# Workers Together

*An Email Publication of the LCMS Kansas District*

## AUGUST 2016

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Call Updates

PASTORAL CALLS
- Rev. Jace Detrie, Athens, TN to Immanuel/Ellsworth, declined
- Rev. Kevin Wyssmann – Bethany/Overland Park to Trinity/Garden City, declined
- Rev. Chad Elfe, Bellevue, WI to Our Saviour, Kansas City, Associate Pastor, declined
- Rev. David Meier to St. Paul/Junction City, IIM Inst. 7/17
- Rev. Devin Kerns, Charlotte, NC to St. John/Topeka, accepted, Inst. 8/7
- Rev. David Schemm – Topeka, KS to Faith/Emporia – accepted, Inst. 8/7

CANDIDATE CALLS EXTENDED
- Northeast Kansas Partnership (Associate) – Fort Wayne Candidate Sean Kilgo, Ord. and Inst. 8/14/16
- Oswego, St. Paul and Parsons, Trinity (Sole) – Fort Wayne Candidate Jonathan Scheck Ord. 6/19/16, Inst. 8/7/16

VACANT CONGREGATIONS CALLING OR GETTING READY TO CALL
- Andover, Peace (Sole)
- Coffeyville, St. Paul (Sole)
- Downs, Zion (Sole)
- Ellinwood, St. John (Sole)
- Ellsworth, Immanuel (Sole)
- Fort Scott, Trinity (Sole)
- Garden City, Trinity (Sole)
- Herington, Our Redeemer (Sole)
- Kansas City, Our Saviour (Associate)
- Lamed/Grace and Great Bend/Our Saviour (Sole)
- Lyons, Grace (Sole)
- Nortonville, St. Matthew (Sole)
- Wamego, Mt. Calvary (Sole)
**CALLING COMMISSIONED**

- Messiah/Hays - DCE
- Faith Lutheran School, Derby – Part-time Principal
- Christ Lutheran School, Overland Park – Music Teacher
- Bethany Lutheran School, Overland Park – PT DCE (Stilwell Campus)
- Good Shepherd Lutheran School – Principal/Teacher
- Trinity/Mission (Shawnee campus) – Family Ministry/Music

**CALLS ACCEPTED:**

- Tchr Kelly Dressler, Danville, IL to Trinity/Atchison, Inst. 8/14 (7/25)
- Tchr Kayla Foss, Faith/Derby to Trinity/Atchison, Inst. 8/14 (7/14)
- Candidate Rachel Kathman (CUNE - Designation) to Topeka Lutheran School, Comm. 7/24/16, Inst. 8/21/16
- Candidate Elizabeth Maxwell (CUNE - Designation) to Topeka Lutheran School, Comm. & Inst. 8/21/16
- Tchr Jena Birt, Nebraska District to Hope/Shawnee, Inst. 8/21/16
- Tchr Lisa Jaeger, S. Wisconsin District to Hope/Shawnee, Inst. 8/21/16
- Tchr Whitney Holle, Indiana District to St. John/Alma, Inst. 8/21/16

**CALLS PENDING:**

- Candidate Nathan Eaton (CUNE - Designation) to Bethany/Overland Park, Comm & Inst. 8/14/16 (7/22)
- Paige Edgington, Wichita to Lutheran Student Center/Wichita (7/22)

**CALL DECLINED:**

- Tchr Kayla Foss, Faith/Derby to Our Redeemer, North Platte, NE. (7/14)
- DCE Angel Gillespie, St. Paul/Bourbonnais, IL to Messiah/Hays (7/11)
- Tchr Brian Scheller, Lutheran North, St. Louis, MO to Christ/Overland Park (7/11)
- Tchr Katrina Thomas, Oklahoma District to Topeka Lutheran School (6/27)

**Prayer Requests**

If you have a prayer request you would like the staff to pray over, please email the request to Tami Lierz at tami@kslcms.org.

**Convention Reflections by Rev. Peter K. Lange, President, LCMS Kansas District**

Dear Workers Together in the Kansas District,

As I write these words, the 66th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is only four days behind us. Once again, many important decisions were made at this convention, decisions that will undoubtedly affect our mission and ministry together in the Kansas District.

It will take months, if not longer, to sift through all the resolutions that were adopted, determine which ones apply the most to our work together in the Kansas District, and then prioritize them so that we can begin to implement them. As we do so, please remember that one of the constitutional responsibilities of a district president is that "he shall cause the resolutions of the Synod to be implemented in the district, encouraging the congregations and schools to embrace the mission and ministry emphases adopted by the national convention for the triennium." (LCMS Bylaw 4.4.2.a.)

That said, I want to assure the congregations, pastors, commissioned ministers, licensed lay deacons, and all the people of the Kansas District that I intend to go about my duties in an evangelical and patient manner that
values constructive dialogue and good communication. And by the same token, I would ask for the calm trust
and collegial partnership of the Kansas District as we seek together how best to find a new stride in our
walking together as Synod.

Before I was even home from the convention I was already receiving questions about how, specifically,
certain convention resolutions would be implemented in the Kansas District. The short answer is, “I'm not
entirely certain!” But I look forward to visiting with the district staff, elected leadership, and members of the
Kansas District as we gather in regular meetings, circuit conferences, and various other opportunities around
the district to discuss these things and to see how we can "conserve and promote the unity of the true faith" in
the most harmonious way possible. (Cf. LCMS Constitution, Article III.1.)

As we do so, I would urge all of us to take to heart the words of St. Paul to the Christians in Corinth when he
said, “I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no
divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.” (1 Corinthians 1:10)

May the Lord bless our faithful and bold witness to Christ in the Kansas District. And as we stand Upon This
Rock may we always repent, confess, and rejoice as one in the body of Christ.

The Lord be with you,

President Lange

Mission & Stewardship Executive Call Process Update

On Saturday, July 30, 2016, after prayerful consideration, the Board of Directors of the Kansas District, LCMS, elected to call the Rev. Dr. Alfonso Espinosa to the position of Assistant to the Kansas District President for Missions and Stewardship. Rev. Dr. Espinosa is Pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church – Laguna Beach/Irvine, CA, and has served there since 2011. He is a current board member serving on the LCMS Office of National Mission.

Dr. Espinosa earned his Bachelor of Arts in 1987 at Christ College – Irvine, CA. Since then, he has earned his Master of Divinity (1991) at Concordia Theological Seminary – Ft. Wayne, IN; a Master of Arts (2001) – Christian Apologetics at Biola University – La Mirada, CA; and, a Ph.D. (2009) in Theology at the University of Birmingham, England.

Please pray for Pastor Espinosa, his wife, Traci, and their family, as they enter this period of deliberation in discernment of God’s will.

Grace Place Midwest Fall Retreat

Midwest Retreat October 17 - 21, 2016
Big Cedar Lodge, Ridgedale MO

Grace Place is in their 2016 Midwest District (Missouri and Kansas Districts) church worker retreat at Big Cedar Lodge on Oct. 17 – 21, 2016. The 5-day, 4-night retreat will be held at Big Cedar Lodge, a grand wilderness resort, reminiscent of lavish, turn-of-the-century Adirondack hunting lodges, but with all the modern conveniences. The only cost for the participants is a $250 registration fee and transportation to and from the retreat facility. Meals and lodging included. This is for ACTIVE CHURCH WORKERS ONLY FOR THE MISSOURI AND KANSAS DISTRICTS ONLY. There are 7 spots open for each district so first come, first serve. Registration links for the Kansas District is listed below. Please list “1” for Quantity Couple.
District Calendar

- Sep. 5: District Office Closed
- Sep. 15-16: District Principal's Conference - Topeka
- Oct. 3-5: Pastor's Conference - Manhattan
- Oct. 5-7: Educator's Conference - Manhattan
- Nov. 23: District Office Closed at 2:00
- Nov. 24-25: District Office Closed
- Dec. 23: District Office Closed
- Dec. 26-30: District Office Closed

You can find the full District event calendar at the District website, www.kslcms.org.

Commissioned Minister Information Form (CMIF) – System Update

As a reminder, the Lutheran School Portal website, which included the Lutheran Educator Information Form (LEIF) system, was decommissioned on June 30, 2016.

The LCMS Rosters and Statistics and School Ministry offices are pleased to announce major enhancements to the NEW Church Worker Update (CWU) - https://cwu.lcms.org - website. While commissioned workers may have logged in last year to update personal and professional information, the forms have substantially changed to accommodate all commissioned ministers and also to address the discontinuation of the Lutheran School Portal Lutheran Educator Information Form (LEIF).

Commissioned church workers, at any time throughout the year, may now:

- Complete sections and questions most relevant to their specific Commissioned Minister classification;
- Update information previously only found in the Lutheran Educator Information Form (LEIF); and,
- Ensure that the information is up-to-date so that the profile on the Commissioned Minister Information Form (CMIF) is accurate when calling bodies are searching.

Commissioned workers should have received an email in early June providing login information and a password. Updates made by July 1, 2016, will ensure that records are printed correctly in the 2017 Lutheran Annual.

Once again, the newly enhanced CWU now replaces the former Lutheran School Portal LEIF process. Not all of the LEIF information was automatically transferred to the CWU system. All commissioned workers are required to address this individually through the new CWU system. With the release of this updated online version, the annual mailing of paper forms has been eliminated, except in cases where an individual has no internet access.

If a commissioned worker has lost or forgotten login information, please follow the online helps at https://cwu.lcms.org/. Questions can be addressed to the LCMS Rosters and Statistics office at 888-843-5267 or rosters.stats@lcms.org.
The Kansas District Youth Ministry Team (DYMT) is blessed by the participation of six high school students in its efforts to develop and promote youth ministry opportunities within the Kansas District. The six high school students consist of 2 seniors, 2 juniors and 2 sophomores, known as Lutheran Youth Fellowship Representatives (LYF Reps). Each year, as the 2 seniors transition to college, 2 sophomores are elected by the DYMT to serve 3 year terms as LYF Reps.

Applicants for the position of LYF Rep must be sophomores with leadership qualities who are committed to and believe the teachings and doctrines of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Those elected are tasked with attending DYMT meetings twice a year, participating in District Youth Gatherings, attending the Teen Leadership Initiative Training held in the following March in St. Louis (paid by the Kansas District), facilitating the Teen Fellowship Retreat for the district and serving as a voice for the youth of the Kansas District.

If you know of a young person who meets these qualifications and demonstrates leadership qualities, please encourage them to complete the application on the district website in its entirety and submit it to the DYMT, as instructed, by August 1st, 2016. [http://www.kslcms.org/resources/LYF%20Application.pdf](http://www.kslcms.org/resources/LYF%20Application.pdf)

Thank you for helping to raise up the next generation of leaders for our church body!

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### 2016 Kansas & Oklahoma District Youth Gathering

Registration opens on August 15 for the Kansas & Oklahoma District Youth Gathering.

- **When:** November 18-20, 2016
- **Where:** Hyatt Regency, Wichita
- **Theme:** HERO. Greater. Better. True.
- **Who can attend:** Youth in grades 9-12
- **Speakers:** unPaved Ministries
- **Band:** 211 Band

Website link: [www.kdyg.org](http://www.kdyg.org)

And new this year; we’ve invited our friends to the South of us in Oklahoma to join in our fun, fellowship & worship. More information coming soon.

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### 2016 Educators Conference

Registration is now open for the 2016 Educators Conference.

- **When:** October 5-7, 2016
- **Where:** Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan
- **Theme:** Upon This Rock: Teachers of the Faith based on Matthew 16:18
- **Bible Study Leaders:** DCEs Kyle and Hannah Lang
- **Cost:**
  - $115 – through September
  - $130 – after September 12
  - $70 - Emeritus, Spouse

Registration fee includes lunch and Lazy T Ranch dinner Wednesday, continental breakfast and lunch on Thursday, full buffet breakfast Friday, all breaks and materials.

Worship Service Offering Designation: Designated by the Educators Committee for Kansas State University Campus Ministry.

Website link: [http://educatorsconference.yolasite.com/](http://educatorsconference.yolasite.com/)

Conference booklet link: [http://educatorsconference.yolasite.com/resources/2016_Educators_Booklet.pdf](http://educatorsconference.yolasite.com/resources/2016_Educators_Booklet.pdf)
2016 Pastors Conference

Registration is coming soon for the 2016 Pastors Conference.

When: October 3-5, 2016
Where: Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan
Theme: Upon This Rock: Confessing Christ in a Postmodern World, based on Matthew 16:18
Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Peter Scaer
Cost: $125 – through September
       $150 – after September 12
       $70 - Emeritus, Spouse

To make reservations easier, you can make your hotel reservations now by clicking on the following link: http://hiltongardeninn.hilton.com/en/gi/groups/personalized/M/MANGIGI-KDPC-20161002/indexjhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

Enter the group code “KDPC” to book your room. You may also call the hotel at (785) 532-9116 and reference “2016 Kansas District Pastor’s Conference.

Worship Service Offering Designation: Designated by the Pastors Committee for Kansas State University Campus Ministry.

Save the Date: Junior High Rally

The 11th annual Kansas District Jr. High Rallies. East and West, will be held at Shepherd's Staff Retreat Center in Rexford, KS and at Timberlake Campgrounds in Williamsburg, KS on September 30 – October 1, 2016.

For More information, please click the link: http://www.kslcms.org/resources/2016%20Jr%20High%20Rally-Big%20Hero%206.pdf

Primary Adults:

Please make sure that you have the proper medical consent forms for each participant with you when you arrive at the Jr. High Rally, we will check. If you do not have a form, there is one available on the district website, www.kslcms.org. Click on Educational Services, then click Youth at the top of the Educational Services page, then look under Standard Youth Forms.

This is a new policy adopted by the District Youth Ministry Team: Sponsors shall be adults at least 21 years of age who have been endorsed by the pastor and/or leadership of their home congregation. The district requires congregations to obtain screening and background checks for adult sponsors and assistants. Please make sure that all of your adults have background checks on file with your church.

Thank you all for attending and we can’t wait to share this event with you. -The Jr. High Rally Team

Seventh Annual District Adult Education Webinar

On Saturday, November 12, Lutherans across Kansas will gather at various locations for the seventh annual Adult Education Live Webinar. Host congregations will be linked via the internet with the other locations in Kansas to hear Dr. Alvin Schmidt on the topic Islam and Lutheranism

The basic outline will include:
1. The historical relationship of Islam and Lutheranism
2. General tenets of Islam in comparison to Lutheranism
3. The contemporary response of Lutheran Christians to Islam
Dr. Schmidt is an emeritus professor at Illinois College and has previously taught at Concordia University, Nebraska and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. He is the author of The Great Divide: The Failure of Islam and the Triumph of the West (Regina Press, 2004).

We are currently seeking host sites for this morning event.

What is necessary to host this conference?

- High Speed internet access (Cable or DSL) in the room where the conference will take place. It may be that a cable may have to run to the room to make this possible. For best results, it should be hard-wired versus wireless.

- Some means of projection of the image from a computer to either a large screen TV or a screen. The easiest of these would be to have a projector.

- Phone line and phone available in the room (in case of technical difficulties)

Someone present on site to help you with technical issues if you do not have the necessary expertise yourself.

If your congregation is willing to host, please contact the District Office at 785-357-4441 ext. 200 or email jbradshaw@kslcms.org

Philippians Workshop

Romans 12:1, “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

Consider these two questions of generosity: How has God blessed you? What is God calling YOU to do? What might generosity look like in our lives individually and as a family of believers together? What does it look like in our congregational family? What does it look like in the greater community in which we live?

Join us for a Philippians Workshop to be held Thursday, October 13th at Messiah Lutheran in Hays, Kansas. The schedule is as follows:
3:00 p.m. Pastors arrive, opening devotion
3:15 p.m. Intro to stewardship theology and practice for Lutheran theologians
5:30 p.m. Lay Members arrive for dinner
7:00 p.m. Presentation for Lay Members on theology and practice of stewardship in the parish.
9:00 p.m. Wrap up

Who is this for? YOU! (Pastors and Lay Members)
Presenter: Rev. Nathan Meador, Assistant Coordinator LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Don't miss this great opportunity to learn more about how God can use you and your gifts in ministry for Him. There is no cost to attend, however a free will offering will be taken for the evening meal.

Register by contacting Curt Loupe at the District office at 800-357-4421 ext. 100 or at curt.loupe@lcef.org by October 6th.

Kansas District Mission Grant Applications Are Due September 30!

Dear Servants in Christ!

Attached to the link below you will find the 2017 Kansas District Mission Grant Application Form. Congregations in the Kansas District have the opportunity each year to submit Grant Applications to fund mission projects your congregation might not be able to completely fund on their own. Mission Grant requests
in the past have ranged from $900 to $30,000. If you have had an idea for ministry that you might do in your congregation “if you just had the money,” these grants provide some assistance. You provide the ideas, planning, people, and follow through.

**Grant request must be returned by Friday, September 30, 2016.** The Mission Board will review applications prior to the October 29, 2016 Board of Directors meeting. By the end of that meeting the Mission Board will have recommendations made to the entire Board of Directors. You should hear from a Board of Missions person at some point after October 29 about the Board’s recommendation. We should be able to give you a fairly strong indication as to the decision on your award. However, you need to remember that final approval of grant awards (and the entire District Budget) will occur at the Board of Directors Meeting, February 4, 2017.

You and your congregation will be in our prayers as we join you in preparing for mission and ministry in 2017. If you are not able to connect to the application link (below) and/or you prefer a paper copy, please call the District Office (800-357-4421) and make that request.

Completed grant applications can be sent to: Kansas District, 1000 SW 10th, Topeka, KS. They can be emailed to shannon@kslcms.org

The Lord be with you!
Kansas District Board of Mission


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**God Loves a Cheerful Giver**

“God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7). Have many times have you heard that? If you’re thinking to yourself “many,” then hear it once again. God is the creator and owner of all His creation. He lovingly provides us the resources He knows we will need to accomplish His purpose here on earth.

We are “cheerful” as we voluntarily give back to God a percentage of what He has first given to us. Think about it—through the gift of faith given to you in Christ crucified and Him risen, your sins are forgiven and you are a child of God—an heir of eternal life. Baptized into Christ, He fully answers the questions of “Who are you?” and “Where are you going?”

To that end, the question begs to be asked, “Will you be generous with what you have first been graciously given?” If the answer is “no,” then repent. Consider the generous God and His salvation given to you through His Son. If the answer is “yes,” then answer the question, “Where will my generous offerings go?”

We “walk together” as a Synod. Individually we give to our congregations who remit a percentage of that to the District. The Districts then remit a percentage of that to the Synod. Encouragement is in order for us to prayerfully consider increasing these percentages for general ministry funds. Yes, it is important for us to consider funding even “day to day” operations even as we consider increasing our funding for missions and missionary support. All are important in the work of God’s Kingdom!

As you receive the Word and Sacraments of Christ, you are filled with Him. God’s blessings to you as this generosity now spills over into the lives of others.
After being on sabbatical for three months, many people have been asking me what I did while away. I actually didn’t “do” what I expected to do, for at least the first month. What I learned was what I “did” on sabbatical was much less important than who I am. I am a human being, a baptized child of God, redeemed by Jesus, not by my own reason or strength, or doing, but with the Holy Spirit calling, gathering and enlightening. I am a husband, father, son, grandfather and a pastor who serves in ministries in the world not always in the parish.

How I arrived at this reminder came through an acting term I was introduced to in my reading, entr’actes. Basically entr’actes are intermissions. Everyone, actors, orchestra, conductor, tech, stage managers, and also many in the audience, need entr’actes. Sometimes these are brief pauses between two scenes or between two movements of a musical production. Often entr’actes come between two acts of a play or musical and includes a musical introduction to the second act reprising music heard in the first act.

For my purpose entr’actes was my sabbatical. After April, I was so frustrated that things weren’t getting done nor were they going as planned. I met with my accountability group, and they reminded me that my sabbatical was about being not doing. They encouraged me to rest and they helped me to understand my entr’actes was a call for rest. “There is just a lot of stuff one can’t plan for; you have to plan for stuff you can’t plan for and you can’t let the stuff you can’t plan for throw you entirely off your plan.” That is a quote from my June 2 journal posting.

I wrote this, thinking about how one can live well in the third chapter of life. I was thinking about this in terms of how I could help others. Upon reflection, the words I wrote help me understand my sabbatical process. There was a lot of stuff I didn’t plan for. The life lesson is you have to plan for stuff you can’t plan for, especially in the third chapter of life. Planning for the unexpected in no way allows one to control the unexpected. Planning is a way of being flexible when the unexpected happens. I think I was thrown, initially, by all the unplanned stuff that came at me. I have come to trust that while I hadn’t planned it, God had, and “it was enough to know that God knows” (quoted from my interview Joel Hempel, interim director of LCMS Specialized Pastoral Ministry).

As I reflected about age in the Bible, I was impressed with Genesis chapter 5. Here are listed the patriarchs from Adam to Noah. The average age of these men was 865 years old. God called many of them to service in the later years of life. God granted several of these third (fourth, fifth, sixth, etc.) chapter men children in the later years of life. It started to make 60 look like a more manageable age. The New Testament revealed just the opposite. Only 7% of men in the New Testament times lived to be over 60 years old. Jesus’ third chapter came in his 20’s and 30’s.

The point is, the Bible teaches that God calls us to service at many different ages. God doesn’t write the same four-chapter book for each of us. My third chapter may be three of ten chapters. What doesn’t change, with each chapter, is who I am. What I do and am able to do might change. My old sinful body has had some breakdowns on this Sabbatical journey.

I come out of this time of reflection more certain of the call God has given me to the Kansas District. I do believe that how I do ministry and what I do in ministry will change. I am not as young as I used to be and I see many challenges for not just myself, but many as we reach this milestone in life. Actually, I see many
challenges for all of us called by God in ministry. We are living in a time of transition. This is not new. People of God are always living in a time of transition. I am just not sure all of us are aware of that, and the change throws us. It is enough to know that God knows.

LERT Training

LERT Training Events can be found at: http://www.kslcms.org/resources/LERT%20Brochure.pdf

Eureka Tornado

On the evening of July 7, Eureka had two to three tornadoes taking turns touching down within and outside of the city limits. As of the July 11th report, 34 homes were destroyed, 24 had major damage, 40 had minor damage and 71 were affected by the storm. In total 168 homes were impacted.

At this time, we know of no LCMS members who suffered any losses from the tornado. Eureka is home to Christ Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation. The ELCA Central States Synod’s Disaster Response Team has been on the ground since July 8 assessing damage and helping town people begin recovery.

On July 13 Chaplain Rocky Mease, Carolyn Buono and her comfort dog Jasmine and Sheri Jones with her comfort dog Evie met the ELCA team and toured the damage. The comfort dog teams visited the local nursing home facility that sustained damage during the storm. It was reported that at the time of the storm two rooms were unoccupied by residents and those were the two rooms destroyed by the tornado. Residents and staff certainly found comfort in getting to pet Jasmine and Evie and to tell their stories to the human members of the team.

As is often the case in small rural towns, there is an insufficient amount of property value loss to qualify for federal disaster dollars to be received by individual home owners. We will be working with (cooperating in externals) the Central States Synod, ELCA, to provide dollars and volunteers for long term recovery. You can help by sending financial donations to the Kansas District and designate those donations for Disaster Response. If dollars raised exceed the amount needed for this disaster, excess dollars are then used for future responses and training.

We will also be needing volunteers with skills needed for making home repairs. If you wish to volunteer, please email Chaplain Rocky Mease at rmease@kslcms.org. Please indicate your building skills and when you would be available for a day trip to Eureka. Currently we are not planning to provide overnight lodging. Please also include a contact phone number so that we can get back to you by email or phone.

2017 Salary Guidelines Now Available

Kansas District LCMS Salary Guidelines have been finalized and are available now on the District website. The District Board of Directors just approved the base salary for 2017 in the amount of $32,860 to use with the guideline packet. To access the resource go to www.kslcms.org, click Publications-Resources at the top of the page, look under Business Office-District on the right side of the page and click on 2017 Salary Guidelines.

Concordia Plan Services 2017 Elections Materials

CHP Employer Election Packets were sent to all employers in late July. The deadline for returning your election form to CPS is September 2nd for 2017. If you do not return the election form in by the deadline, your 2016 option will continue to for the 2017 calendar year.

Please take time to review the contents of the mailing, get answers to your questions, and contact their team of Employer Resource Consultants and Employer Relations Specialists for more information and discussion.
They are there for you and available to make the annual enrollment process quick and easy with a solution that meets the needs of your ministry. You can reach them at 888-927-7526, ext. 6010.

**Tax & Education Loan Repayment Help Available / Rural Opportunity Zones**

The State of Kansas has established Rural Opportunity Zones (ROZ), 77 counties in Kansas that have been authorized to offer one or both of the following financial incentives to new full-time residents:

1. Kansas income tax waivers for up to five years
2. Student loan repayments up to $15,000

**Who is eligible?**
To be eligible for Kansas income tax waivers, individuals must have established residency in a ROZ county on or after the date the county became part of the program; lived outside Kansas for five or more years immediately prior to establishing residency in a ROZ county; and earned less than $10,000 in Kansas source income in each of the five years immediately prior to establishing residency in a ROZ county.

To be eligible for student loan repayments, individuals must have established residency in a ROZ county after July 1, 2011 and after the date on which the county opts-in to the student loan program; hold an associate's, bachelor's, or post-graduate degree; and have an outstanding student loan balance.

Visit KansasCommerce.com/Rural to find more information – frequently asked questions, programs guidelines and applications. Or call 785-296-5298 or email roz@kansascommerce.com.

**How can congregations help?**
New program standards now allow employers to sponsor ROZ participants. The employer sponsorships help employees reduce student loan debt by paying up to $1,500 per year, over a five year period, with matching funds from the State of Kansas. Want to find out how to sponsor a ROZ participant? Go to http://www.kansascommerce.com/DocumentCenter/View/4446 or contact Chris Harris at 785-296-6815 or charris@kansascommerce.com.

**Deadline Approaching - 2016 Education Loan Grant Applications Now Available!**

The Kansas District LCMS provides grants to rostered church workers, helping them repay college and/or seminary education loans. All rostered synodical graduates, and those who have completed the colloquy program, that are currently working in the Kansas District are eligible for the first ten years after graduation or ordination to apply for this grant.

The 2016 grant application is now available on the district website at www.kslcms.org. You can access this form under the “Quick Links” on the home page or on the “Publications/Resources” tab. You can also access the application by clicking the following link: http://www.kslcms.org/resources/2016_ED%20Loan%20Application_Form.pdf

**The application deadline is August 31, 2016** and should be sent to the attention of Tami Lierz at the District Office, 1000 SW 10th Ave, Topeka KS 66604 or by email to: tami@kslcms.org. Grants will be processed and awards announced by the end of September.

The policy of the Kansas District LCMS is for the education loan grants to be applied to educational debt rostered workers have incurred, whether in the form of federally subsidized loans, commercial loans or even credit card debt for books needed to enter ministry. The grant is awarded to help reduce total indebtedness, not to make payments in advance or to reduce the amount of currently scheduled payments. The Education Loan Repayment Committee reserves the right to determine what indebtedness is appropriate and what grants will be given but seeks to keep its definition of indebtedness as wide as possible.

**Concordia Health Plan Election Period Starts Soon**

All employers should have received the 2017 Employer Election Packet in the past several weeks. Your packet contains information on the health plan options available with the corresponding rates for 2017. The Employer Election Period begins July 8th and the deadline for election is September 2nd.
LCMS MinistryFOCUS Grants

MinistryFOCUS recognizes that individuals often assume educational loans in order to serve the Lord and, for some, such loans often distract from or even undermine their very purpose. MinistryFOCUS has established a loan repayment assistance program (LRAP) so that servants of the Lord can focus more on ministry, and less on money. Individuals who meet the following criteria are eligible for MinistryFOCUS LRAP grants:

1. Currently serve as a rostered church worker of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod;
2. Carry at least $20,000 in educational loans.

Need more information? Click on http://ministryfocus.org/fund1/ or contact Ken@MinistryFOCUS.org.

Lutheran Witness Subscription Packets

The 2016-2017 Lutheran Witness Renewal Packets have been sent to each congregation. The Kansas subscription year runs from November 1, 2016 – October 31, 2017. Lutheran Witness is the official publication of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

The cost will remain the same as last year. The “blanket” rate will be $15.25 (this rate applies when the church pays for a subscription to each home). The “individual” rate will be $17.00 (this rate applies when each individual or family pays their own subscription fee to the church). The subscription statements are sent in October, the church need only submit one check for all of its subscribers, blanket or individual.

Please follow the Lutheran Witness renewal instructions on the first page of your packet, attach that first page, the packet with address corrections and cancellations, and the addition page(s) and return to:

Kansas District LCMS
Attn: Shannon Oldham
1000 SW 10th Avenue
Topeka, Kansas, 66604

Changes can also be made via email or fax. If you would prefer one of these methods, please send emails to shannon@kslcms.org or send a fax to 785-357-5071. If sending by email, please scan the forms; include church name, church city, and the CPH 5-digit district code found on the first page of the subscriptions.

In order to guarantee timely changes with Concordia Publishing House all renewals are due in the District office NO LATER than August 31, 2016! If we do not receive changes by the August 31 due date, members may not receive all issues and your billing will reflect the current number of subscriptions listed in your renewal list. Please DO NOT send money now. Billing will be done in October and due by December 31, 2016.

We wish to express our appreciation for the support of all congregations and subscribers and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email, shannon@kslcms.org, or by phone at 1-800-357-4421 Ext. 202.

LCEF Investment and Loan Rates

LCEF Interest Rates
- Personal Investments
- Ministry Investments

LCEF Loan Rates – Personal and Ministry Loans

Lutheran Church Extension Fund – Family Emergency StewardAccount®
Expecting the unexpected makes for good planning, that’s why you might consider the LCEF Family Emergency StewardAccount. You never know when there may be a need for funds not allocated in your monthly budget. This investment builds over time with electronic funds transfer (EFT) and interest earned. But you can access the funds easily when you need them the most.

Features:
- Minimum $25 investment to open account.
- Minimum $25 monthly electronic investment required until account reaches and maintains a balance of $10,000 or more.
- Limit 12 checks per calendar year, with per-check minimum of $250.
- Initial quantity of checks FREE; check reorders competitively priced.
- Interest compounded and paid monthly.
- No monthly maintenance or membership fees.
- Free MyAccount online services, including e-statements.

Need funds for a life event?

Y.I. Club

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs to the kingdom of heaven.’” —Matthew 19:14

Check out the NEW Young Investors (Y.I.) Club Online Activity Center at yiclub.lcef.org for:
* Games and videos!
* Bible stories and devotions!
* Service project idea, crafts and recipes!

Each group—Little Lambs, Mission Builders and World Changers—has its own area on the site with age-appropriate activities. There are interactive games, coloring pages, Bible stories and devotions, videos, and, for older members, news stories and links to servant events and projects. New items will be added regularly to keep young ones engaged and entertained!

This website will reinforce Bible lessons, enhance understanding of stewardship concepts and supplement studies in math, English, history and personal finance in a fun and meaningful manner. We want each Y.I. Club member to know and understand Jesus’ love and the fact that their investment is helping others learn about Jesus as well. Explore the site and have some Y.I. Club fun! Designed to work well on mobile devices and tablets, it’s perfect for families on the go!

Join the Y.I. Club with a Y.I. StewardAccount®
With an investment of just $25 to open the Y.I. StewardAccount, your young investor becomes a Y.I. Club member with special fun activities that grow with three different age levels.

Lutheran Federal Credit Union

The Lutheran Federal Credit Union was started to serve the members, congregations and entities of the LCMS communities. To learn more, click on the link below.

https://www.lutheranfcu.org/
In the world of Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM), the sixteenth triennial Zion Conference is being offered September 15 – 18, 2016 at Our Lady of the Snows Retreat Center in Bellville, IL. If there are pastors or students in the Kansas District who are engaged in ministries of institutional chaplaincy, emergency services chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, or clinical pastoral education, this conference is of interest to you. The link will take you to additional information; lcms.org/events/zionconf2016. This conference is also open to those who are exploring one of these vocations.

The theme of the conference is Lutheran Accents in Specialized Pastoral Ministry. Information about the presenters and a description of the presentations as well as the schedule can be found at lcms.org/events/zionconf2016. Contact any of the planning committee members for more information:

Joel Hempel joel.hempel@lcms.org
Kim Wheeler wheelkim@comcast.net
Jim McDaniels revjmcdaniels@aol.com
Jeff Scheer jeffery.Scheer@LSSLiving.org
Rick Armstrong rarmstrong@lcsfl.com
Bill Wagner w3inbeloit@aol.com

Reformation Festival 2016 at Grace, Wichita

On October 30, Grace Lutheran Church, 3310 E Pawnee, Wichita is hosting the joint-circuit Reformation Festival of circuits 10 and 11. All are invited to join the festivities! We first gather around our Lord’s gifts given to us in the Divine Service. Our guest preacher will be the Rev. Dr. James Bushur, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology and Director of Deaconess Formation at Concordia Theological Seminary—Fort Wayne. A circuit-wide choir will lead the Church’s song. After the service we’ll gather for a dinner of brisket and brats.

Banquet tickets are $15/meal or $25/couple, children 10 and under eat free. Plan to pay at the door. The offering from the service will support the Joint-Seminary Fund and the Lutheran Student Center in Wichita. We rejoice at the opportunity to gather Lutherans from around Kansas to celebrate our Lord’s faithfulness to us from generation to generation. Hope to see you in October!

4:00pm – Divine Service
5:30pm – Dinner
6:15pm – Lecture: Rev. Dr. James Bushur
7:30pm – Closing Prayer

RSVP to the church secretary by Thursday, October 27 (graceoffice@glc.kscoxmail.com). Any clergy wishing to participate are encouraged to do so by contacting Pastor Geoff Boyle, (pastor.boyle@gmail.com).

Professor Bushur joined the faculty at Concordia Theological Seminary—Fort Wayne in the fall of 2006 and serves as the Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, as well as their Director of Deaconess Studies. Before teaching at the seminary, He served as pastor for 14 years: first at Trinity Lutheran Church, Goodland, Indiana (1994-1999) and then at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Decatur, Indiana (1999-2006). He received a Master’s degree of Sacred Theology from the Fort Wayne seminary (1998) and has recently completed his Ph.D. through the University of Durham, in northern England. Dr. Bushur specializes in patristics and is a member of the North American Patristics Society.

sola gratia, sola fide, sola scriptura, solus Christus!

LeadaChild/CCCS Executive Director Retiring January 2017

David Saving, the Executive Director of LeadaChild/CCCS, has announced that he will retire from this position, effective January, 2017. Saving, who has served in this position for nine years, will continue to serve “as long as needed or until the board has found the next person to fill the Executive Director position.”
Founded in 1968, the mission of **LeadaChild/CCCS** is to “share the love of Jesus to children around the world through Christian Education.” A Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), LeadaChild/CCCS is a grant/funding ministry that supports over 26,000 students through scholarships in 29 countries in over 270 program sites.

Inquiries about this position, should be directed to Beth Eubanks at: [office@leadachild.org](mailto:office@leadachild.org).

### RSTM: Overcoming Distractions

For the latest LCMS Rural and Small Town August eNews, follow this link: [http://kansasdistrictmissions.yolasite.com/resources/0816%20RSTM-web.pdf](http://kansasdistrictmissions.yolasite.com/resources/0816%20RSTM-web.pdf)