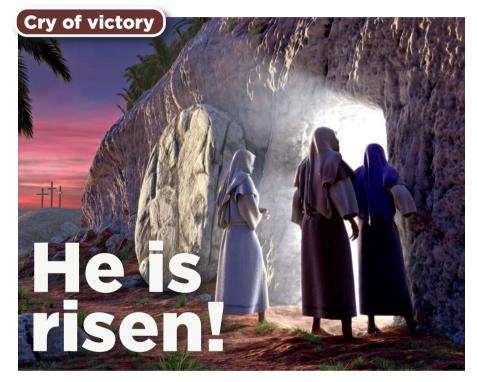




# MID-SOUTH LUTHERAN





**Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola** District President

hroughout Christianity, there will be people thrilled at the sounds of "victory!" Our victory! This blessed Eastertide, how many times will we be greeted with the familiar words, "He is Risen!"?

We will reply, "He has risen indeed. Hallelujah!"

Like a wave of the sun's rays rising over a new day, country after country, congregation after congregation, Christian after Christian, we will celebrate Jesus — the Incarnate Son of God who died on the cross to pay the eternal price for the sins of the world.

Easter angels, men who are faithful pastors — the called messengers from God — and the whole company of believers will proclaim the resurrection of our crucified Christ. He is the One who gives foundation to the church's doctrines. He is the One who alone is able to give us cause to generate the response, "He is risen indeed!"

So now what? To the next person you meet, what should be the next Easter proclamation after saying "He is risen!"?

Come to think of it, there's a new response — one that comes from Holy Scripture — that seems appropriate. It's a declaration we use

every day hereafter. In fact, it's what Christianity is all about. It's Ps. 118:17. Listen to it. Inscribe it on your heart:

I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

Let's face it. That verse appears to be the words of a man who isn't facing reality, at least as far as the unbelieving world is concerned. The world, the devil and our own sinful flesh mock that verse because so far most people we have known weren't able to avoid the grim reality of our human mortality.

The world would laugh hysterically and say, "Oh you fools! Everyone's going to die! How dumb. None, zero, nada, zippo, zilch ... no one gets out of here alive! You can read the psalm all you want you fool, but you're going to die. Period."

As Christians we cannot disagree. We know history is filled with too much evidence that there aren't many who've made it out alive.

Satan, the tempter who lied to Adam and Eve, now stands ready to accuse you: "You're a sinner! Sinners will *all* die. You deserve eternal torment for what you've done and said. Go ahead, quote the psalm all you want, but you'll breathe your last someday." As doubt comes from the devil, the deceiver, he also shows us evidence that the end of the sinner is death.

Of course, even as baptized children of God, we unfortunately still live within that old sinful flesh. Family, congregation friends, neighbors and even kids in school are dying right and left. The pandemic took too many of our friends

See EASTER, Page 2

## **DISTRICT NEWS**

#### EASTER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

and loved ones. There are people younger than us who died. Solid Christian friends and older members of our congregations have died. It makes us realize that the inevitability is a real part of our human existence. So as we live as saints and sinners, we know that because we've sinned and were born into sin, the wages of sin is death. There's little we can do about it.

But God's Word says, "I shall *not* die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD." Is the psalmist on something? Is this one of those smiley-faced cartoons of hyper-optimistic words of a raving lunatic? Actually, none of those accusations are true. The psalmist knows real doctrine and Scriptural truths. The Bible, from Genesis through Revelation, teaches us that there are two deaths. The first is the separation of body and soul in our physical death. Just about everyone will experience it. Jesus died. Abel, the thief on the cross and lots of our loved ones all died.

The second death is, simply put, hell — everlasting condemnation and eternal separation from God. Anyone whose name is not recorded in the Book of Life will be separated from God — His love, His mercy and everything good.

Jesus said:

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death." REV. 2:10-11

"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" JOHN 11:25-26

"Yes, I do," says the psalmist. "Yes, I do!" declares every baptized, faithful follower of the Christ. By the gift of faith — given by God's grace and Spirit — those who receive the pure doctrine of God's saving Word by the one true faith and remain steadfast in His promise can also most assuredly declare, "I shall not die, but I shall live and recount the deeds of the LORD."

Think about the deeds of the Lord. The Great I Am said, "Let there be light," and there was! Everything out of nothing! The Word spoke and the universe happened. Stars in their patterns, planets that wander around the sun, gravity, momentous mass and quantum astrophysics declare it, but God did it for those He created in His



I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die." image. Waves of water or waves of grain. Grapes that cluster or turn into wine. Wheat cast on the ground or made into bread. A Lamb without blemish and beasts on the land. The Word spoke and man is. Because of it all, we exist, live, move and have our being.

These are the beautiful deeds of the Lord He gave for us! But then think of His redemptive deeds. Holy Scripture tells us that He came down from heaven and became flesh to dwell among us. The Lamb of God shed His blood to take away our sins and all the sins of the world.

Recall how the great high priest, Jesus Christ, entered the Holy of Holies covered with His own blood to atone for our unrighteousness. Remember how God Almighty raised His Son from the dead. Now all human flesh that is joined together with Him by God's mercy and through the Means of Grace will also be raised from corruption to incorruptible righteousness in life everlasting.

Jesus declared, "Because I live, you shall live also." And yet the same God who led His ancient people to the Promised Land and faithfully fed them on the journey also leads, guides and feeds us on our pilgrim journey on this earth. He feeds us on the Bread of Life and gives us drink from the cup of Thanksgiving to gladden our hearts in His divine peace. Unlike all the other world religions, Christianity is alive and well because we are founded on a living God, a faithful and loving God, a gracious God who is not dead. The tomb couldn't hold Him. Sin and death couldn't keep Him wrapped up in corruption. Jesus Christ is no longer dead. He is alive. He is risen!

Neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Peter, Paul nor any of God's faithful people who have departed this life are dead. They are alive in faith in Christ Jesus, awaiting the resurrection of all the faithful. These and more are the deeds of our Almighty Lord, accomplished and done so that we may remember these promises; so that we may tell the joys of our gracious God's promise for us, our families and those who yet do not know of God's grace and mercy. We may recount these things to our friends and tell them the Good News: Our sins are forgiven. By God's grace we shall live forever. We don't place our trust in dead idols.

I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

We worship a true and living Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to suffer and die for our sins but is no longer dead. He is risen! Alleluia, amen.

## MISSIONS

#### FOCUS on EVANGELISM

Shared by the Board of Evangelism of First, Little Rock

## God's Word for the neighborhood

"We dedicate this Little Free Library to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and ask the Lord to bless it and use it to reach people with the Word of God who need His love, truth and mercy," said Rev. Ron Bacic on Jan. 29, as he dedicated the new outreach instrument located in front of the First Lutheran Church office.

The Little Free Library contains Bibles and other Christian works that are available to the public at no charge. This project, sponsored by First's Board of Evangelism, offers a fresh approach to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with the community.

In addition to those pictured at right, members participated in the installation and dedication celebration.

Thanks to everyone who was involved in making this happen, to the glory of our Lord!



Those present for the groundbreaking of First Lutheran's Little Free Library included, from left, Rev. Steve Teske, former First pastor; Mark Peterson, Board of Evangelism chairman; and Rev. Ron Bacic, First pastor.

## **LCEF HAS GRANTS** for K-8 schools

n Jan. 15, Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) announced the opening of the 2022 grant process for its long-standing Kaleidoscope Fund. This year, eligibility will be limited to LCMS K–8 elementary schools. Those who are interested and eligible for the grant should submit a grant application by June 1.

"The Kaleidoscope Fund is an additional avenue for LCEF to support the work of the church," said the Rev. Bart Day, LCEF president and CEO. "When we have a good year, we can pass on those blessings to strengthen Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod [LCMS] ministries in the form of this grant."

This year's grants will focus on four categories:

- Faculty wellness (e.g., continuing education, retreats or sabbaticals for staff);
- Curriculum development (e.g., engaging specialists in content areas or working with other schools to develop shared programs);
- ► Technology (e.g., improving existing



programs/tools or adding new ones); and

Student engagement/outreach (e.g., connecting with the homeschool community, providing after-school tutoring or reaching out to the community).

Funds will be granted in amounts between \$10,000 and \$40,000.

"Because the face of Christianity is changing," Day said, "our schools have become outposts for the proclamation of Christ. We rejoice in Lutheran educators who teach the core academic subjects and the faith in our schools. We share a fervent passion for supporting and empowering their work in any way we can — like the Kaleidoscope Fund."

The application proposal deadline is June 1. To find out more or start the grant process, visit *lcef.org/kaleidoscope*.

#### Congregation mission commitment receipts as of Jan. 31, 2022 (1 month)

## **DISTRICT NEWS**

## - The Henkel Conference

"Mankind thus unacquainted with God cannot love him; neither can they love one another: 'He that loveth not knoweth not God""



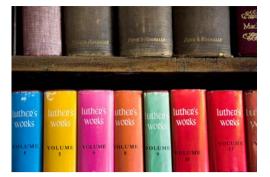
scension Lutheran Church, Madison, Tenn., is pleased to host The Henkel Conference on Aug. 22.

The Henkel Conference is devoted to Christian theology and cultural engagement by featuring dedicated Lutheran theologians and experts on Christian subject matter.

Presenters include Rev. Dr. Thomas M. Winger, president of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada; Ryan T. Anderson, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center; Brent P. Waters, director of the Stead Center for Ethics and Values; and Leonydus Johnson, host of the *Informed Dissent* podcast.

Although not yet finalized, the presenter topics are anticipated to be worship, the mystical union, gender theory, race theory, religious liberty, bioethics, children's rights, and Christian education.

Visit *ascensionmadison.com/ henkel* for more information and to register. Your greatest support for this new endeavor is your attendance!



## WANTED: Advice on starting lending library

Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Memphis, is exploring the possibility of providing a lending library for its members and guests. The church would like to connect with another Mid-South District congregation or worker who either currently has such a resource or is familiar with the set-up and operation of a lending library.

If you have expertise to share in this area, please contact Immanuel Lutheran Church at 901-373-4486.

# Grace to hold seminary class

Grace Lutheran Church, Little Rock, will host a Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Ind., extension class June 8-11.

The class will be taught by Rev. Scott Stiegemeyer, who teaches theology, church history and bioethics Concordia University Irvine, Calif. He has a master's degree in bioethics from Trinity International University, Deerfield, Ill., and a doctoral degree in bioethics from Loyola University in Chicago. He has served as a pastor in Pittsburgh, Pa., and Elmhurst, Ill.; and as director of Admission at CTSFW.

The class will address "What It Means to be Human." It will consider questions concerning human nature and personal identity and congregational responses to transgender ideas and goals, as well as the increasingly important issue of genetic engineering, or transhumanism. The topics will be considered from a biblical perspective.

For more information and registration, contact Rev. Kent Schaaf at 501-663-3631 or *kent.schaaf@glclr.org*.



## **DISTRICT NEWS**



Rev. Mark Bushuiakovish was installed as associate pastor of Our Savior, Nashville, on Feb. 6. Participating in the celebration were, from left, Revs. Charles Buckhahn, emeritus; David Callies, district president emeritus; Tracy Nelson, Our Savior associate pastor; Dr. Roger Paavola, district president; Greg Bauch, Ascension, Madison; Mark Bushuiakovish; Gene Henke, emeritus; Rev. Lane Reuter, Our Savior senior pastor; Randy Sakach, Prince of Peace, White House; Ken Shaw, Trinity, Gallatin; Steve Heilmann, emeritus; and Rich Elseroad, Grace, Knoxville.



Rev. Michael Edwards was installed as pastor of Our Savior, Cabot, Ark., on Jan. 30. From left, Revs. David Vandercook, Shepherd of Peace, Maumelle, and Trinity, Little Rock; Dr. Roger Paavola; Michael Edwards; Kevin Conger, Hope, Jacksonville, and district second vice-president; and David Witte, Grace, Little Rock, and Our Savior vacancy pastor.

## **LWML Mid-South District Convention** June 10-12 • Clarksville, Tenn.

Early-bird registration ends April 16.

Registrations will be accepted until May 20. Convention Theme: "Planting Seeds of Faith" (1 Cor. 3:6)

**Keynote speaker:** Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, executive director of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty and speaker emeritus of "The Lutheran Hour."

**Song leader and banquet entertainer:** Wendysue Fluegge, song leader at the 2017 LWML convention in Albuquerque, N.M.

**Convention offerings**: Mara Evangelical Church at Holy Trinity, Bowling Green, Ky., and Loaves & Fishes, Clarkville, Tenn.

**In-gathering recipients**: Hope Unlimited Crisis Pregnancy Center, Paducah, Ky., and Hope Pregnancy Center, Clarksville, Tenn.

#### Seminars:

- Learning about Mara Evangelical Church and Burmese Culture.
- Learn to navigate the LWML website, how to use the LWML app, how to set up and use podcasts and much more!

Know before you go: Clarksville has become a popular destination to visit and relocate. Want to spend an extra few days in Clarksville? Take a look at all Clarksville has to offer at visit *clarksvilletn.com*.

Registration and information are available at midsouthlwml.org/ district-convention. Or scan the code.



2022 SPOTLIGHT ON LUTHERAN SCHOOLS



## WITH SINCERE THANKS

#### By Allen Piepenbrink

Mid-South District Education Executive

Teacher Appreciation Week will be held in May. This is when I send a well-deserved acknowledgment of the many accomplishments the teachers of the Mid-South District achieved during the year. I personally thank all the teachers in the district for their extraordinary work during this unprecedented time.

I show my bias when I say that teachers are some of the most passionate and dedicated of any occupation. A teacher's commitment to their students is unequaled. It's hard to imagine how stressful it is to be ready to teach in a totally new way when stay-at-home orders are given.

Most parents are back to work and the end of the school year is near. It will be an interesting summer trying to figure out the extent of this pandemic and if the teachers will be able to teach in a face-to-face environment for the entire 2022-23 school year.

Thanks to all the teachers for all you are doing to keep the lines of com-

munication open with parents and students, and for continuing to share the love of the Lord with those whom the Lord has sent to you to serve. Be that good servant and continue to help those children grow mentally and spiritually.

I also want to thank principals, school-board members and parents for continuing to help their schools be a light in their community.

The National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) process is rigorous. It takes many hands to continually monitor various aspects of the school community. The self-study process, followed by a visiting NLSA team of peers every five years, are important aspects of continued growth. It is that dedication and keeping the focus on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior that gives our Lutheran schools the position in the community that is needed in these trying times.

May all of our elementary schools and early childhood centers continue to be a source of inspiration and truth in our world, and I thank God for them.

#### HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Bowling Green, Ky.

The devastating tornado in early December missed our church and school by a couple of blocks, but displaced two Holy Trinity families and staff, and several students were visibly shaken by the experience.

Our youth group helped with cleanup efforts and we attempted to re-open as a ministry of presence in the days immediately following the tornado, but were able to do so for only two days before we were forced to close due to COVID.

Some of our tornado and fire drills can bring back the fear in the younger kids who were directly impacted. However, the outpouring of love and help from so many people from all over the country has been extremely uplifting. Several schools contacted us to say they were sending us their chapel offerings for National Lutheran Schools Week. God is good, "In All Things."



The first All Saints class is pictured with, from left, Rev. Joshua Leigeber, pastor; Gail McDonald, aide; and Rev. Andrew Lehman, headmaster and associate pastor.

#### ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN SCHOOL | Jonesboro, Ark.



his is the inaugural year for All Saints, which is dedicated to being genuinely Lutheran, thoroughly classical and intentionally small.

All Saints prepares children for heavenly and earthly citizenship by means of a classical Lutheran education so that they might be grounded firmly in the truth of God's Word, abound in knowledge and virtue, and share God's grace in all of their various vocations, present and future. Each day begins with the praying of Matins and includes vigorous instruction in such subjects as math, Latin, astronomy, history, the catechism, the hymnody of the church, and the sacred Scriptures.

With a dozen students this year, we look forward to continuing to cultivate wisdom and virtue by nourishing the soul of each child on truth, goodness, and beauty.

#### ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL | Stuttgart, Ark.



Just 50 miles southeast of Little Rock, St. John's includes kindergarten through grade six and offers a preschool program for infants through age four. The enrollment this year is 185.

Students participate in a variety of school and community activities. For Christmas, we collected over 150 items for a senior center and nursing home. St. John's has six basketball teams and plays in the Stuttgart Parks and Rec League.

Our school and community have continued to face many challenges the past two years. We are very thankful for our church leaders and parents who have helped to keep our students safe.



#### CHRIST LUTHERAN SCHOOL | Little Rock, Ark.



hrist Lutheran School is committed to providing a solid foundation for students to grow spiritually, academically, emotionally and socially. We worship as a family each Wednesday, led by our sixth through eighth graders and observing our theme, "Embrace the Grace."

We embrace technology as a learning tool as students are issued electronic tablets and teachers use ActivPanel televisions. All students (K-8) are engaged in our hands-on science curriculum. They love caring for the chickens and gathering eggs from our chicken coop.

Our K-fourth graders adorably performed "The Turkeys Go On Strike." Our county spelling bee winner was the youngest participant. Tod and Beau, our gifted seventh and eighth graders, respectively, were finalists in the Arkansas Peace Week Youth Essay Contest, and Tod named winner.

Student efforts also ensured that area foster children received help through our Giving Tree project.



#### FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Fort Smith, Ark.





First expanded its ministry presence this year with the addition of a toddler-age classroom, welcoming16 toddlers into the program. This addition is already helping to grow both the early childhood and elementary programs. This classroom is already full for the 2022-23 school year, only two weeks into open enrollment.

#### BELVOIR CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Chattanooga, Tenn.

To celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., elementary school students incorporated his life accomplishments into many of their lessons at the time of his birthday and for Black History Month.

Kindergarten students were challenged during their weekly STEM lessons to create a podium that Dr. King might have used for speech-making. They also created "I Have a Dream" clouds with hopes and dreams for the future, as well as "flip-flop" charts to show various aspects of his life. Students learned that "we are all human ... with a heart that beats, with emotions of laughter, joy, sadness and love, and this is what should hold us together, not the color of our skin."

Middle-school science students fashioned rain sticks as they learned about cloud seeding and engineered bridges and towers made of marshmallows and paper cups, and enjoyed a snowball fight using imported snow.







#### CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN SCHOOL | Memphis, Tenn.

Each year, CTK undertakes a variety of volunteer projects and programs and raised \$1,500 this year for Lebonheur Children's Hospital through the "Go Jim Go" challenge. Funds were also raised for a new playground area through the BoosterThon Fun Run. Students prayed for their school with other students around the globe as they meet at flagpoles (See You at the Pole), and partnered with parents for a Christmas toy drive that benefits the Amigos Foundation. Adele San Vicente and Seymour Shepard placed first in the citywide Art Fair.



#### FIRST LUTHERAN SCHOOL | Knoxville, Tenn.

When fourth- and fifth-grade students decided they wanted to raise \$150 to purchase an alpaca for a family, they really took the goal to heart. They baked up a storm, and their tasty treats were bought up quickly by their fellow students, bringing the total raised to over \$400. Their hard work allowed them to purchase two alpacas, a beehive, chickens and rabbits, all of which, through the charity Heifer International, go to help families that can use these animals to support their households. This generosity and giving spirit is a reflection of how Christ is truly at the center of all we do.



#### IMMANUEL LUTHERAN SCHOOL | Memphis, Tenn.





"Choose Joy" is the theme for the 2021-22 school year and we have been so blessed using and sharing the gifts of **joy** we've been given. Last fall we were able to share appreciation and joy with veterans during our luncheon. At Christmas, several classes gave piles of presents to families while our preschoolers collected paper products for a women's shelter. Our church and school worked together to prepare a display for the Bartlett Christmas celebration, themed "Jesus—the Sweetest Gift." What a joy!

Students and teachers continue to challenge each other to reach and surpass goals. STEMM classes work cooperatively to meet engineering challenges and students have also started coding, even those in kindergarten. ILS is blessed with talented children and dedicated staff that "Choose Joy" every day!



## Mercy for traumatized children in Nashville

On Feb. 5, the LWML and Sunday School children of Our Savior, Nashville, presented over 160 stuffed toy animals to Sgt. Catie Poole and Officer Alberta Auguste from the Mid-Town Hills Precinct of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department. The toys will be shared by the police with children who experience trauma from house fires, floods and domestic situations.

The Our Savior congregation has developed a supportive partnership with the precinct, showing appreciation for their service. Sgt. Poole and Officer Auguste expressed their gratitude to the LWML for this community outreach.

Deb Johnson, LWML mission leader for first responder service projects, and Celia Walkowicz, Our Savior's director of Children's and Youth Ministry, coordinated this service project.



Sgt. Poole received the "hug buddy" toys that will be used to comfort traumatized children.



Immanuel Lutheran School, Memphis

#### NOTE:

The Mid-South District also gives thanks to God for **Heavenly Host Lutheran School**, Cookeville, Tenn., and **Avilla Christian Academy**, Alexander, Ark., which do not appear in this schools issue.



Christ Lutheran School, Little Rock, Ark.



## **CAMP TRINITY**

## Trivia Night is April 30

Which congregation has the smartest members? Perhaps we will find out during Camp Trinity's annual Trivia Night, to be held April 30 at Christ Lutheran Church, Little Rock.

The event, now in its 13th year, is the camp's main fundraiser, but it's also about fun, food, fellowship and friendly competition.

The contest includes eight rounds of 10 questions in which teams of up to eight people will have to stretch their brain power. Patti Airoldi is returning as emcee, bringing her theatrical talent and humor to entertain and keep the competition friendly. (For some, there's nothing trivial about trivia, so a panel of judges will rule on any challenges.)

Winners will compete for restaurant gift certificates and the coveted Dinner Bell Trophy.

Between rounds, participants and observers can play Dead-or-Alive and Heads-or-Tails with a chance to win some cash.

You don't have to be an Einstein to win. The night also includes three creative contests to determine best costumes, best table decorations and most clever team name.

Trivia Night also includes a silent auction. Items to bid on include state park lodging, Razorbacks paraphernalia, kitchen gadgets, shop tools, gift baskets, auto accessories, jewelry and more.

No need to eat beforehand — a concession stand will serve burgers, hot dogs,



nachos, candy, sodas and other snacks. Free popcorn and bottled water are provided.

The entry fee is \$20 per person or \$160 per team. For more information and to register, visit *lutherancamp.org/ trivia-night*.

## Openings still available for summer camp

Registration continues for summer adventures at Camp Trinity, and most of the nine sessions still have openings.

Campers will hike, explore, swim, canoe, ride horses, visit the petting zoo, compete in archery, play games, make crafts and take part in a service project. Every day starts with First Word (morning devotions) and Bible study follows breakfast. Every day ends at a campfire with lots of singing and a message about God's love in Christ.

Two sessions of Family Camp are planned for the last two weekends in

July. These sessions are designed for families with children too young for regular camp sessions, and to enable younger children to experience camp activities with parents and grandparents close by.

High school students who love Jesus and desire to serve others are encouraged to apply to be counselors-in-training for one or two weeks. Interested teens can email the camp office at *director@lutherancamp.org.* 

Summer camp is an electronics-free zone. Cell phones, music players and other electronics are not permitted so that campers can enjoy the beauty of Petit Jean Mountain and fellowship without distractions.

Save money, parents, by taking advantage of special multi-session, multichild, first-time camper and bring-afriend discounts.

Learn more and register at *lutherancamp.org.* Click the "Summer Camp" link at the top of the page.



Deadline for June-July issue is April 15 Digital files, sent via e-mail, are preferred. Our submission deadline is the 15th of each month, two months before publication. Send email submissions to *LW@mid-southlcms.com* or send by postal mail to: Judy Otto • 150 N. Maury St. Holly Springs, MS 38635