

The VOICE

December 2019



Missouri District

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

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From the President's Desk:

2020 Vision



Be prepared! The turning of the calendar from 2019 to 2020 will bring with it an endless amount of references to 20/20 vision. From presidential candidates to fitness coaches, many will capitalize on the year by offering to fill what has been lacking in your lives. They propose an alternate vision for what is possible for your life and future when you heed their counsel or give them your vote. The not-so-subtle implication will be that your vision has been less than 20/20 and they can make it all better.

As we look back upon the past, there have certainly been many things that were lacking our lives. Such problems are not the result of the failures of politicians or organizations, but have come as a result of sin. Our homes, our towns, our country, even our world have all been marred by the devastating effects of lives where we have cast our eyes inward. We have sought to serve our own appetites and our own desires, which means that we are incredibly near-sighted. We can't see beyond ourselves and no corrective vision procedure will change that.

The writer to the Hebrews describes how the Christian is enabled to run with perseverance the race that has been marked out for us. Christians run this race with our eyes fixed on Jesus. He is both the means by which we run and the prize waiting for us at the end of the race. John Kleinig describes our running in his commentary on Hebrews, "They gain the capacity to endure in the race of faith by keeping their eyes fixed on Jesus rather than on their fellow athletes as models of endurance. Since he is the one and only champion, the list of faithful people in 11:4-12:2 culminates with him as 'the author and finisher of our faith,' the forerunner who has completed the race."

Therefore, our vision for 2020 is the same as it was in 2019 or 1847 or 1517, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. For the people of God, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus is not an excuse for apathy and indifference, but a source of courage and boldness. We face the results of our sin with the assurance that our sins are forgiven for the sake of Christ. We are active in our communities, not motivated by a fear of the future, but a confidence that our future is in God's hands. As the world attacks those who bear the name of Christ, we endure all things by keeping our eyes solely on Jesus. Jesus Christ is our vision.

While Stephen occupies just a few verses of the Scriptures, he is a testimony of how the Christian lives and dies. When the Jews heard Stephen confront them with their sin, they began to stone him. In Acts 7: 56-60, he dies with his eyes cast keenly on Jesus. Then, into Jesus' hands, He commits his spirit.

Dear friends in Christ, we are blessed to face this life with our eyes focused on Jesus and revealed to us in His Word. May God bless you, your family and your congregation that you may begin this new year and face each new day with a clear vision of eyes fixed on Jesus. A blessed new year to you all!

Fraternally in Christ,



President Lee Hagan

PRESIDENT'S PRAYER LIST:

Pray that the Word of Christ would deeply richly in each of us.

Pray that our congregations, schools and servants would be faithful to the Word of Christ in all they do.

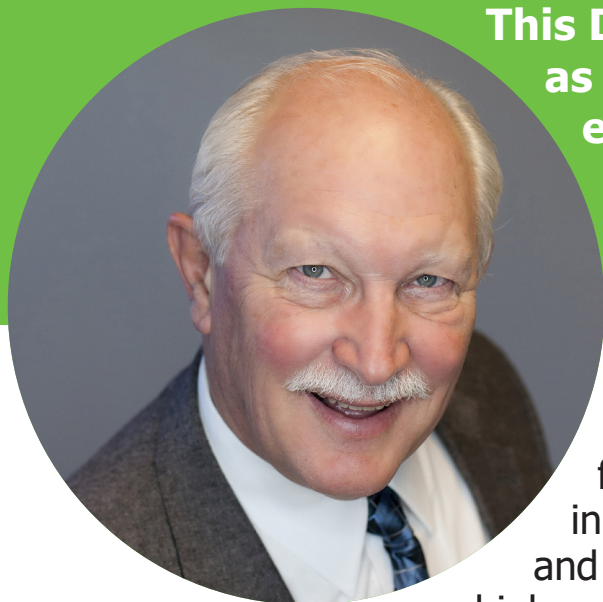
Pray that we would be faithful witnesses to Christ in our daily lives.



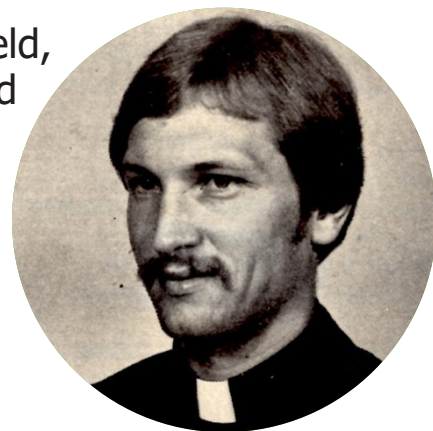
Profile Study: Rev. Gene Wyssman

Asst. to the President: Church Worker & Congregational Health

This December the Missouri District said goodbye as one of its most dear and longstanding employees, the Rev. Gene Wyssmann, retired. Rev. Wyssmann started working for the Missouri District back in 2001 and has been helping and counseling people ever since.



Born the son of a pastor in Marshfield, MO Rev. Wyssmann graduated from- what is now- Missouri State in 1973 with an English major and a German minor, married his high school sweetheart, attended the Springfield and Fort Wayne Seminaries, and graduated with his Master's of Divinity in 1978.



As you might expect of a pastor, Rev. Wyssmann has lived in a variety of places. He and his wife lived just outside of Washington D.C. at St. Paul's in Falls Church, Virginia while Rev. Wyssmann completed his vicarage. His first call out of seminary was to Trinity Lutheran in Pinckney, Michigan. Eventually, he came back to Missouri taking calls in Crystal City and then Springfield.

It was during his time in Springfield that Rev. Wyssmann became the Regional Director of

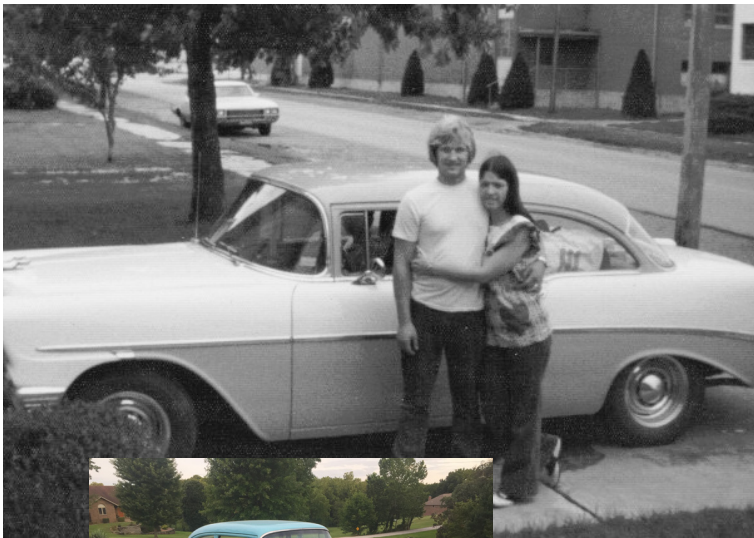
Lutheran Family and Children Services. Over the next few years, he continued to increase his counseling services.





In 2001, Rev. Wyssmann accepted the call from the Missouri District to serve in Campus Missionary. In 2003 he received his Master of Social Work from Missouri State and would continue to counsel, serving in *Family, Life, & Youth Ministry with Congregational Health; Congregational Reconciliation;* and eventually landing in his most recent role as *Church Worker and Congregational Health.*

With retirement, Rev. Wyssmann plans to take some long-deserved travel time to visit his children and grandchildren. Also, at some point he and wife would love to visit Cardinal's Spring Training in Jupiter, Florida. Rev. Wyssmann and his wife often travel around in the same car they drove as high school sweethearts, a 1956 baby blue Chevy, which Rev. Wyssmann says he happily dedicates much time to restoring and tinkering.



"I find such great joy working with God's people. I have also had great joy with working with the Missouri District staff throughout the years. The current staff are just wonderful, they have a lot of gifts for ministry. I am very confident that the Lord would use them in a powerful way going forward!"

- Rev. Gene Wyssmann

**We shall miss you
dearly, Gene!
God's blessings on
your retirement!**



E²: Equip & Encourage

Encourage | Equip | Connect

Use your time more effectively in reaching your neighbors, serving your congregation, and helping your community.

E² conferences help you accomplish this.

There are four conferences coming up. These are totally free, and are a few hours on a Saturday morning.

Jan 25, 2020
St. John's, Arnold

Feb 29, 2020
Saxon Lutheran HS, Jackson

Feb 15, 2020
Calvary HS, Jefferson City

March 7, 2020
Faith, Springfield

Read more about this amazing opportunity on our website:
<https://mo.lcms.org/upcoming-events/>

Or you can simply register by going here:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/E2Conference

Kaleidoscope Fund Grants LCEF

The LCEF, Lutheran Church Extension Fund, serves to offer funding and resources in support of the church. One of the many ways they accomplish this is through the Kaleidoscope Fund Grant. For the year 2019 the LCEF invited LCMS K-8 elementary schools throughout the United States to apply for matching grants for school projects. Throughout the country 26 schools were chosen as grant recipients, including 2 within our own Missouri District. Read more about St. Paul's Lutheran School in Concordia and St. Paul's Lutheran School in Des Peres.

St. Paul's Concordia

School: Located an hour east of Kansas City, St. Paul's Lutheran School started in 1858 and continues to grow to today with around 200 students and 13 faculty members.

Project: A SPLS Technology library. There will be new pieces of technology: R-sets coding, 3D printers, greenscreens, a podcast video creation center, and a SAM lab with coding equipment.

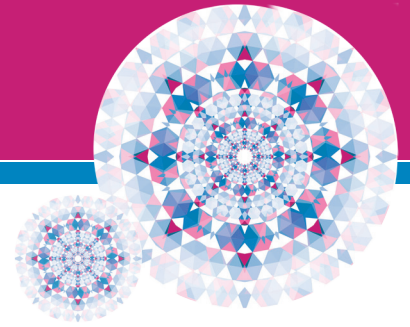
Next Steps: Over the next 6 months to 1 year: readying the space, purchasing equipment, integrating the education into the teacher's curriculum, and evaluating improvement.

A Word from Principal Nathanael Poppe: "Having the Kaleidoscope Fund Grant allowed St. Paul's to do much more with our new Technology Library. LCEF was a great resource and made the process smooth. It is my hope that teachers can use this in the classrooms for enhanced learning and to be a witness to others outside our community- to be able to use this as a communication tool to continue to be a witness of God's love."



"We give thanks for LCEF and their constant support of school ministries." - Al Freeman Asst. to the President: Schools

St. Paul's Des Peres



School: Within the greater St. Louis area, St. Paul's Des Peres was established in 1849 and today is part of the National Lutheran School Assoc with around 170 students.

Project: St. Paul DP is building a state-of-the-art 3 story facility which includes new tech enabled classrooms. The Kaleidoscope Fund Grant is specifically for the new STEM lab, which includes equipment, furniture, and curriculum.

Next Steps: During 2020 the structure will be completed enough for SPDP to start moving into it. From there equipment will be ordered and curriculum adjustments in science and STEM will be made.

A Word from Principal Janet Profilet: "The Kaleidoscope Fund Grant was a collaborative effort. Moving into our new space will be exciting for our students, teachers, staff, and families. God has blessed us with this incredible gift. We plan to use it wisely for the enhanced program for our students."



"Through our over 61,000 investors the Lord continues to richly bless LCEF with resources to help grow the Kingdom. The Kaleidoscope Fund is one of the exciting ways we steward and utilize those resources to assist and challenge ministries to think outside of the box and find new ways to impact the communities they serve with the ultimate goal of strengthening the saved and reaching the lost with the good news of the Gospel!"

- Casey Carlson, Asst. to the President: LCEF

Reading, Writing, and... Yoga Chairs



Down in Southwest Missouri is a small church that exemplifies a Gospel presence in their community. Grace Lutheran Church in Aurora is 85 members strong and served by Pastor Ken Lampe. Officially he may be retired, but this church is going full-speed ahead in the Kingdom of God.

Aurora is a mid-sized town in changing times. "There are good people in this community, but so many are struggling," Lampe shares. "We don't have a major industry; a lot of people feel stuck; they have difficulty supporting their families."

Grace Lutheran has been focused on outreach for years. The Missouri District's Plus One process was a great fit for them to evaluate and consider an effective next step. Working with their coach, Pastor Paul Peckman, Grace discovered the intersection of their gifts and the needs of Robinson Elementary School. Robinson has 14 classrooms serving about 300 students in the third and fourth grades. "That was the direction that the Lord was leading us," Lampe recalls, "we had teachers that taught at the school. Through the process Grace listened to teacher needs and developed relationships. We learned that there just weren't enough resources to support the teachers."

How could a small congregation make a difference? Grace's Plus One planning team became like a coach to the whole congregation. They started asking questions of the whole congregation. "What do we have to give?" "What could we do working together?" God provided answers in abundance! Some members built relationships with local businesses and generated partner support. Others donated supplies and funds. They all prayed for the teachers and the children. They served meals to teachers on parent-teacher conference evenings.



Through a Plus One grant the church took their next step. They made a commitment to purchase a Scholastic Book for every child, to provide magnetic dry erase notebooks for every teacher, and yoga chairs for every classroom. Some of the first yoga chairs arrived in November and they are already helping teachers work with children who have behavioral and learning difficulties.

The Plus One process built a relationship with teachers as one new step for the congregation. Today, Grace Lutheran is a trusted partner with Robison Elementary. The relationship continues to grow. Recently, the administration opened discussions with Grace on volunteer engagement with students. They hope to begin as early as next month. With an average worship attendance around 40, Grace Lutheran is multiplying their ministry by a factor of 8 (or more) with this one new step.

Reflecting on the future, Lampe brings a Gideon like Spirit to his small volunteer army. "Grace will continue to look for ways to connect with the community. Our biggest challenge is engaging younger families. We've taken a step. The Lord will provide results. We're there to serve the community – not just the congregation."

When asked what he would say to a congregation considering the Plus One process, Lampe counsels, "Find three or four people who have a heart for outreach and connect them with one of our District coaches. Give them the opportunity to find a need in their community that can make a difference. Trust God to provide the results. You may end up in a different direction that you thought you would, but that's okay." To learn more about Plus One or connect with coach contact Bill Geis (bill.geis@mo.lcms.org) or online at <http://mo.lcms.org/plus-one>.



The Missouri District LCMS
LUTHERAN JUNIOR HIGH RETREAT
Camp Windermere, Lake of the Ozarks

LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM
TABLE OF DUTIES
CHRISTIAN VOCATION

SARAH SALZBERG
Orange, California



BREAD OF STONE
Sioux City, Iowa



October 25-27, 2019
March 27-29, 2020

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Lutheran Youth Fellowship

It is that time of the year again – the time when we ask adult leaders across our District to nominate young people to our Missouri District LYF Team. This is a team of high school youth who work alongside adults in the District to host our District Junior High Retreats, participate in Peer Ministry Training, and help at our Senior High District Gatherings. They also volunteer at our District area at the LCMS National Youth Gatherings.

First and foremost, we are seeking young people who love the Lord and who have a heart for connecting their friends and peers with Him. Of course, we are also seeking youth who show leadership ability.

The young people who are nominated should currently be in their freshman year of high school. They should be members in good standing of an LCMS congregation. If chosen, they will serve for three years on the team. Please carefully consider if you have a young person in your midst who fits what we described above and ask if they are interested in serving our District in this way.

Nomination forms are due April 1, 2020 are found online at:
<https://mo.lcms.org/lutheran-youth-fellowship/>

One portion of the form is for nominator to complete and the other portion is for the nominee to complete. The nominee must also submit three letters of recommendation. Forms, information, and recommendation letters may be mailed or emailed to:

Sue Stiegemeyer
stiegemeyer@stpauljackson.com
223 West Adams, Jackson, MO 63755
573-243-2236



Thank You!

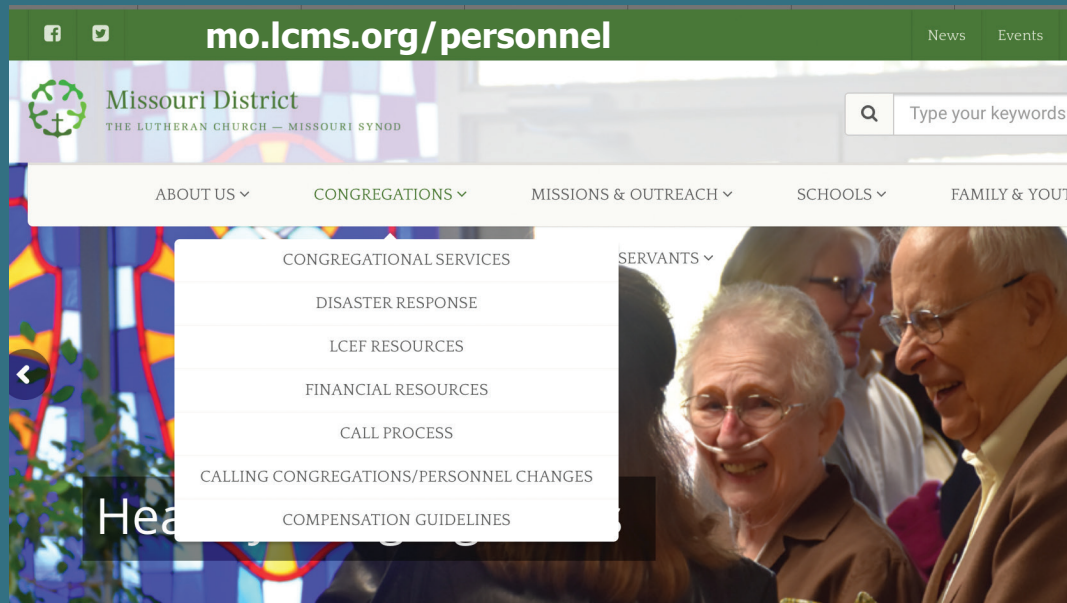
To the many congregations and individuals that financially supported the Missouri District this year, please accept our sincerest thanks for your generosity. God has truly blessed us with committed partners in ministry! From church planting to military outreach, encouragement for Lutheran schools to disaster relief efforts, church worker care to ethnic ministry... you've been a source of encouragement all along the way. Thank you!

We look forward to where God will lead us in 2020—and are excited to be making the journey with you!

Calling Congregations and Personnel Changes Now Available Online!

Did you know that you can now view Missouri District roster changes for ordained and commissioned ministers of religion online? The Calling Congregations and Personnel Changes lists can be found at

mo.lcms.org/personnel/



Missouri District

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