

The VOICE

October 2019



Missouri District

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

In this Issue:

- From the President's Desk: God's Word Is Worth the Risks ,p. 2
- Mission Advancement Snapshot, p. 3
- Missouri District Leads Volunteers of 2019 LEA Convocation, p. 4
- Christ Lutheran Church in Kansas City Partners with Oromo Congregation of Ethiopian Immigrants, p. 6
- Junior and Senior High District Youth Gatherings Help Teens with Faith Formation and Christian Friendships, p. 7
- Missouri District Supports New Teachers with Annual Retreat and Fellowship, p. 9

Kids process in to the opening worship service of the LEA Convocation





From the President's Desk: God's Word Is Worth the Risk

The early church father Jerome was commissioned in 382 to complete a definitive translation of the Old and New Testament into Latin, the language of the world at that time. Jerome declared that "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ." But with Latin literacy in decline as Rome's influence abated, the Bible became inaccessible to everyday people. It would be a thousand years before John Wycliffe and Jan Hus would translate the Scriptures into their native tongues of English and Czech, for which both men would be named heretics, Hus burning for it.

Some two hundred years later Martin Luther and William Tyndale, friends and partners in the Reformation, would translate the Bible into German and English. Both men would be branded heretics and Tyndale, like Hus before him was burned at the stake. All over a book.

But to them, it wasn't just A book. It was THE book. It was the book of life. It was the truth. It was the book about Christ. And the truth is that the same kind of opposition exists today. Distribution of Bibles is a punishable offense throughout the Muslim world. While the Christian church is growing exponentially in China, evangelization is still very guarded, and the passing on of Bible is still punished. All for a book. That's right – there are still places where God's Word is a risk.

Dear friends in Christ, God's Word is still a risk. Every day we have the opportunity to encounter Christ present in His Word. We don't risk imprisonment. But we risk all sorts of other things. The devil, the world and our sinful flesh all convince that there are other things that are more important than God's Word. There is a risk that we allow things to become more important than God's Word. Sports practiced, played and watched can easily come before God's Word. Trips to the lake or trips to the city often trump time in God's Word. Spending time with friends (no matter what your age) maybe seems more important than spending time in God's Word. God's Word is a risk.

PRESIDENT'S PRAYER LIST:

- We give thanks to God for faithful pastors who proclaim God's Word and administer His Means of Grace.
- Please join me in praying for young people to consider church work vocations.
- Also, give thanks to God for the treasure that is God's Word and the opportunities we have to gather around God's Word at home and church.



Mission Advancement Snapshot

Thanks for encouraging others to boldly share the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Due to the generosity of donors and congregations, new outreach ideas are being funded

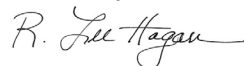
through Plus One grants. Check out our website and Facebook page for some of these great stories.

What will your friends think if you begin to study the Bible? What if I get embarrassed because I don't know something? Or worst of all, what if God's Word actually starts to change something in my life? That's a risk.

God's Word is still a risk for us today. Operating a Christian day school, a child development center, ministry among teenagers. These things all come at a risk. They're not profitable. They're not cost effective. They're not good for the bottom line. How can we risk such things in our world today? We all live in a world of escalating liability and risk management. Apparently we don't take risks, we manage them. But Christians are called to hold the Word of God sacred, even if that comes at a risk because the Scriptures make us wise unto salvation. Paul's point to Timothy is that the most important aspect of the ministry of a Pastor, the most vital part of the life of a Christian congregation, or a Christian family is connecting people with God's Word no matter what the risk.

Jerome had it right; ignorance of the Scripture is ignorance of Christ. But being a student of the Scripture is a life-long encounter with the risen Christ, His grace, His mercy, His forgiveness, His love. In a world of violence and bloodshed, of hatred and prejudice, sexual immorality and contempt for life in all its stages, the church exists to proclaim the Word, and to bring Christ to the nations through that Word. Nothing is more important in any age that preaching and teaching God's Word in congregations, schools and homes. The reason we risk operating Lutheran schools is because of the Word. The reason we risk the things we do is so that word may be proclaimed and taught and that through the word young and old alike would be made unto salvation through faith in Christ. The reason for the Word is that people know Christ and that by knowing Christ they would have eternal life.

Fraternally in Christ,



President Lee Hagan



Pastors' Wives Retreat

Nov. 2
King of Kings
Chesterfield MO

Nov. 9
Timothy
Lutheran
Blue Springs MO

Join us for a time of:

- Fellowship with Other Ministry Wives
- Light Breakfast and Lunch
- Fun Activities
- Bible Study and Prayer
- Service Opportunity

Babysitting will be provided upon request.

The cost to register is \$20. Please contact Kathy Chinberg at dwchinberg@sbcglobal.net for more detailed instructions.

Missouri District Leads Volunteers at LEA Convocation

For the first time in more than 30 years, the Lutheran Education Association (LEA) has selected the city of St. Louis to host its 2019 Convocation. With the theme, Opening Eyes, Minds, & Hearts, this convocation brought together 2700 number of Lutheran educators from all over the country, as well as from Korea, Shanghai and Germany. The Convocation was held on Oct. 10 to 12, 2019 at the Americas Center in downtown St. Louis.

LEA is a leading organization for Lutheran educators, and this year's convocation included speakers, a game room, professional development and more. Mr. Alan Freeman, the Assistant to the President for Schools

at the Missouri District, spear-headed the managing of 189 convocation volunteers, with assistance from Sue Thompson, the district Event Coordinator. The volunteers worked more than 700 hours to make the convocation a success.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Jeff Myers, President of Summit Ministries and Sally Lloyd-Janes, an author of children's books. A wide array of sectionals included topics such as biblical principles for digital citizenship, avoiding burnout, technology for classrooms of all ages, career planning for educators, sectionals about teaching specific subjects and much more.

In addition to the conference speakers and sectionals, the convocation included opening and closing worship services, complete with a parade of singing school children, a performance of the Lutheran North High School choir, as well as dinners and receptions. The exhibit hall included booths from organizations from VBS curriculum providers, Chinese learning courses, digitization services, book shops and even woodworking.

A game room and a STEM playground, complete with virtual reality headsets flanked the hall. Several little ones attending with their families enjoyed playing tic tac toe, volleyball, Jenga, and other games, which the STEM playground gave people the opportunity to experiment with 3-D printers and building challenges. Tables displayed toys designed to teach coding logic and other technical skills.

In keeping with the theme of Opening Eyes, Minds, & Hearts, an illusionist performed during one of the banquets.



Christ Lutheran Church in Platte Woods Partners with Oromo Congregation of Ethiopian Immigrants

Three or four years ago, Rev. Brandon Froiland of Christ Lutheran Church in Platte City received a request to share their church building with a group of recent immigrants from Ethiopia. These individuals, members of the Oromo tribe, came to the United States as refugees, fleeing persecution. They were specifically interested in becoming Lutheran and felt uneasy with their current space, which was through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). They wanted a partnership with an LCMS congregation, with whom they felt more aligned doctrinally.



Technically a separate congregation, the Oromo Evangelical Christian Church of Kansas City (OECCKC) meets in the larger gymnasium of Christ Lutheran Church's building. Additionally, the children of both congregations often attend weekday and Sunday School together. The two congregations have held a few joint worship services together, giving each group a chance to learn about each other's worship style.

At first, the congregation included approximately 40 people and had to settle for the leadership of any available pastor whenever they could borrow one from somewhere else. They did not have the luxury of having a baptism or wedding performed whenever they wanted. Christ Lutheran Church often had elders take care of as much as possible, but it became clear that this group needed their own pastor.

Rev. Froiland and Christ Lutheran Church worked with an immigration attorney out of Cleveland (they could not find a local attorney to take the case with the correct expertise), and once a suitable pastor was identified in Ethiopia, it took months and massive amounts of paperwork and processing. The Missouri District was heavily involved with the documentation, as the Oromo group had to prove their church was legitimate in order to obtain a visa.



At one point, Rev. Froiland inquired if any of the current members of OECCKC felt called to start formal theological training to get the group a pastor. None of them did, and ultimately, Pastor Abdi was finally allowed to migrate to the United States, followed by his family. The process was not without challenges. It was very stressful for the Oromo worshippers when the government in Ethiopia would introduce red tape and bureaucratic road blocks to allowing Pastor Abdi to leave the country, and eventually, the state senator had to intervene with the Ethiopian embassy.

Once they had a pastor in place, there was relief and more stability. To be able to hear preaching in their own language was an enormous quality of life improvement, as everyone in the group is at different stages in the journey learning English. Now they can get married with their own pastor officiating, hear preaching in their native language, baptize their babies and partake in Holy Communion regularly. The next step is to grow to a point where they can support a pastor in a traditional full-time position, and someday acquire their own space. Both of those steps are in the future. However, when you consider all that happened to get everyone here in the Kansas City area together, it's easy to feel optimistic. Afterall, the OECCKC has more than doubled in size, now averaging between 90 and 100 worshipping each week.

In a recent assessment, Christ Lutheran Church asked members to share some feedback on the joys and challenges of having the ministry of sharing their space with the Oromo people. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. People felt inspired by the unique mission work, felt like they could see how God was working across borders and felt good about serving their brothers and sisters in Christ. They acknowledged that it can be challenging at times to share a space with such a large group, and they were sometimes surprised by the different styles of parenting across cultures, but they seemed to feel like the good far outweighed the bad.

Rev. Froiland says watching this worship community flourish under his congregation's roof has been a joy. He says, "To see the appreciation they have and the thankfulness for everything God has done for them. It's been really humbling for me to see that. Certainly we have different life experience, me growing up here and these folks growing up in really difficult situations in the third world. But we can come together around these common things: the preaching of the Gospel, the gift of new life in baptisms and what God does for us in Communion." Rev. Froiland is also impressed with how holistically the Oromo approach worship. Though they, of course, work jobs, their worship permeates every aspect of their life. "I think that's something we can learn from," he says.



To support
the mission
to OECCKC,
contact Leah
Sieveking at
(314) 590-
6211 or leah.
sieveking@
mo.lcms.org

Junior and Senior High District Youth Gatherings Help Teens with Faith Formation and Christian Friendships

There's an energy that comes when young people come together for worship and the Word of God. At the recent National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN, thousands of high schoolers came together from all over the world. According to the LCMS website, "More than 20,000 youth and adults from all 35 districts and 13 countries joined together in Minneapolis in July 2019 for the 14th triennial LCMS Youth Gathering."

While the National Youth Gathering occurs every three years, the Missouri District offers programming each year for both junior and senior high school students. These events provide a much needed respite from the day-to-day pressures that many of our youth navigate constantly. School and athletic obligations, combined with the ups and downs of social relationships can weigh students down, making it hard for them to maintain a healthy spiritual walk with the Lord.

Mark Engelhardt, Director of Christian Education (DCE) at Our Savior Lutheran Church in St. Charles, says that it's in the social relationships where he really sees the impact of the junior and senior high youth gatherings last over time. With the gatherings scheduled in the Fall, they work nicely with typical programming like confirmation classes to help the students really get to know each other. Then they have

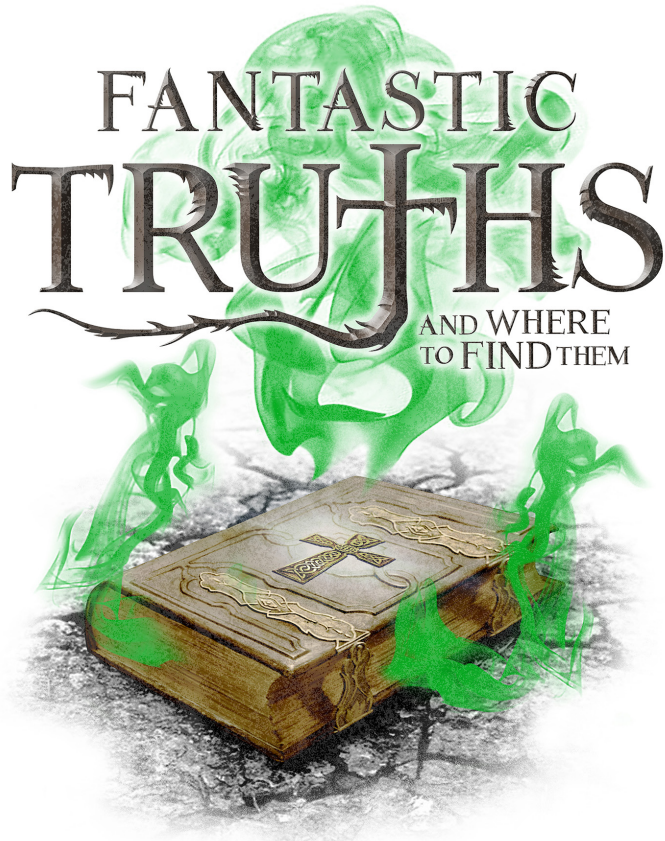
a more solid circle of friends who share their faith as they go back to school. The education of the catechism and scripture are valuable, too, but when they come away with stronger relationships, that helps every aspect of their faith formation.

DCE Engelhardt hopes his congregation can capitalize on the momentum of the National Youth Gathering for the upcoming senior high retreat. For Junior High kids, their district youth gathering includes a unique opportunity to be connected to the National Youth Gathering, which was only open to high school students. Bread of Stone, the same band that played for the throngs of LCMS teens in Minneapolis, will be performing.

In addition to Bread of Stone, Sarah Salzberg will be one of the speakers. She teaches Old Testament at Orange Lutheran High School in Orange County, CA and DCE Engelhardt notes that she's always had a very strong rapport with the students, who enjoy listening to her talks. The theme for the Senior High Youth Gathering is Fantastic Truths and Where to Find Them. You can still register your group for the Senior High event until Nov. 11 by going to mo.lcms.org/event/2019-fall-sr-high-youth-gathering/



Senior High Youth Gathering



The 2019 Fall Senior High Gathering will take place Nov. 22 to 24 at Cross Pointe Retreat Center.

\$165 per person

Learn more at mo.lcms.org/event/2019-fall-sr-high-youth-gathering

Registration is open until Nov. 11, 2019

Junior High Youth Gathering (event over) DON'T MISS OUT IN THE SPRING

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



PeaceRULES
COLOSSIANS 3:15

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

f /LUTHERANYOUTH t /LUTHERAN_YOUTH

Learn more at mo.lcms.org/event/junior-high-gathering

Missouri District Supports New Teachers with Annual Retreat and Fellowship



The New Teacher Retreat has quickly become an annual event for the Missouri District. Alan Freeman, Assistant to the President for Schools, says, “The research tells us that teachers are more likely to leave the field in their first five years of teaching. That’s a shame because it takes a while to really get the hang of teaching. It’s such a demanding—but rewarding profession—if we help shepherd new teachers through the start of their career, we can help set them up for the long-term.”

The Lutheran education system is a large part of the LCMS heritage. Schools have always been important to our congregations, from the founding days to modern times. As times have changed, schools have become a significant source of outreach.

While previous decades saw schools populated directly from their partner congregations, the new reality is that many students are the family’s first introduction to the LCMS. Attracted by the quality and positive environment of the schools, parents are bringing their children directly into the path of the Gospel. Teachers are instrumental in crafting the kind of quality, Christ-centered school environment parents crave.

When a teacher starts their career, they may be one of a handful of first-to-third year teachers in the entire school. But on the New Teacher Retreat, they’re surrounded by professionals dealing with the same transition they are, and they feel less alone as they get their arms around the learning how to manage the classroom, schedules, parents, administration relationships and more.

“The research tells us that teachers are more likely to leave the field in their first five years of teaching. That’s a shame because it takes a while to really get the hang of teaching. It’s such a demanding—but rewarding profession—if we help shepherd new teachers through the start of their career, we can help set them up for the long-term.”

— Alan Freeman, Assistant to the
President, Schools

Here's a Look at Some of the Educational Ministries Our New Teachers Might Work In

Our Savior Christian Academy, Smithville

Growing up in a military family means many things, including getting familiar with the unfamiliar. When kids from military families enroll in Our Savior Christian Academy, some of them have moved as many as 13 times already. Many times, they're new to the Midwest, though they may have lived on military bases overseas. They receive a full orientation, to help them get settled in the community as soon as possible.

Lavonne Pappert, the Superintendent of Our Savior, estimates that 65 percent of the families they serve are in the military. Everyone on staff works hard to make the school a place where these kids—and their families—can feel at home. It also means finding practical, meaningful ways to support the families who have made great sacrifices serving our country. As a result, the families enjoy a school that doesn't feel like somewhere they have to explain their way of life. They can enjoy sending their children to a school that "gets it."

Lutheran North Campus, St. Louis

Lutheran North High School has long been a staple of the community, one of the only private schools in the area. With so many supportive families eager to provide solid, faith-based education for their children, they recently expanded to include a middle school.

Now serving sixth, seventh and eighth grade students, Lutheran North Campus welcomed their new classes with encouraging locker signs from the high school's leadership team. Clearly, this is meeting a palpable need in the community. The school met its capacity in the first year, with several families asking to be put on the waiting list.

Saint Paul High School, Concordia

One of the only schools of its kind in the state, Saint Paul Concordia serves kids from close neighborhoods, across the country and from all over the world. The boarding school offers flexibility for local parents (and slightly less local parents), while offering a world-class Lutheran education to students from any part of the world.

Service is a big part of what they do at St. Paul, with many different opportunities for students to get involved.

United in Christ Lutheran School, Frohna

When students walk into class at United in Christ Lutheran School, the teachers often know them from church, the Frohna community, and in some cases, having taught their parents. Nestled approximately 30 minutes from both Perryville and Cape Girardeau, United in Christ serves many families of generational students. Ms. Honoree, the principal, says a feeling of being a family is one of the things we do best.

The Lutheran faith has been historically well represented in this part of Missouri, and as a result, United in Christ serves almost all families from the association of three congregations that support it, support which includes covering tuition of members' children. As a result, approximately 90 percent of their students attend a Lutheran church with their families. Ms. Honoree says this means they can take an advanced approach to teach the faith.



Lutheran North Campus,
Worship service on first day
of school



More Highlights from LEA!!!



All Nations Church Holds 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

With a few cans of temporary spray paint and a couple of portable hoops, the strip mall parking lot outside of the church transformed into an all-day festival. Over 64 men from around the city competed in the 16-team tournament.

"We wanted to reach disconnected men in our community to show them that they are all stars to the community that needs them," said Pastor Chris Paavola, the planting pastor of All Nations Church. The church used a social media campaign to reach the men who competed in the tournament, and none of the players had a previous connection to the church.



Calling Congregations and Personnel Changes Now Available Online!

Go to mo.lcms.org/personnel/ to see information about calling congregations and personnel changes (both ordained and commissioned ministers of religion).

Find this information under the congregations tab on our website: mo.lcms.org

