



The VOICE

October 2020

Missouri District Newsletter

In This Issue:
Serving the Lord
in our Vocations

Liturgical Art by LCMS artist Kelly Schumacher

From the President's Desk:

Varieties of Service

One of the many great parts about being a pastor for me has been seeing all of the quiet, behind-the-scenes ways that laypeople serve the Lord in their congregation without any awards or fanfare. From teaching children to trimming bushes, our congregations are made up of servants of Christ, who respond to God's rich mercy and grace with the gifts that they have been given. In describing the body of Christ, St. Paul writes, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone ." This issue of The VOICE highlights the many and various ways that the saints of God serve in their congregations and communities.

Martin Luther's doctrine of vocation emphasizes the Scriptural teaching that every Christian is called by God to a life of service. Some may be called to lives of service as pastors or teachers, while others serve their neighbors as accountants or police officers. However, each is a form of service that we offer in Christ's name. This key teaching of Lutheran doctrine gives purpose to the daily work that each Christian undertakes. In his "Freedom of a Christian," Luther writes, "A Christian is an utterly free man, lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is an utterly dutiful man, servant of all, subject to all."

We are, therefore, free to serve the Lord with gifts of music and art or by picking up trash around the church grounds. All forms of service are considered acceptable sacrifices to God on account of Jesus—the one, perfect sacrifice. For our service to Christ and His Church is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

While we need young people to consider church work vocations, it is my prayer that all of our congregation members would understand their vocation as priests of God who offer themselves and their service as spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. The Scriptures and Lutheran theology help us to see that we do not have to attend a Lutheran college or seminary to serve God. The Table of Duties in the Small Catechism provides a great paradigm for lives of faithful service at work, but also in our homes, communities, and congregations.

How is God using you to serve others and be His chosen instrument of blessing? If you're not sure how to answer that question, please ask your pastor for help. There are so many different ways that we can serve with the gifts that God has given us. As St. Paul writes, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:17) Jesus Christ has set you free to serve! May our heavenly Father use you to be a blessing to many with the gifts that He has given to you! God's blessings in your service!

Fraternally in Christ,

R. Lee Hagan

President Lee Hagan





“Serving the Lord” with Our Gifts: How is the Missouri District Funded?

The work of the Missouri District has always been and will always be a group undertaking—funded by the generosity of others. Financial support for our work comes from our congregations, foundations, and individuals. Our sincerest thanks to those who so faithfully walk with us in this calling in God’s Kingdom.

As is our custom, twenty percent of the unrestricted gifts we receive are shared with Synod for international mission work and disaster relief, as well as the functions of our church body’s headquarters. Offering this double tithe is our joy as good stewards of what God has entrusted to us.

The remaining gifts are used here in Missouri—at specific mission sites, for the strengthening of Lutheran schools, and providing for the health and well-being of our church workers. These endeavors are of utmost importance to us, and we thank God for blessing this state with so many partners in ministry.

Investors are given regular updates on their investments, and this is also the case with the Missouri District. In addition to this newsletter, social media, and District website, look for the 2020 Missouri District Annual Report to be released in the coming weeks. It’s a snapshot of where we’ve been...and where God is leading us at this time. If you would like a member of the District staff or one of our board members to answer any additional questions, please contact Leah Sieveking.



Leah Sieveking

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DISASTER RESPONSE ACROSS MISSOURI

This issue of the VOICE is all about “Serving the Lord in our Vocations”, but Christian vocation is more than a career that provides a living, it is a lifetime of service to God and to your neighbor. A great opportunity for vocational service is becoming LERT trained and joining the Missouri District Response Team. Tornadoes, floods, and other disasters—sadly—can occur at anytime. Helping our neighbor applies beyond the border of Missouri too. With the big derecho wind storm that greatly affected parts of Iowa and a bad hurricane season impacting many areas in the Southeast, the need for disaster response is very high right now. But did you know that before helping with a disaster in an official LCMS capacity, you need to be LERT trained?



Kent Kunkel serves as the Director of Development at Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, and is also a LERT Disaster Response leader in the Missouri District. Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) is a training process provided by the National Office of the LCMS to help certify volunteers in disaster response. The training is about eight hours, open to people over the age of 18, and covers the “do’s and don’t” of disaster response as well as spiritual care training. There is also a component to become chainsaw user certified. LERT certification is good for life and people can volunteer at a level of their choosing. Once becoming trained, you can connect with a Disaster Response team in your area.

Kunkel describes how Disaster Response works with the District, “LERT is self-supported. We don’t want to drain resources on people already in the disaster... If there is a disaster, the local church [in the disaster area] will contact with a disaster response coordinator. We meet with them, and they decide what the response is going to look like.” While churches aren’t responsible for providing anything for LERT teams, Kunkel says that often they are so thankful for the assistance they help to arrange housing, food, drinks, and other support for the travelling LERT teams.

When helping the assigned households remove damage, LERT teams are frequently approached by neighbors. Kunkel explains, “We have the safety gear on (helmet, chaps, glasses), we take our time and do it right, it gives [homeowners] peace of mind. One homeowner said ‘I couldn’t think there was so much to do. Then you came and took care of this one big thing, and I was able to relax enough to work through other things.’” Kunkel continues, “Everytime I go, my intention is to help others, and they always end up helping me.”

If you would like to learn more about LERT training or current opportunities to serve in disaster response right now, contact Rev. Marty Hasz, PLPC, Disaster Response Co-Coordinator 573-979-2791 | marty.hasz@mo.lcms.org

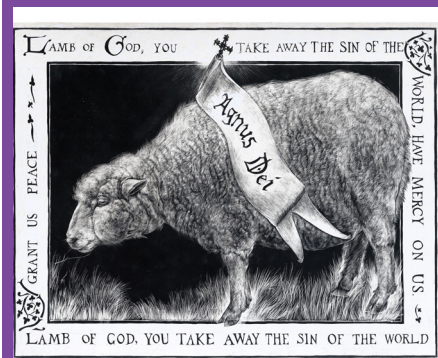
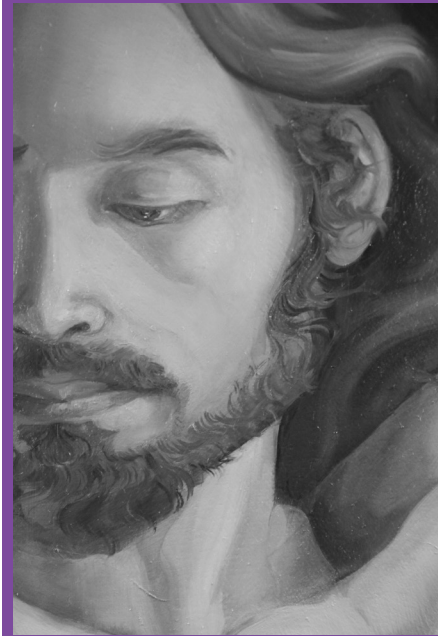
LITURGICAL ART

by Kelly Schumacher

Artist Kelly Schumacher has found a unique way to serve the Lord, by using her talents to make liturgical art. Schumacher explains that there is a variety of religious art styles. Historical Biblical images depict an event that took place in the Bible, like Moses parting the Red Sea. Devotional images occur when the humanity of the scene is emphasized, often the subject will be gazing at the viewer. Liturgical images show heavenly and cosmic elements revealing the invisible church.

While liturgical art can take on different interpretations within Christian denominations, Schumacher focuses on using her art within the grace-minded setting of Lutheran theology. She explains her focus on liturgical art is, "anytime that the art can affirm the liturgy and the means of grace, such as the agnus dei, the historical narrative, the forgiveness of sins, the creed, the six chief parts of the catechism, etc."

Hailing from the St. Louis area, Schumacher has always had an interest in art, something she has carried from youth into adulthood receiving a Master of Fine Arts from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. In 2013, she started Agnus Dei Liturgical Arts. "When I was in graduate school, there was so much bad art—and not poorly done—just unchristian," explains Schumacher, "...I spent my master's degree to see how my faith could be manifested in art. How can we take our historical doctrine, music tradition, and our liturgy and make art... and art that didn't have to be abstract. I wanted to show how concrete and tangible our doctrine was, because it's based in historical narrative."



If you would like to learn more about Kelly Schumacher, visit agnusdeiarts.com or follow her vlog and social media for art and fun facebook.com/agnusdeiarts/

3 GENERATIONS OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION

Our “Serving the Lord” theme continues with a family who has given multiple generations of service to Lutheran education. Sharon Sherrill teaches first grade at St. Paul Lutheran School in Farmington, her granddaughter attends the same school, and her son is principal at St. Paul Lutheran High School in Farmington. Mrs. Sherrill has taught at St. Paul since 1971. But, at first, service though teaching was not something that seemed like it was going to last for 50 years.



Sharon Sherrill was raised in Emma, Missouri. Her parents didn't complete many years of education themselves, but instilled the importance of education to their six children. Their push for education worked, as Sherrill attended Holy Cross Lutheran grade school, Sweet Springs High School, and Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska.

When she began teaching first and second grade at St. Paul in 1971, Sherrill wasn't sure if it was going to last long. “At first, I was lonely and uncertain if this was the right position,” Sherrill explains, “My dad encouraged me to stay for more than one year—well, I did.” Fifty years later, Sherrill recognizes that it was her love of sports and coaching that initially helped her engage with her position. Being raised around athletic brothers, Sherrill had a competitive spirit, “I often had to convince people that I was the younger sister of the ‘Oetting brothers.’” Using her talents in softball and volleyball, she coached for over 25 years at the grade school level.

When asked how teaching has changed over the years, Sherrill replies, “Some teaching tools such as ditto machines, blackboards and chalk have been updated to whiteboards and chrome books, but teaching God's Word and showing love to each child has not changed.” She notes that while the curriculum can revolve and change, “the basic ways of reaching each student and helping individuals have success is still my intent.”

Teaching during COVID-19 is an interesting experience for all teachers, staff, and parents. Sherrill notes that St. Paul, like many schools, has installed new rules for everyone's protection and has had to alter some experiences such as group activities and hands-on teaching methods. But despite these hurdles, Sherrill is thankful to be back in the classroom, “Praying and singing as we worship each day draws the class together. We will survive this time because God is our leader, our strength.”

When asked if Sherrill had any words of wisdom for those looking at choosing a vocation, she remembered her father's advice, “do whatever [you] do to the best of [your] ability, and give God the glory for any success.”

THE PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCE 2020



Every three years, the Missouri District hosts the Professional Church Workers' Conference. Normally the conference invites pastors, educators, and other church workers to a central location in Missouri where participants gather together for fellowship and professional development. But in 2020, it was not possible to have the conference under these circumstances.

However, with the help of technology, the Missouri District was able to adapt and host the conference virtually. The two day conference on October 21-22, 2020 had a higher number of registrants than previous years. And those registered are able to access presentations for a limited time after the conference.

"I think it's great that we were still able to provide meaningful resources to Professional Church Workers in the Missouri District, even though we're not able to be together in person this fall. It's exciting to see over 600 registrants— many of whom may not be able to attend normally due to cost or travel— get an opportunity to participate."

SUE THOMPSON
MISSOURI DISTRICT: MINISTRY EVENTS SPECIALIST

Pictured left: President Hagan; Al Freeman & Bill Cochran; Marty Hasz
Pictured below are participants from the 7 a.m. exercise & fellowship.



UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE MISSOURI DISTRICT OFFICE

"MEET THE MISSIONARIES"

A Missouri District Virtual Series

Our series continues with events in October and November. If you missed learning about church planting in Ozark, you can watch the event at mo.lcms/missionaries.



OCT 27
7PM CST
ETHIOPIAN OUTREACH
IN PLATTE WOODS

NOV 24
7PM CST
CHINESE OUTREACH
IN OLIVETTE



LUTHERAN YOUTH MEGA GATHERING

SPRING
2021

JR HIGH / SR HIGH

APRIL 9-11, 2021

CAMP WINDEMERE, LAKE OF THE OZARKS



Missouri District

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD