

The VOICE

March 2022

Missouri District Newsletter



***In This Issue: SHINE! 2022
(This year the shirts are green!)***

From the President's Desk

The Shining Servant - Christ

Christ did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many. Our understanding of the service of a Christian is rooted in our Lord who served us through His suffering, death, and resurrection on the cross and His triumphant resurrection from the grave. In the second of the Suffering Servant songs from Isaiah 49:6, our heavenly Father says of His beloved Son, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." Jesus served not only Israel through His Passion, but the Father even made Him to be a light for all nations.

In each Divine Service, Christ Himself serves us as He dwells with us through Word and Sacrament, as He forgives us and strengthens us. Though there are pastors and organists, acolytes and ushers, altar guild and choir members, we never lose sight that it is Christ who serves us by giving Himself.

Since Christ served us on the cross and continues to serve us by giving to us Himself in the Divine Service, we are emboldened to serve God where He has placed us. Martin Luther captures this well in his landmark work, "The Freedom of a Christian," where he 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."

The Missouri District Servant Event, *SHINE!*, is just a simple way for Christians to live out our theology. Those who have been served by Christ are freed to serve their neighbor and their community. From April 22 to May 1, groups clad in green t-shirts from congregations, schools, campus ministries, and Lutheran agencies across the Missouri District, will be shining in our communities, reflecting Christ, the Light for all nations." In small communities and large metropolitan cities, from young children to seniors, LCMS Lutherans will be serving with the gifts and abilities that they have received from God. Our purpose is not to reach a numerical goal or to garner publicity. Our purpose is that others will see our good deeds and praise our Father, who is in heaven. We hope that your congregation members will join us and let your light *SHINE!*

Fraternally in Christ,

R. Lee Hagan

President Lee Hagan



Starting a Servant Event

The task of hosting a servant event may seem daunting. Whether you help with several servant events a year or this is your first time hosting a group, we pray that you will find this edition of The VOICE useful.

First and foremost, know that serving is all about putting the other person first. So one of the best ways to get started is to take a good look around you and ask, "What does my neighbor most need?". Check out the next article for ways to explore finding ideas for your servant event.

While determining *where* you plan to serve, you can start figuring out *who* is going to join you. Start getting the word out in your church, school, or organization. Remember to use the communication channels already in place. Does your church send out monthly newsletters or does your school send out e-blasts? Make sure to create a post there. Establish a point person who can divide tasks, delegate responsibilities, and create a project timeline.

Determine if any financing will be needed for your project. Planning ahead can allow for fundraisers and/or donated items. A couple of things to remember while planning is what tools or equipment will be needed and what kind of refreshments will help your group? Maybe you need snacks in individual bags or perhaps a group at your church can sponsor a lunch or dinner for everyone.

You may find as your group comes together that it's best to divide into different sections. Sometimes a project is limited to a certain number of people, or even abilities can vary in range. If there's a group who is full of energy and muscles (youth groups) while another group has a servant's heart, but does better sitting (older adults) perhaps consider having one group do something physical, like rake leaves or paint, while another group can write letters to soldiers or stuff care packets. You can even bring everyone together for a big opening or close to the event.

While hosting a servant event for your organization may seem daunting, it can really be boiled down to a few steps.

FIND

- a need in your community
- people to help you serve
- a time that works best for your group
- resources to accomplish your goal
- a way to *SHINE!* God's love to your neighbors

The Lord bless your service in 2022!





Ideas for Service

Is your *SHINE!* group still looking for ideas on where and how to serve? Take a look at these suggestions to get ideas flowing:

Government Offices

City Hall may know of a park that needs cleaning, a garden that needs planting or a resident struggling with a few projects at their home. Stop in or give your local government workers a phone call.

Adopt a Not-for-Profit

Food pantries, resale shops, organizations that support children, groups that walk with those experiencing medical conditions, and many more agencies could all use an extra hand now and then.

Ask Around

Area principals have a good read on issues impacting families in a community. Likewise, your pastor could know of a unique situation where your group could be a blessing.

Prayer Walking

Walk around town and pray for what you see. Ask those you pass throughout the day if they have any specific prayer requests. Ideas may come simply by talking to God about the community where you live.

What's Missing in Town?

If there is a noticeable need in the community that isn't being addressed or a service that isn't currently being provided, have your group fill in the gap.

Experience of Team Members

Your *SHINE!* team members have interests or careers that put them in contact with all sorts of people and situations. Talk with other members about what touches their heart when serving others.

Whatever your team decides to do, the Missouri District will be praying for you all. We know God will use you to be a blessing to many!

SHINE! Big

It can be a great blessing to gather with a hundred (or more) people in service to the community. But having such a large group can present some challenges. Here are some ideas from *SHINE!* groups last year.

Tackle a Big Project

Salem in Farrar, Trinity in Altenburg, and Concordia in Frohna came together to paint the community's ballpark bleachers. This is an important gathering spot in the community, and they took a team to do it!

Timothy in Blue Springs invited people to a prayer service for those effected by cancer. They also distributed prayer shawls and cancer prayer packs.

Divide Up Your Group

Many large groups had successful *SHINE!* events by dividing their large groups into multiple small groups.

Abiding Savior in South County, St. Louis had many who served—in three different groups. Their men's small group did extensive yard work to a member of the blind community. Their youth baked cookies and served them to a local firehouse. And finally they had another group who did yard work throughout the community.

Saxony Lutheran High School in Jackson had 15 different teams! The students divided up work around the school and in the Cape Girardeau area. One group even washed cars for their teachers as a surprise.

River Roads Lutheran School in St. Louis had different classes with different focuses. Some went into the community, while other grades potted plants for seniors citizens, and the younger grades did "Color a Smile" art for local charity.

St. Paul, Jackson assisted members of their church and community with home maintenance and yard work. They also maintained an adopt a highway street in their community.

A big group can get a lot accomplished. Sometimes it just takes a little extra coordination.





A Compact Crew

Even the act of one person serving makes an impact. And these groups certainly had more than that. Having a group smaller than 100 is also most certainly a blessing, and from a project standpoint, allows groups to focus on one task. Below are some great projects from 2021.

Compile Items to Gift

Bethlehem in Warrensburg hosted a community event. They gave away clothing, household items, and a host of other things. Those being served were lined up before the event started. By the end of the event, several hundred have been served.

St. Matthew in Lee's Summit gathered supplies then stuffed them into duffel bags and donated them to foster kids.

Hope Lutheran Chapel, Osage Beach volunteered gave free diapers, baby wipes, and clothes from infant to 4t to the local community over the course of two days.

And who doesn't appreciate food? Concordia in Sikeston served and delivered over 120 meals!

Serving Hands and Feet

Sometimes a project that seems simple makes a really big impact. Immanuel in Rader/Conway rebuilt a walkway for a senior citizen in thier community, making it much safer!

St Stephen in Liberty took a crew of 35 armed with chainsaws to cleanup an overgrown property. While St. Paul, St. Joseph helped a member of their congregation dealing with Parkinson's disease. (They even used a Thrivant action team grant to cover food costs.)

Members of St. Paul's in Des Peres helped to put a kitchen back together for a Ronald McDonald house.

The Married Couples Club at Peace in St. Louis gathered together and sent 175 cards to homebound and those serving in the military. Our Savior Christian Academy in Smithville also served those serving us by writing letters and creating care packages for troops overseas.

Groups of all sizes make an important impact. It's all about serving our neighbors and shining God's light!

Play to Your Strengths

A great way to have many *SHINE!* teams is to look at groups already established in your church, school, or organization. Below are some ways that these groups have contributed in the past and they may provide inspiration for your groups this year.

Youth Groups

There were quite a few youth groups that participated in *SHINE!* last year. Concordia, Kirkwood had their youth do yard work for shut-ins. Saint Paul's youth in St. Joseph volunteered at a local thrift shop. Afterwards they celebrated with pizza! Youth at Immanuel, Jefferson City helped sing for residences at a Lutheran Senior Service community. Cleaning up roadsides was also a popular *SHINE!* event.

Lutheran Early Response Team

Saint Paul High School in Concordia hosted a LERT training class for its young adults. The same day, St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Concordia had their LERT team cutting down trees at a local park and trimming trees at the local nursing home. In the afternoon, the newly trained LERT youth helped with hauling and clearing. If your group is interested in a LERT training session or partnering with one of our LERT trained teams, visit: <https://mo.lcms.org/disaster-response/>

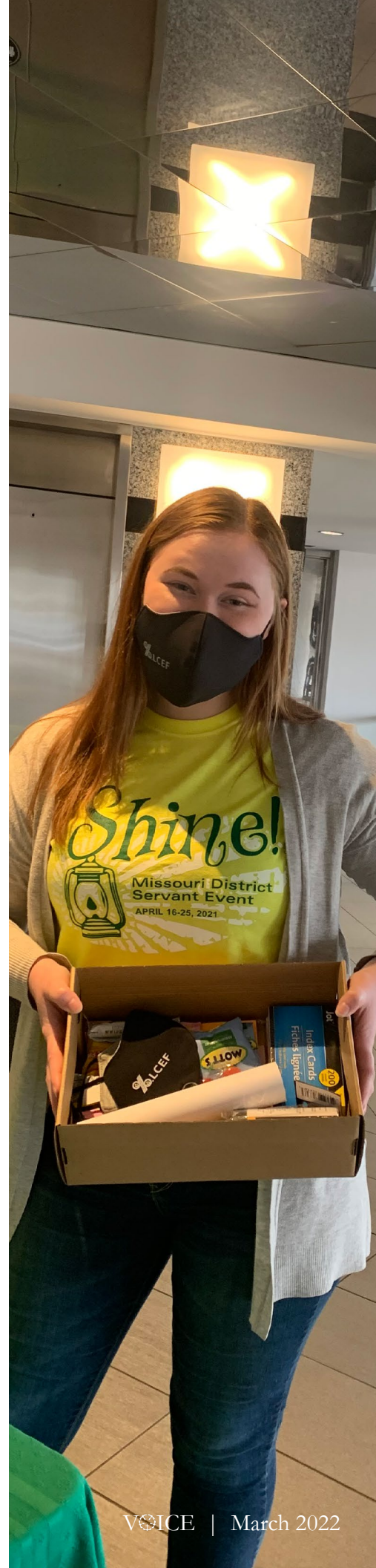
Early Childhood

It's never too early to *SHINE!* Christ's light. Our Savior, Fenton did a variety of projects including planting flowers on their campus. And Immanuel Preschool, Festus collected items for nursing homes and delivered them with cards that the kids decorated!

College Campus Groups

A great way to add service and fellowship is with your student group. The Lutheran Student Fellowship Campus Ministry at Truman State University spent a Saturday serving at the Community Action Partnership in Kirksville. The Lutheran Student Fellowship group at Mizzou served at a local equine center that offers therapeutic riding for children. Also the Lutheran Campus Center at Maryville helped members of the local congregation who needed assistance with spring cleaning.

SHINE! has been very blessed by ladies of LWML, men's clubs, quilting groups, and so many more. What group does your church have that can sign up to *SHINE!* in 2022?





Upcoming Events

Visit mo.lcms.org/upcoming-events for more information on these events.



JR & SR Youth Gathering

April 1 – 3
"Crossroads"



SHINE!

April 22 – May 1
T-Shirt Deadline Mar 21



District Convention

June 12 – 14
Check out the Convention workbook, now online.



NYG Event in Houston

July 9
District Event Registration Open

For more news from the District office, sign up for email communications at mo.lcms.org and follow us on social media.



Missouri District

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