confirmation. Anne's maiden name in Welsh means "The Word of the Lord Alone." By joining the Lutheran Church, Anne states, "I have come home." In preparation for her confirmation, Anne read not only Luther's Small Catechism but also the entire Book of Concord along with other books about Lutheran Christianity. The flowers in the background were donated by Margo and Tom McCaffery, the first people to be received by adult confirmation. After the morning service, Margo and Tom gave Anne the flowers to take home.



Annual Baby Food Buffet - Chapel of Good Shepherd



On March 3, Chapel of the Good Shepherd completed their annual Baby Food Buffet. Due to the generosity of the congregation along with that of members of the church's Neighborhood Bible Breakfast plus several other friends of the church, approximately 300 items were gathered. The baby food was given to the Union County Food

Pantry for distribution. Pastor Paul Kritsch stated, "Since we speak out against abortion on demand, it is important for us to find ways to support the families of our community." The church's next project in support of families will be their annual Diaper Derby which gathered over 1,000 diapers last year.

Welcome Rev. Thompson

The ordination and installation of Rev Henry Thompson as an SMP Pastor was held in St. Luke Lutheran Church in Malvern, AR on Sunday, March 10. Pictured are (front row, L-R) Rev. Kevin Conger, Rev. Thompson, Rev. Jon Beyer, Rev. Stuart Marshall. (Back L-R) Rev. Emil Woerner, Rev. Jim Walter, President Roger Paavola, Rev. Michael Schleider, Vicar Anthony Johnson.



Welcome Rev. Gorshe

Installation service of Rev. Christopher Gorshe as the Associate Pastor at Bella Vista Lutheran Church in Bella Vista, Arkansas on February 24. Left to right are: Rev. Rance Settle, Rev. Robert Herring, Rev. Paul Hass, Rev. JD Zischke, Rev. Hubert Bernthal, Rev. Al Quoss, Rev. Christopher Gorshe, Rev. Richard Mayer, Rev. Brian Bibler, Rev. Stan Jones, Rev. Ken Haydon, and Rev. John Lindner.

GracePoint Announcements

Pictured is the latest gathering of GracePoint Lutheran Church in Munford, TN, where **17 new members** were received into membership. Pastor Dan Hawkins also announced to the congregation the purchase of a **permanent home for GracePoint** that will be ready for occupancy this summer.



2 EVENTS for District Youth

Lutheran Youth Retreat Summer 2019

June 4-8, 2019

University of North Alabama, Florence
Lutheran Middle School and High School
Fun, Worship & Study!
\$250-300, last year under \$200 per

Fun highlights

- Cane Creek Canyon Nature Preserve
- Muscle Shoals-record music for our retreat
- Rattlesnake Saloon

Worship and Study

Worship at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church,
Florence, Alabama. Study: Acts of Mercy, Helen
Keller and Anne Sullivan

Theme

Hymn "LSB 849" - adapted to the genre of the
Muscle Shoals Sound for our in-studio recording
session.



Contact Info

Rev. William Parsons, Redeemer, Fairhope, AL
Phone (251) 591-0602
Email w.a.parsons.3@protonmail.com

Rev. Curt Hoover, Faith, Thompson's Station, TN
Phone (615) 533-4636
Email pastorcurthoover@gmail.com

[Download flyer](#) (pdf)

Party in the Park - NYG 2019

Friday, July 12 at 4:30p-7:30p

Minnehaha Falls Park | Wabun Shelter D
4655 46th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55406
\$40/person until March 1

Please join us for a afternoon of food, carnival
games, inflatables, splash pad and fantastic
scenery while we connect with one another.
All students and chaperones from the
Mid-South District are welcome to attend.

Register online

Fill out the registration form online, payment
to be mailed to the District Office

Contact Info

Tabitha Wildhirt, NYG District Coordinator
Phone 501-414-4726
Email wildhirtsing@yahoo.com

More Info [District website](#)





A SPECIAL EVANGELISM EVENT FOR LAYPEOPLE

PRESENTED BY THE
MID-SOUTH DISTRICT, LCMS

3L Summit is a FREE dynamic evangelism event for laypeople, hosted by the Mid-South District, LCMS. Laypeople from across the Mid-South District will be encouraged in their personal evangelism efforts by two LCMS pastors who are powerful speakers on the topic of gospel-sharing:



Rev. Zach Zehnder
The Cross Church
- Mount Dora, FL



Rev. Chris Paavola
All Nations Church
- University City, MO

3L Summit will be hosted in two great locations in May. Both events will feature a “meet & greet” with the speakers the evening before, followed by a day of engaging talks and fellowship; lunch will be provided. For those requiring an overnight stay to attend the “meet & greet” event, special hotel pricing is available (cost to be covered by attendee).

REGISTER FOR THE 3L SUMMIT NEAR YOU:

[HTTPS://MIDSOUTHDISTRICTLCMS.REGFOX.COM/3L-NASHVILLE](https://MIDSOUTHDISTRICTLCMS.REGFOX.COM/3L-NASHVILLE)

[HTTPS://MIDSOUTHDISTRICTLCMS.REGFOX.COM/3L-LITTLE-ROCK](https://MIDSOUTHDISTRICTLCMS.REGFOX.COM/3L-LITTLE-ROCK)

MAY 9-10, 2019 IN NASHVILLE

- **MAY 9, 7-9 PM**
Meet & Greet w/ Speakers
@ Hampton Inn
(5630 Franklin Pike Cir.)
- **MAY 10, 8:30 AM-3:15 PM**
3L Summit
@ Our Savior Lutheran Church
(5110 Franklin Pike)

MAY 10-11, 2019 IN LITTLE ROCK

- **MAY 10, 7-9 PM**
Meet & Greet w/ Speakers
@ Crowne Plaza
(201 S. Shackleford Road)
- **MAY 11, 8:30 AM-3:15 PM**
3L Summit
@ Grace Lutheran Church
(5124 Hillcrest Avenue)



Vacation Bible School Mission Program

Show your children the love of Christ by giving them a service where children can help children!



Give your VBS or Children's Ministry purpose. Our mission materials can be used with any VBS curriculum as the mission project and will enable your children:

- To share the love of Jesus with children in Haiti
- Make a difference in other's lives
- Learn about life in Haiti
- Begin to develop a passion for helping others

Mission Package (easily available on our website)

<https://www.trinityhope.org/kids-feeding-kids-program/>

- Overview video
- A video for each day of VBS
- Teacher instructions & supply list
- Activities for each day
- Individualized info cards of the children in Haiti
- Customized posters for your church with the date and church's address

ONE BOWL OF BEANS & RICE AT A TIME

<https://www.trinityhope.org/kids-feeding-kids-program/>

Jennifer Perkins, 615-606-9195 or admin@trinityhope.org

The best part is
it's all free!



Congregational Mission Commitments

Mission Commitment Receipts as of 2/28/19 (2 Months)

Anticipated Amount (16.67% of budget)	\$255,379
Actual Receipts	<u>266,218</u>
Over (under) anticipated amount	\$10,839

Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (2 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions	\$75,699
Allocated to Tanzania	4,167
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts)	<u>186,353</u>
Total Receipts	\$266,218

Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (2 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 2/28/19	\$266,218
Actual Receipts as of 2/28/18	<u>\$238,540</u>
Over (under) prior year receipts	\$27,678



More info at lutheranfriendsofthedeaf.org/citi or email
Deaconess Heidi Sias hsias@millneck.org

Prayer Summary, March 2019

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 March 2019.

PRAYER CONCERNS

MRS. SUSAN ELSEROAD (wife of Rev. Richard Elseroad, Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN)

REV. NORM GROTELUSCHEN (Germantown, TN, MDS President – Emeritus)

MRS. PAMELA HANSON (wife of Rev. Bruce Hanson, First Lutheran Church, Blytheville, AR)

MRS. ALISON HAWKINS (Mid-South District Office)

MR. RICHARD KLINE (father-in-law of Rev. Ron Bacic, First, Little Rock)

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

JON MALUAK (Rev. Nathaniel Bol's son, South Sudan Evangelical Lutheran Church)

MR. RICHARD MEYER (Bella Vista, AR)

MIKE MCDOWELL (Nashville, TN)

MRS. MEGAN NAVRATH (daughter of Rev. Carl and Gwen Wenck, Grace Lutheran Church, Murfreesboro, TN)

MAMISOA RANDRIANASOLA (Rev. Joseph Randrianasola's daughter, Lutheran Church Madagascar)

REV. DAVID RUBKE (Tulahoma, TN)

REV. MERLIN SEPMEYER (Crossville, TN)

AMELIA SHEWMAKER (Philip Shewmaker's daughter, Faith, Bentonville, AR)

MRS. SUE ANN TOOPES (wife of Rev. Andy Toopes, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Bowling Green, KY)

THE MOTHER OF MS. MICHELE LAYNE (ECE Director, St. John's, Fayetteville, AR)

SOON KYOUNG KO (mother-in-law of Vicar William Zwick, First, Harrison, AR)

Our deepest sympathies to:

The family and friends of Rev. John Merrill (First Lutheran Church, Fort Smith, AR) at the loss of his father, Mr. Randy Merrill on Monday, February 18, 2019.

The family and friends of Rev. Robert I. Miskimen (Emeritus, Bella Vista, AR) who passed away on March 10, 2019.

The family and friends of Tom McWilliams (Former Deacon, Faith, Union City, Tennessee) who passed away on March 25, 2019.

The family and friends of Judy Otto (Lutheran Witness Editor) at the loss of her brother, Barry, on February 28, 2019.

CALL UPDATE

ORDAINED MINISTERS

PENDING: **Rev. William Ringer**, Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, New Ipswich, NH and Christ Lutheran Church, Troy, NH has been issued a call to serve as **Pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR**

DECLINED: **Rev. Joel Krogen**, Pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Batesville, AR returned the call issued to serve as **Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, in Terra Bella, CA.**

Rev. John M. Bussman, Pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cullman, AL, returned the call to serve as **Pastor at First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN.**

IN THE CALLING PROCESS - CONGREGATIONS

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

St. John's Lutheran Church, Lafe, AR – Associate Pastor

Mid-South District – Executive Director for Missions and Ministry

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

IN THE CALLING PROCESS – FOR COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

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

Heavenly Host Lutheran Church and School-
Cookeville, TN, principal

Immanuel Lutheran Church & School, Memphis, TN
– Principal

Pilgrim Lutheran Church & School, Jonesboro, AR
– Principal



67th Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

The 67th Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod will take place July 20-25, 2019 in Tampa, FL. Complete, up-to-date information for congregations is available on the Synod website at <https://www.lcms.org/convention>. Congregations are reminded to watch for important convention information and be mindful of related deadlines.



Mid-South District, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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Paul Reaves, *Executive Director for Development & Executive Director for LCEF Vice President*

Allen Piepenbrink, *Executive Director for Schools and Early Childhood*

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Julie Tyler, *Administrative Assistant for Missions and Education*

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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 **April 22, 2019** to Rhonda, webmaster@mid-southlcms.com