

# Encourager

Mid-South District LCMS | August 2019

## Focus for August

### Church Planting

**“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Romans 10:14-15 NIV**

This month we focus on church planting. Please join us in prayer for those who are planting seeds to reach the lost and grow God’s kingdom. May the Lord bless them and sustain them as they work.

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



*“A Mighty Fortress  
is Our God!”*

**M**artin Luther’s epic hymn, “A Mighty Fortress,” sounds very much like a military battle song. “A Mighty Fortress is our God, a trusty Shield and Weapon; He helps us free from every need that hath us now overtaken. The old Satanic foe now means deadly woe; Deep guile and great might are his dread arms in fight; on Earth is not his equal.” Verse 4 concludes, “The Word they still shall let remain nor any thanks have for it; He’s by our side upon the plain with His good gifts and Spirit. And take they our life, goods, fame, child and wife, let these all be gone, they yet have

nothing won. The Kingdom ours remaineth.”

Military science has always included fortresses or redoubts in military strategy. Only the weaponry and soldiers performing in military strategy have changed. In warfare, the strategies and tactics change when new weapons roll on to the battlefield, but the overall concept toward victorious armies remains the same. Castles and fortresses were built to protect an army and its citizens from marauding enemies. For example, the fortress around Constantinople was deemed to be nearly impenetrable. The Byzantine capital withstood invasions from outside forces from the Seventh Century until its defeat by the Ottoman Turkish general Sultan Mohamed II in 1453. The invention of gunpowder made the difference as the Turkish bombards (cannons) battered the impenetrable fortress and brought the city to its knees.

The French developed a defensive installment that was known as the Maginot line. It was a fortification along the French-German border that was interconnected and was used to defend against a German

invasion. But, during the first part of World War II, the Maginot Line became useless. The German war strategists planned an invasion of France through Belgium. The fortress was worthless.

The development of American Western Expansion showed fortifications developing a pattern of outposts that dotted our Western frontier in an effort to support settlers and American soldiers. The Western Expansion eventually brought the continental states to range from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. Fort Smith, Fort Wayne, Fort Laramie, Fort Campbell,

and Fort Randall are just a few examples outposts that helped established "plants" of Western Expansion. What does this all have to do with the Church? A lot!

The Bible tells of stories of the Israelites laying siege on the Canaanites in the cities such as Jericho - where Joshua led the Israelites to victory. The walls of Jericho were a fortress that protected both the inhabitants and its army from invading armies. But, when the marching around the city and the blowing of the trumpets were completed just as God directed, the Israelites saw the strategies of God that caused

the walls of the city to crumble, leaving the inhabitants and army completely vulnerable to God's design for warfare.

The advance of the Lutheran Reformation that began in Germany over 500 years ago, took a military-like development. Once the immigrants from Germany, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and elsewhere brought their Lutheran "brand" of the Christian faith they had packed in their trunks and baggage. Seacoast cities and hamlets that served as outposts along navigable waterways began to be dotted with Lutheran churches and schools. "Mothering" churches launched new congregations as the inward migration grew. The first Lutheran settlement in North America was established in 1619 when Pastor Rasmus Jensen brought Danish colonists to this continent because they became trapped by ice in Hudson's Bay. The first Lutherans started in Pennsylvania under Pastor Henry Melchior Muhlenberg in 1748. Some of our Mid-South District congregations began before The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod was formed in 1847.

The Mid-South District began in 1966 after the old Western District split into the Mid-South and Missouri districts. The purpose was to establish better ways to do the expansion of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod into the "Bible Belt." Through the efforts of Rev. Norm Groteluschen, Al Benke, Dr. Wil Griesse, Rev. David Callies, and Rev. Ken

## Future Building Plans for Chapel of the Good Shepherd



This is the front elevation of Chapel of the Good Shepherd's potential church building in Sharps Chapel, TN. This country church has a front door on the left into the narthex leading to the sanctuary. The door on the right leads past the pastor's study into the fellowship hall. The plans are with four different builders as we await their bids.

Lampe, in just over 50 years, the Mid-South District has grown to twice the size it started with in 1966. The “battle” has changed however. Not with gunpowder, but in the way the battle for “Church Expansion” has been fought.

Today, individual congregations or groups of congregations join together in all of the 35 districts of the LCMS to plant, support, and encourage emerging Lutheran congregations. The “battles” are not waged against other denominations of Christianity. The battles are fought against an evil foe that has opposed Christ’s Church for eons. St Paul wrote, *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the*

*cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”* (Ephesians 6:12 ESV)

We are called to be witnesses for the sake of Christ and His Church (1 Peter 2:9) and to build up the Church, guided by God. St Paul concluded, *“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and*

*the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”* (Ephesians 6:13-17)

We are dedicated to doing church planting for the Mid-South District. We will continue with the resources God provides, through the 26,000 soldiers of the cross from the Mid-South District Jesus has redeemed, equipped, and called to the battlefield where His Word – the only offensive weapon St Paul listed within the armament of defense - God freely offers by His unending grace.

Your servant in Christ –  
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola



## Faith Lutheran Installs Rev. David Schmidt



Sunday, July 14 at Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR. Rev. Schmidt was installed. From the left—Rev. Mark Krause, Rev. Hubert Bernthal, Rev. Brian Bibler, Rev. Robert Herring, Rev. JD Zischke, Rev. William Zwick, Rev. John Schmidt (father of David), and Rev. Chris Gorshe. Kneeling is Rev. David Schmidt, newly installed pastor of Faith, Bentonville. Others who cannot be seen in attendance include Rev. Paul Hass and Rev. David Hudak.

# Mission To Ministry Zero to Sixty

By Genie Swan

*Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis, TN, celebrates its sixtieth anniversary this fall. As a church plant in 1959, CTK was the beneficiary of significant encouragement and donations of time and talent from its sister congregations and their pastors.*



Volunteers came in every weekend to set up for services. As the congregation outgrew the original house, a second house was connected, adding more classroom and worship space.

In September of 1958, the Mission Board of the Western District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod explored the possibility of forming a mission church in the eastern area of the expanding city of Memphis. Under the auspices of the Lutheran Activities Council, an organizational meeting of the new South-East Memphis Mission was attended by 30 people, as well as several area Lutheran pastors who provided their support and encouragement, including Rev. Leo Symmank of Holy Cross, Rev. Paul Martens of Trinity, Rev. Paul Schmidt of Redeemer, and Rev. Everett Grese of Immanuel. Wednesday evening services began soon after in a local bank building, with Rev. Symmank serving as supply pastor. Several months

later, a "lovely 7-acre tract of land out on Park Avenue," complete with two small houses, was purchased by the Mission Board for around \$40,000. Charter members recall the entrance to the property was just a small dirt driveway covered with overhanging branches of trees on both sides, with the houses set far back from the road. It was dubbed "The Church in the Wildwood" by its members, with its parklike surrounding and almost unlimited space for children to explore and play.

Local Lutheran churches and their members loaned the mission appropriate altar paraments and donated hymnals as well as rented a small portable organ for its use. A total of 37 people attended the first Sunday morning worship

in the two-room house on the day after purchase in December of 1958. A year later, as the mission grew, they connected another small house on the property to the original one, providing additional meeting rooms. A mission pastor, Rev. Carl Schrader, was called in April of 1959, and installed as full-time Pastor of Christ the King in July of that year. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with the encouragement and support of area Lutherans, and with eager, enthusiastic, innovative outreach and evangelism efforts, this mission plant in southeast Memphis celebrated its Charter Sunday, with 60 members signing the Charter, on Sunday, June 21, 1959.

This fall, Christ the King will celebrate its 60th anniversary

with a special Sunday service at 10AM on Sept. 15, followed by a catered lunch and a look back at six decades of serving the Memphis community and beyond, giving thanks to our gracious God for His providing us faithful undershepherds (Reverends Schrader, Bruce Zagel, Jeff Stephens, Chuck Neugebauer, and Mark Goble), and guiding us through years of mission and ministry, construction and renovations, and expanding our reach to the farthest corners of the world. We invite our members and

friends to join us on September 15, and celebrate with us our sixtieth year of having been "planted" here and now to do the Lord's work. Contact Genie at [gswan@ctkmemphis.com](mailto:gswan@ctkmemphis.com) for more information on our anniversary celebration.



*One of the original houses that served as the first sanctuary on the property at 5296 Park Avenue, surrounded by overgrown brush.*

## Ordination and Installation Rite for Rev. William Zwick



The Ordination and Installation Rite for Rev. William Zwick was held on Saturday, June 29, 2019 at First Lutheran Church in Harrison, Arkansas. Pastor Zwick served his academic vicarage at First Lutheran from 2018 until his Ordination.

Pictured (Front L-R) Rev. Frank Zirbel (Emeritus pastor in Harrison), Rev. Roger Schoolcraft, President Roger Paavola, Rev. Wm Zwick, Rev. David Tews. (Middle L-R) Rev. Dr. Ryan Tietz, Rev. Adrian Piazza (Christ Lutheran, Noblesville, IN), Rev. David Gadbow; and (Top L-R) Rev. Duane Kirchner, Rev. Robert Herring, Rev. Joel Kroger, and Rev. Bill Schutte.

# Thank you Mid-South District Delegates

The 67th Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod took place in Tampa, Florida July 20-25, 2019. Thank you to those who traveled to Tampa to serve as delegates to the convention. For

information about the convention, go to <https://www.lcms.org/convention> or visit the Reporter website for their complete coverage at <https://blogs.lcms.org/category/convention>.



Pictured above ---3rd row standing, left to right:  
Rev. Robert Benke – Faith, Hot Springs Village, AR,  
Rev. Robert Herring – Grace, Holiday Island, AR  
Dan Jacobs - Good Shepherd, Chattanooga, AR  
Rev. John Gierke – Secretary, Mid-South District  
Rev. Joel Krogen – Hope, Batesville, AR & Zion,  
Waldenburg, AR  
Rev. Brian Truog – Our Savior, Loudon, TN  
Larry Vickers – Treasurer, Mid-South District  
Shawn Barnett – Grace, Clarksville, TN  
2nd row standing, left to right:  
Randy Bueckman – Grace, Knoxville, TN  
Rev. Ron Bacic – First, Little Rock, AR  
Ed Mell – Immanuel, Memphis, TN  
Bryan Mattes – Pilgrim, Jonesboro, AR  
Tim Hanusa – Ascension, Madison, TN  
President Roger Paavola – President, Mid-South District  
Rev. Russell Belisle – Cross of Calvary, Memphis, TN  
Rev. Andrew Abraham – Shepherd of the Hills, Crossville, TN  
Rev. Eric Phillips – Concordia, Nashville, TN  
Keith Brummett – Faith, Bentonville, AR

Front row sitting, left to right:  
Rev. David Graves – St. Paul, Wartburg, TN  
Rev. JohnDavid Zischke – Restoration, Fayetteville, AR  
Robert Morris – Peace, Conway, AR  
Robert Rahe – Faith, Thompsons Station, TN  
Rev. Stewart Marshall – Trinity, Pine Bluff, AR  
Connie Soso-Goines – Grace, Greenwood, AR  
Angela Fowler – Executive Director for Business and  
Finance, Mid-South District  
Rev. David Appold – St. Paul, Paducah, KY  
Rev. Neely Owen – Commission on Constitutional Matters &  
Faith, Hopkinsville, KY  
Rev. Larry Peters – Commission on Constitutional Matters &  
Grace, Clarksville, TN  
Not pictured:  
Jeffrey Schlittenhart – Zion, London, AR  
James Sieving – Zion, Alexander, AR

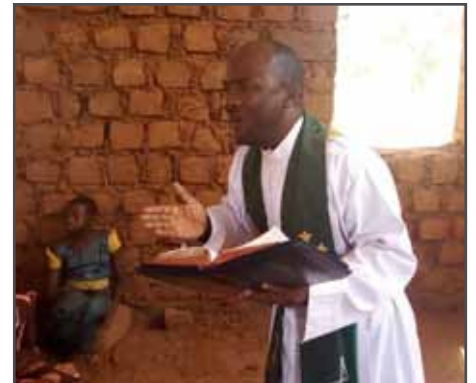
# Church Planting in Tanzania

By Bob Allen



Church planting in the Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese (SELVD) is such an amazing experience. Each year since 2004 mission teams from the Mid-South District partner with pastors and lay people from the SELVD to outreach into areas of the diocese that has had little or no exposure to the Gospel message. We form into teams and go out into pathways and trails of the area and into homes to share the good news of Jesus Christ. We return to a meeting area and share the stories of our visits with the rest of the team. Thousands have been baptized during these trips and sub-congregations are started in these areas. We then go home, we feel blessed to have been part of this experience. A few months after the trip, we receive reports and pictures of what these new Christians have done in these sub-parishes. This May we evangelized in the Welezo and Shabuluba areas in the Tinde Parish of Pastor Jeofrey Tenga. This week we were notified that a church building had been built in each of these villages. The new congregation dug the foundation by hand, they made the bricks and constructed the walls themselves. We have had similar experiences during other mission trips. In 2017 in the Lalago Parish new churches were built in Mwakidiga and Mbalagane by the newly baptized Christians in 4 months.

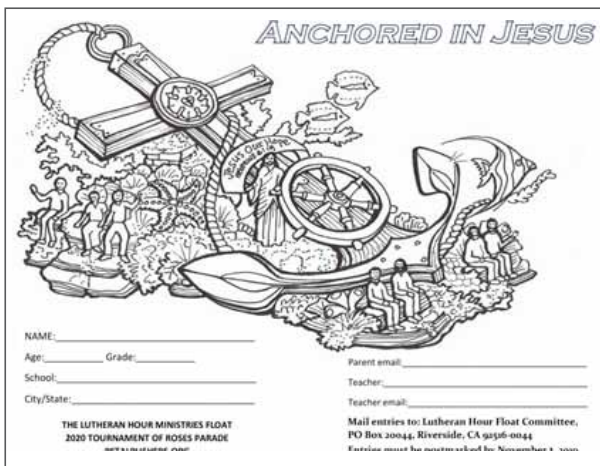
In 2018 in the Ushetu district, a new church was built in the sub-congregation of Saba Sabini and in Itilima district church buildings were constructed in Muhunze, Mwadiliama, and Ikindiro. Mission trips in Tanzania have been a blessing to all who attend. We are making plans for another mission trip in 2020, come join us! Contact Bob Allen for more information, [rjallen@prodigy.net](mailto:rjallen@prodigy.net) or call 270-535-7370.





## Members Welcomed

Two newest members of Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Kay and Mike Irwin. Our previous keyboardist moved with her husband back to Indiana. We started praying for a new church musician, and within three weeks the Lord sent us Kay who is an experienced church musician. Even in the hinterlands of Lutheranism, the Lord blesses His church!



## Coloring Contest Online!

The LHM Float Committee invites children to participate in our annual float coloring contest. Please complete all information on the coloring contest entry form. We regret that we cannot judge entries with incomplete information or return your beautiful colored entry forms.

Download the coloring page and get more information here: <https://cdn.givecloud.co/s/files/1/0000/0038/files/epson213-1.pdf>



## Call for Petal Pushers

The Lutheran Hour Ministries' is looking for Petal Pusher® volunteers to be a part of the 2020 Tournament of Rose Parade entitled *The Power of Hope*. The LHM float entitled *Anchored in Jesus* will be their 70th entry and continues as the only Christian float in the parade.

You can be a part of this opportunity! Learn more at <https://www.lhm.org/volunteer/petalpusher.asp>





# PRAYER SUMMARY

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 July 2019.

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## PRAYER CONCERNS

**MRS. RUTH BESEL** (mother of Rev. Gordon Besel (Emeritus), Holy Trinity, Rogers, AR)  
**APAR BOL and NYUK BOL** (daughter and son of Nathaniel Bol, South Sudan)  
**REV. NORM GROTELUSCHEN** (Germantown, TN, MDS President – Emeritus)  
**MR. MARK GUDLIN** (hospitalized, wife Denise is with Trinity Hope)  
**MRS. ALISON HAWKINS** (Mid-South District Office)  
**MR. TOM KYNER** (Deacon, Hawkins County Lutheran, Rogersville, TN)  
**DIONNE MILAM** (Secretary to Pastor Toopes, Holy Trinity, Bowling Green, KY)  
**REV. PAUL KRITSCH** (Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Sharps Chapel, TN)  
**REV. DR. HERBERT MUELLER** (1st Vice President of the Synod)  
**REV. DAVID RUBKE** (Tullahoma, TN)  
**REV. MERLIN SEPMYER** (Crossville, TN)  
**MRS. LOIS SOHN** (Memphis, TN)  
**REV. NEIL VANDERBUSH** (Former Pastor in Bentonville, Arkansas)  
**MR. MATT ZAVADA** (son of Ray & Cindy Zavada, Ray is head of development in the Michigan District)  
**MRS. JEANETTE ZIRBEL** (wife of Pastor Jason Zirbel, Grace Lutheran, Greenwood)

THE ATTENDEES OF THE LCMS SYNODICAL CONVENTION (Tampa, Florida) AND THE ATTENDEES OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING (Minneapolis, MN).

### Our deepest sympathies to:

**The family and friends of MR. EDWIN E. DOEPEL, Sr.** (Zion Lutheran, Ulm, AR) who passed away on June 30, 2019.

**The family and friends of MR. LOUIS BENJAMIN HERRING** (Zion Lutheran, Ulm, AR & St. John's Lutheran in Stuttgart) who passed away on June 30, 2019.

**The family and friends of MRS. FLORENCE PROFT** (Trinity Lutheran, Mena, AR) who passed away on June 20, 2019.

**The family and friends of MR. GLENN RHOADS (Father of Rev. Mark Rhoads,** Christ Our Savior, Loudon, TN) who recently passed away.

## CALL UPDATE ORDAINED MINISTERS

**ACCEPTED: Rev. Eric Longman,** Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Jackson, MO, has accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Rogers, AR.** (To be Installed 7/28/19)

**Rev. Greg Prauner,** Associate Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN has accepted a call to serve as Senior Pastor at **Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN.** (To be Installed 8/4/19)

**Rev. David Schmidt,** Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Royal Oak, MI, has accepted a call to serve as Pastor at **Faith Lutheran Church, Bentonville, AR.** (Installed 7/14)

## COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

**PENDING: Ms. Emily Leising,** DCE, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, West Fargo, ND, has been issued a Call to serve as **DCE at Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN.**

**ACCEPTED: Ms. Heidi Jerry,** Principal, Christ Lutheran School, Little Rock, AR, has been accepted a call to serve as Principal at **St. Mark Lutheran School, Houston, TX.**

**DECLINED: Ms. Jennifer Lutz,** teacher, Martin Luther Immanuel School, Joplin, MO, has returned the call to serve as a Teacher at **First Lutheran Church & School, Fort Smith, AR.**

## IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS

**First Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN - Pastor**

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

**Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN – Associate Pastor**

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

**St. John's Lutheran Church, Lafa, AR - Associate Pastor**

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

## IN THE CALLING PROCESS – FOR COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

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

**Christ Lutheran School, Little Rock, AR – Teacher**

**First Lutheran Church & School, Fort Smith, AR – Teacher**

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN - DCE**

**Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN – DCE \*\* A Call has been issued \*\***

**St. John's Lutheran Church, Stuttgart, AR – DCE**

**Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Memphis, TN – Principal**

## CONGREGATIONAL MISSION COMMITMENTS

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### Mission Commitment Receipts as of 6/30/19 (6 Months)

Anticipated Amount (50% of budget) ..... \$766,137

Actual Receipts ..... 771,909

Over (under) anticipated amount..... \$5,772

### Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (6 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions ..... \$219,073

Allocated to Tanzania ..... 12,500

Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts)

540,336

Total Receipts ..... \$771,909

### Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (6 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 6/30/19 ..... \$771,909

Actual Receipts as of 6/30/18 ..... \$757,223

Over (under) prior year receipts ..... \$14,686



## 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**, *Executive Director for Schools and Early Childhood*

**Missy Washburn**, *Administrative 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

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### 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 **August 21, 2019** to Rhonda, [webmaster@mid-southlcms.com](mailto:webmaster@mid-southlcms.com). The August issue will focus on Stewardship.