

Focus for September Stewardship

*Based on the gift each one
has received, use it to serve
others, as good managers of
the varied grace of God.*

- 1 Peter 4:10

...

This month we focus on Stewardship. We celebrate the congregations across the district who share their time and talents within their communities to reach the lost or reconnect with those who may have fallen away.

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



The Problem with Christian Stewardship

An interesting subject, chosen for this month, poses the gigantic subject of Christian stewardship. There are volumes written on the subject and is yet to be exhausted because it is at the heart of every aspect of a Christian's life. But, what is it? Giving money? Giving talents and time to the work of the Church? Despite the fact that when posed with the question of "stewardship," most people think the church is trying to dig into our back pockets and squeeze out every bit of script possible. But, that's not the case - totally!

Julius Crawford, in his book, *The Stewardship of Life*, writes that stewardship is, "... the recognition and fulfillment of personal privilege and responsibility for the administration of the whole of life - personality, time, talent, influence, material substance, and every thing - in accordance with

the spirit and ideals of Christ." (*The Stewardship of Life*, p. 11) The United Stewardship Council of 1945 defined stewardship even further, stating, "Christian stewardship is the practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions, based on the conviction that these are trusts from God to be used in His service for the benefit of all mankind in grateful acknowledgement of Christ's redeeming love." (*Teaching Christian Stewardship*, p. 18)

In response to a question Jesus posed to a keeper of the Law, the young man answered that his idea of stewardship was found in the old Levitical law, "You shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, and with all you should, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27) But, a few chapters earlier, Jesus told the Pharisee who was upset that Jesus allowed a "woman of the night" to wash His feet, citing the forgiveness of sins, saying, "Her many sins have been forgiven - for she has loved much. But he who has little been forgiven, loves little." (Luke 7:47)

In that most unusual parable of the shrewd servant, Jesus uses the term, οἰκονομία (oikonomias) - translated as stewardship, "Give an account of your stewardship." (Luke 16:2) Thayer's Greek Lexicon states: "οἰκονομία, οἰκονομία, οἰκονομέω, comes from Xenophon, and Plato down as, "the management of a household or

of household affairs; specifically, the management, oversight, administration, of others' property; the office of a manager or overseer, stewardship". That changes the usual understanding most people hold concerning the subject.

Later, Thayer's notes, "The word is transferred by Paul in a theocratic sense to the office (duty) entrusted to him by God (the Lord and Master) of proclaiming to men the blessings of the Gospel, 1 Corinthians 9:17; ἡ οἰκονομία τοῦ Θεοῦ, ["...the stewardship of God."] the office of administrator (stewardship) entrusted by God (Colossians 1:25). It is universally administration, which in a theocratic sense, is ascribed to God Himself as providing for man's salvation: αἵτινες ... ἡ οἰκονομίαν Θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει, ["...which is the stewardship from God, that is by faith."] (1 Timothy 1:4) speaks of the things by which God has provided for and prepared salvation – salvation that must be embraced by faith.

There are approximately 25,000 verses in the Bible. Approximately 2500 (10% or one-tenth) of those verses speak about money or management of money. Is that a coincidence? Probably. But, in the lesson from Malachi that may lead to some of the questions about stewardship, God spoke through the prophet saying, "Return to Me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?' Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me. But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house. And thereby put Me

to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need." (Malachi 3:7-10)

But, is that the motivation – to watch the windows of heaven pour down an abundance of riches because we gave one-tenth of everything we own, have, or are to God? No! Stewardship in the truest Christian sense is to be free from worrying about our own ability to supply all our needs and trust that all we have or will ever need is from God and remains to be God's possessions. Stewardship recognizes God's overflowing and divine gifts by grace, and a human response out of gratitude to God for His provision. The Psalmist writes, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." (Psalm 24:1); and, "Everything under heaven belongs to Me!" (Job 41:11)

C. S. Lewis makes it very clear, "Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service, you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense His own already." (C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*) Bottom line: God owns everything – including us! We are simply the stewards who act on His behalf, on one hand; and return to Him as a privilege and responsibility on the other hand. We do not have the right (or ability) to control anything that is not already within God's gracious provision, control, and power. He, as the Owner has rights, but we as stewards have a privilege and a duty.

The New Testament's use of the word stewardship - οἰκονομίας

(oikonomias) – that means, "...a steward, managing of a household properly – a stewardship, management (administration), i.e. where a person looks after another's affairs. (A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Second Edition, p. 560) It is a compound word that would say, "of the house or dwelling place (oiko) and "keeper (nomos)." It specifically means to be a manager of the Owners dwelling place. St Paul writes, "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13) This is why giving, in the context of the Gospel, does not relate to what we do for God, but stems from the gracious depths of the heart of God in His love for us so that He gives first. "For God so loved the world that He gave..." So, a stewardship isn't just about what God has done for us, but what He does in a continuing action of unconditional love and mercy toward us from now and into eternity.

As a result, Paul wrote to the Galatians, "For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose." (Galatians 2:19-21) It means, like a thermometer that measures temperature, our stewardship of God's possessions (everything) is rooted in one's new relationship with God that He established in His saving action in Christ Jesus and transmitted to us by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel.

If the essence of our “keeping the dwelling place of God” was only limited to time, talents, and treasures, giving of dollars would be justified. But, it is a theology that is found under the misbelief (such as the misinterpretation of Malachi 3) that giving an offering would expect a corresponding blessing from God to a “good and faithful steward.” But, that is not the stewardship of the Gospel! It has nothing to do with stewardship that comes from or is based on the Gospel. The greatest treasure in our stewardship of God’s provision is always going to be the riches of God’s grace that He showers in an overflowing abundance on us who are called out of darkness into His marvelous light. As St Peter writes, “*You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*” (I Peter 2:5, 9-10) Sharing the Gospel IS our greatest stewardship!

T. A. Kantonen, concludes, “Christian stewardship keeps an eye on the glorious fulfillment of the divine purpose in which he is privileged to share... illustrated by the replies of three men engaged in a building project to the question of what they were doing. One said, ‘I am laying bricks.’ Another said, ‘I am making twenty dollars a day.’ But the third replied, ‘I am building a [great, beautiful] church.’”

(T. A. Kantonen, *A Theology of Christian Stewardship*, p. 76) Through the Spirit calling us by the Gospel, we are privileged to be a living stone that continues to be a part that builds the Church until the day when Christ returns

to bring us to the Church that does not end.

Your servant in Christ –
Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola



Sharing Prayers and Support for the Family of Rev. Shawn Hunze



The Mid-South District joins the family of Trinity Lutheran Church, Dyersburg, TN and Faith Lutheran Church, Union City, TN in mourning the death of Rev. Shawn Hunze, who passed away on August 7 following a brief illness. Please lift in prayer Pastor Hunze's wife, Rose Ann, and their children Ben, Paul and Abby, as they grieve this very sudden loss. Please note that an online donation page has been established for Pastor Hunze's family to help relieve the financial burden created by his unexpected passing. Gifts are being collected by the Mid-South District and will be forwarded to the Hunze family.

To make an online donation, please visit:

<https://midsouthdistrictlcms.givingfuel.com/hunze-family-fund>

If you prefer to mail your gift, please send it to the Mid-South District Office at 1675 Wynne Road, Cordova, TN 38016. Gifts may be designated "Hunze Family Fund."

Many thanks for your prayerful consideration of this request and ongoing prayers for the Hunze family.

Block on the Rock 6th Birthday Bash

First Lutheran Church



6th year of
participation

2,200
attendance

Open House
yard signs

Food trucks
+ Vendors

Live
Music

On July 27, 2019 a Little Rock craft beer vendor, “Stone’s Throw Brewing”, held their “Block On Rock 6th Birthday Bash”. From 4:00pm to 10:00pm the two blocks of Rock Street between 7th & 9th in downtown Little Rock was blocked off for the bash. First Lutheran Church, located at 8th & Rock, was right in the middle of the activities. This was also the 6th year that First has participated in the bash.

The weather was terrific and helped to obtain the attendance of over 2,200 people. The “Bash” had 13 food trucks along with 24 vendor and community group canopies set up. Live musical entertainment was provided by “The Big Dam Horns Band”, a seven piece brass group that had the same wonderful sound as the band “Chicago”. As we have done before, two kiddie splash pools were placed on the lawn in front of the church and many attendee’s dogs

enjoyed the water for drinking and bathing. A good number of ‘thank you’s were offered for these tokens of kindness!

In the past 5 years we had opened only the church for visitors to tour the sanctuary. This year was the first time that the adjacent Luther Education Building was opened to welcome visitors to come in to rest, eat their food truck servings and play table games. A local game company, “Magic Games”, staffed the room and helped adults, as well as their children, in playing the provided games. Throughout the evening there were a constant number of visitors. Many of them also walked down the hallway to the church to view the sanctuary.

To help make the attendees aware that First was open for tours, ‘open house’ yard signs were placed out front. The front and inner sanctuary doors were

blocked open allowing the altar to be viewed from the street. And with the Western evening bright sunlight beaming through the ‘Ascension Stained Glass Window’ over the altar, the affect was like a heavenly light showing the way for visitors to come in to God’s House. Again, there was a constant number taking the tour with volunteers directing as well as answering any questions. A brochure “What Lutherans Believe” from the Lutheran Hour Ministries was provided for everyone.

All in all, First Lutheran’s participation in this year’s bash proved to be another opportunity to reach out to the community and say “Hello, here we are and welcome”. It was especially pleasing to witness all ages in the crowd attending the bash, especially the many young adults and children.

Leaders in Training – Summer Internship 2019

Salem Lutheran Ministries (Springdale, AR)



Five teenagers participated in our summer internship this year. The purpose of the internship is to equip and motivate our youth to follow Jesus, serve others, and become leaders in our community.

Our theme this year was: *It All Points to Christ (How the Entire Old Testament Leads us to Jesus)*. We explored how the characters, events, and promises of the Old Testament all point forward to their fulfillment in Jesus. We also spent time every day serving the needs of our church or community. These youth were key leaders in our Vacation Bible School!

The teenagers also participated in leadership development activities that equipped them to stand firm in God's Word and lead their peers in God's ways. Several participated in the National Youth Gathering and the others enjoyed an awesome week at Camp Trinity (Petit Jean Mountain). I look forward to how our God will continue to work in and through these youth!

— *Contributed by*
Pastor Brandon Martin



Kleinig Teaching In Carlyle

Sept. 17-19, 2019

Concordia Theological Seminary is hosting a continuing education class for pastors and lay people at Messiah/Carlyle. The class dates are September 17-19 and features Rev. Dr. John Kleinig. Dr. Kleinig's topic is "Making Music for the Lord: The Role of Choral Music in the Divine Service According to

Chronicles and the New Testament." You can register for this class here: <https://www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/continuing-education/carlyle-illinois/>. Those who attend will receive 1.5 CEUs through Concordia Theological Seminary.

In connection with Dr. Kleinig's class, Messiah is hosting a hymn festival on Tuesday, September 17, at 7pm. Featured organist is Benjamin Kolodziej, organist

at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas and member of Faith Lutheran LCMS in Plano, Texas. Mr. Kolodziej's organ improvisations are published by Concordia Publishing House. Members of the entire District are invited to attend.

Messiah Lutheran is located at 1091 13th Street in Carlyle, Illinois. Contact Rev. Scott Schilbe, pastor and class coordinator, at 618-594-3912 for more information.

Welcome New Pastors!

Installation of Rev. Mark Kophamer to Redeemer Lutheran Church in

Elizabethton, TN on 8/11/19. Pastor Kophamer had been filling the vacancy at Redeemer and the congregation issued him a Call.

Pictured (L-R): Rev. Steve Harmon, Deacon Tim Carter, Deacon Steve Meier, Pastor Kophamer, Rev. Gil Pingel, Rev. Gordon Smith, and Rev. Erv Lueker.



Installation of Rev. Eric Longman at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church,

Rogers, AR on Sunday July 29, 2019. Pictured Front Row (L-R): Rev. Jeff Jordan, Rev. JD Zisce, President Roger Paavola, Rev. Eric Longman, Rev. David Schmidt, Rev. Brandon Martin, Rev. Roger Schoolcraft Middle Row (L-R): Rev. Christopher Gorshe, Rev. Hubert Bernthal, Rev. Paul Hass, Rev. Larry Spencer Back Row (L-R): Rev. Richard Mayer, Rev. Albert Quoss.

Installation of Rev. Gregory Prauner at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis, TN was held on Sunday, August 4, 2019. Rev. Prauner is their senior pastor. Pictured are (Front Row L-R) are: Rev. Clayton Seller, President Roger Paavola, Rev. Greg Prauner, Rev. Jesus Granado, Rev. Jim Belles and Rev. Michael Croom. Top Row (L-R): Rev. Terry Tieman, Rev. Clarence Martin, Rev. Russell Belisle, and Chaplain Michael Sneath.



Installation of Rev. Joshua Ralston at Zion Lutheran Church, Augsburg, AR was held on Sunday, August 25, 2019. Pastor Ralston was ordained the previous week at his home congregation of Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, AR. Pastor Ralston is a 2019 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft Wayne, IN.

Pictured with Pastor Ralston Front (L-R): Rev. Darrel Kobs, Rev. James Glowinski, President Paavola, Pastor Ralston, Rev. Jim Walter, and Rev. Tim Henning. Middle Row (L-R) Rev. John Treude, Rev. Josh Willadsen, Rev. LeRoy Leach, Rev. William Ringer. Back Row (L-R) Rev. Jason Zirbel, Rev. Korey Boster, Rev. John Merrill.



Installation of Rev. William Ringer was held at St John's Lutheran Church, Russellville, AR on Sunday, June 16, 2019. Pictured with Pastor Ringer are (Front Row L-R) Rev. James Glowinsky, Pastor Ringer, and Rev. Joshua Willadsen. Back row (L-R) Rev. Korey Boster, Rev. Tim Henning, Rev. John Treude, and Rev. Darrell Kobs.

Tennessee: The Next (Final?) Battleground in Ending Abortion

Perhaps not since the Scopes Trial in 1925 and Dr. King's death in 1968 has Tennessee been the site of a national debate on the government's role to acknowledge God and the nature and equality of men. But that may soon be changing. Pro-life and pro-abortion advocates are now positioning themselves in Nashville to bring attention to a Senate bill (SB 1236) under consideration by the Judiciary Committee. It has been called a "heartbeat bill," similar to what other states like Alabama and Georgia have passed. However, the Tennessee Senate bill (different from the House version) is actually an attempt to address the personhood and the absolute rights of a child in the womb. In other words, it does not just move up the abortion cutoff line to protect more children, that is, those with a detectable heartbeat. It acknowledges rights to any human life. This is what could make Tennessee the battleground for the abortion debate.

Last week (on August 12 and 13), testimony was heard by the Judiciary Committee. David Fowler of the Family Action Council of Tennessee, one of the pro-life speakers, said, "The Senate Judiciary Committee's two-day hearings were the best and most significant hearings I've been part of in my more than twenty-five years in state politics" (factn.org/the-elephant-in-abortion-hearing-room). What has Fowler, and others, so hopeful is that the Senate bill is grounded in the Ninth Amendment of the United States Constitution, not the Fourteenth Amendment. (The Fourteenth Amendment was cited to uphold *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in keeping abortion legal.) The Ninth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution is rather short and simply states: "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." This acknowledgment in the Constitution of "other," inviolable rights that precede the formation of our government is the basis for arguing the right to life in the Tennessee Senate bill.



According to legal scholars, our "other" rights are rooted in common law, "those 'laws' that derive their 'force' among us not from legislative enactments backed by the power of the sword, but from such a long course of development over centuries that we know them to be true and real" (factn.org/shining-light-roe-wade-house-heartbeat-bill). Law professor Adam MacLeod, who also gave testimony before the committee, said in his prepared remarks:

The Bill of Rights marks off certain rights as beyond the competence of Congress to alter or abolish. And much of the Bill of Rights has now been incorporated also against state legislatures through the Fourteenth Amendment. But as the Ninth Amendment makes clear, the enumeration of certain common-law and natural rights does not deny or disparage all the other rights that the American people enjoy by virtue of natural law and their ancient customs. Chief among these is the right to life. An absolute right is one that a person enjoys prior to government, vested in him or her by the laws of nature, simply by virtue of being human (factn.org/the-elephant-in-abortion-hearing-room).

We can also think of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Evidently, the U. S. Supreme Court has never directly ruled on a pro-life argument based on the rights protected by the Ninth Amendment. **This means that *Roe* and *Casey* would not be**

precedent! Would this actually free up the justices to do the right thing? God only knows.

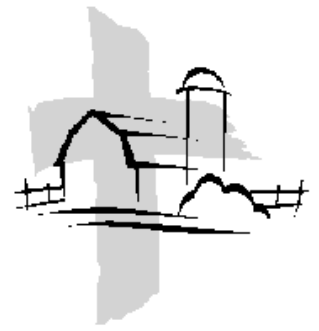
You should be aware, though, that some “pro-life” groups are aligned against the Senate bill in their “strategic” thinking. They are waiting for a better time and a better court. However, nobody can predict the situation if and when a case concerning this bill reaches the highest court, possibly in three years. We are simply called to be faithful and to believe Jesus’ words, *“With God all things are possible”* (Matt. 19:26).

Of course, this bill goes nowhere if the Senate doesn’t move it forward in January when the entire legislative body comes back into session. This means that the next five months could bring increased scrutiny, great pressure, and paid-for influence upon Tennessee lawmakers. For us, I envision a similar struggle to the one from five years ago in the passage of Amendment 1. (Amendment 1 overturned the Tennessee Supreme Court’s ruling in 2000 that found a right to abortion is implicit in the State Constitution. The reason Tennessee is now able to even consider SB 1236 is because of the foundation of Amendment 1!) The difference with Amendment 1 is that this time the state Senators will have the responsibility to decide rather than the registered voters of the state. However, our voices, letters, emails, yard signs, and peaceful presence will be no less important!

Please pray for, support, and follow the efforts to make this stand for life in our state. Check in with www.factn.org. We trust not in princes (Ps. 146:3), but perhaps this will be the turning point when our lawmakers and judges will be compelled to fulfill their role under God to protect innocent life. Regardless of whether this ends up being a historic battle or a minor skirmish that does not change the status quo, if we speak out in love and in faith in our Creator and Redeemer, we will not have labored in vain (1 Cor. 15:58).

Rev. Philip Young
Mid-South District Life Coordinator

Active Stewardship in the Rural Parish



Reaching Rural America for Christ

Where I serve, people are conservative. I don’t mean that they watch Fox News and listen to Rush Limbaugh (although plenty of them do). I’m talking about the deep-down conservatism that always asks the question, “Pastor, if we’ve been doing it this way for so many years, why would you ask us to change? Is the risk of messing up what’s been working just fine really worth whatever little marginal gain you think your new way of doing things will give us?”

That question may not always be put into so many words, but after 13 years in rural ministry I’ve learned that that’s what people are thinking pretty much any time I make a suggestion for doing something new or different in our church. And I’ve come to appreciate the question. People are most conservative about the things they know best — and for good reason. Human life is short, and we humans are slow learners. The traditions we’ve been given by previous generations represent the distilled wisdom of the ages. So it’s a good question.

But wisdom, alas, is not the only thing handed down by our fathers, nor is it the only thing we are preparing to hand down to our children. If we’re not careful, we can also pass on our bad ideas, our laziness and our mistakes.

So, to turn to the topic at hand, how are things in your congregation financially? How’s the stewardship of the people? Do you find yourself running short in the summer months? Do you run bulletin announcements asking people to dig a little deeper and put a little more in the plate to catch up to the budget in October, November and December? Do you worry about closing the school, cutting a staff position, getting the roof fixed, or even being able to afford your own pastor?

I get around the Synod a lot, and I can tell you that I’ve rarely found a rural parish that doesn’t



Active Stewardship, continued

struggle with things like that. Indeed, that's how I got into stewardship ministry in the first place: I had to face those challenges in the parishes I still serve.

So if what we're doing is not working out, maybe it is time to learn and change. Maybe there are deeper, even more conservative traditions to follow when it comes to our stewardship: instructions from God's Word on how to be active, faithful, generous, Gospel-centered stewards of God's good and gracious gifts.

Ed. note: this topic was a webinar in July, to view the playback: <https://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/national/rural-and-small-town-mission/webinars#archives>

In the webinar Rev. Curtis talked about what really works for stewardship in the rural parish (or any parish, really): putting the Word of God first, finding stewardship's place in the Christian life and the theological task of the Lutheran pastor, and teaching generosity and the support of the Lord's work in a faithful, authentic, natural way.

Contributed through the LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission monthly newsletter by Rev. Heath Curtis, Coordinator of LCMS Stewardship

Taste of the Sem



February 15-17, 2020

Concordia Seminary and Taste of the Sem: Is there a young man in your high school youth group who has gifts that would be well served in pastoral ministry? Do you have a high school student who has expressed an interest in the pastoral ministry?

If so, please consider encouraging him to check out Concordia Seminary's "Taste of the Sem," being held February 15-17, 2020. During this on-campus event, young men considering the ministry will be connected with a current seminary student to see what life is like at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

To register or to get more information, please check the Concordia Seminary website at <https://www.csl.edu/admissions/visit/taste-of-the-sem/>. If you would like more information, please contact Rev. Dr. Scott Holder in the Admissions Office at 314.505.7225.

Anchored in Jesus- Rose Parade Floats!

The 2020 Lutheran Hour Ministries Tournament of Rose Parade Float, titled Anchored in Jesus fits perfectly under the parade theme of The Power of Hope.

Just as an anchor secures a mighty vessel, saving faith in Jesus Christ provides security during all seasons of life-not only for this life on earth, but for eternity

The only Christian float in parade, the LHM float is decorated by as many as 5,000 Petal Pushers® volunteers from across North America.

We need you! Please go to <https://www.petalpushers.org/reg> and sign up to decorate Tournament of Roses Parade floats.



Faith

By Denise Gudlin

In a recent sermon from Pastor Keith Enko, he challenged us to live out our faith every day of our lives. He shared, "Faith is not a word that should be treated lightly but is indeed a way of life. We are to actually live out our faith, our trust in the Lord. Okay, what does that mean? Well, for one thing, we are to live each day with absolute confidence that the Lord God is the One who created everything that exists. Next, we are to live out life knowing to the depth of our soul, that Jesus truly is the Son of the living God. Out of love for us, He took our place on that cross, with every last one of our sins on Him, and sacrificed Himself for us so that we would be free from our sins and restored into a right relationship with God. We are now a child of the Almighty God, our Heavenly Father. This is what we are to live out every day of our life."

While on our recent trip to Haiti, we had the opportunity to visit a student's home. The student attends Colminy in the St. Mark area. The mother is 30 years old and lives with her one-year old daughter and six year old son. Her husband died just after their daughter was born. She lives in the same home she was raised with her father, but he does not support her because she sends her son to a Christian school. When asked how she makes money to buy food, she answered that she makes charcoal to sell. She does not eat every day but knows the sacrifices she makes allows her son to eat lunch every day at school while experiencing and learning the love of Jesus Christ in his life. That is more important to her than her father's approval.

She has faith and lives it out every day.

Our mission team consisted of two fathers and their daughters. They were amazing servants living out their faith by serving the children in Haiti. Their compassion and love shared with servant hearts was contagious. One of the fathers, Pastor James Rockey, shared, "Truly, this trip was far more than I had envisioned. God knew what we were going to do and how He would use this to impact and bless each of us as well. We too are so thankful to have been able to serve beside each of you, to see Christ's love flow in and through each of you! May each of us continue to shine the Light of Christ each day as we continue to live out Christ's mission wherever we are!!"

"Truly I tell you whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." ~Matthew 25:40



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 during the month of August 2019.

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)

MR. STEVE TYLER (spouse of Julie Tyler, Mid-South District Office)

REV. NEIL VANDERBUSH (Former Pastor in Bentonville, Arkansas)

Our deepest sympathies to:

The family and friends of Rev. Shawn Hunze (Served Dual Parishes at Faith, Union City, TN & Trinity, Dyersburg, TN) who passed away on August 7, 2019.

The family and friends of Rev. Paul Jilg (Emeritus, Little Rock, AR) who passed away on August 18, 2019.

The family and friends of David Swanson (Brother of Rebecca Woodford, Rebecca is the spouse of District President Lucas Woodford, Minnesota South) who passed away suddenly.

The family and friends of Mr. Miguel Vega (Brother of A.J. Vega, DCE at Immanuel, Memphis, TN) who passed away on August 7, 2019.

CALL UPDATE

ORDAINED MINISTERS

ACCEPTED: **Rev. Robert Anderson**, Christ Memorial, Houston, TX has been issued and accepted a Call to serve as **Associate Pastor, Grace Lutheran, Knoxville, TN.** (Installation to be 9/22/2019)

Rev. Mark A. Kophamer, who has been serving as Vacancy Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Elizabethton, TN has been issued and accepted a call to serve as **Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Elizabethton, TN.** (Installed August 11, 2019)

COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

ACCEPTED: **Ms. Emily Leising, DCE**, St. Andrew Lutheran Church, West Fargo, ND, has accepted a call to serve as **DCE at Heavenly Host Lutheran Church, Cookeville, TN.**

PENDING: **Mr. Matt Nieman**, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Seymour, IN has been issued a call to serve as the **DCE at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN.**

IN THE CALLING PROCESS – CONGREGATIONS

First Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, TN - Pastor

First Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN – Pastor

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

**St. John's Lutheran Church, Lafe, 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**

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

CONGREGATIONAL MISSION COMMITMENTS

Mission Commitment Receipts as of 7/31/19 (7 Months)

Anticipated Amount (58.33% of budget).....	\$893,827
Actual Receipts	<u>887,080</u>
Over (under) anticipated amount	(\$6,747)

Use of Mission Commitment Receipts (7 Months)

Allocated to Synod for World Missions.....	\$251,541
Allocated to Tanzania	14,583
Retained for District Mission/Ministry Support (70% of receipts).....	<u>620,956</u>
Total Receipts	\$887,080

Mission Commitment Receipts Prior Year Comparison (7 Months)

Actual Receipts as of 7/31/19	\$887,080
Actual Receipts as of 7/31/18	<u>\$868,806</u>
Over (under) prior year receipts	\$18,274



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*

Rena 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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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 **September 23, 2019** to Rhonda, webmaster@mid-southlcms.com. The October issue will focus on Witnessing and Discipleship.