

The VOICE

September 2023 Missouri District Newsletter



District Trainings
Pictured: Leadership Academy

From the President's Desk

God at Work

To title the fifth New Testament book "The Acts of the Apostles" is a bit of a misnomer. However, the book we know as Acts is quite clear in its content that the Lord was the primary "actor" and the One who added to the number of disciples (2:47). Each month, we highlight the work of congregations, schools and missions of the Missouri District. However, these updates are more than just news of how humble saints are serving. These articles are testimonies of the Lord's work among us as the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the Church.

The VOICE of Missouri takes us on a journey through from early childhood centers to campus ministries to congregational ministries among seniors. There are new church plants underway and ministries reaching people from different tribes and nations. But all of these are testimonies of the Holy Spirit working through the Word to give the growth.

The work that God is accomplishing also includes parents passing on the faith to their children. There are also examples of congregations serving and equipping young people. Support for church workers is about putting them in mind of their baptisms, assuring them of God's abundant grace, and walking alongside them through the ups and downs of ministry. Through all of these, the Holy Spirit is at work.

Even when the numbers are not "trending" in a positive direction the Lord is at work. The ministry that happens at congregations across Missouri as the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments are administered, as shut-ins are visited, as children are catechized, and as we are built up and strengthened in the faith. And God is at work in all these examples.

May God abundantly bless the ministry of your congregation as the Holy Spirit works through the Word of God in your midst.

Fraternally in Christ,

R. Lee Hagan

President Lee Hagan



Kris Schuldt Wins LERT Award

Lutheran Early Response Teams are Lutheran volunteers across the state (and country) that are trained in disaster response. Rain, floods, tree damage, earthquakes—whatever the disaster they come prepared to help clean up free of charge to those affected. LERT's training serves to restore more than property damage, though, they also are trained in mercy ministry, learning how to pray and be a spiritual support in times of crisis.



Rev. Michael Meyer presents Kris Schuldt the 2023 Disaster Response Servant Award

The impact of the efforts of these LERT groups is great. Their efforts were recognized at the LCMS National Convention this summer. Resolution 3-04A stated "To Commend and Give Thanks for Synod Work regarding Disaster Response", and it passed unanimously.

Across Missouri, there are many active LERT groups. Sometimes these groups even travel to other states to help with disasters. Kris Schuldt serves as the Missouri District Disaster Response Coordinator and leads an active LERT group. Kris's heart for ministry and service shines through in his tireless efforts this past year.

Kris was awarded the "2023 Disaster Response Servant Award" from LCMS Disaster Response. "Kris was selected from our entire pool of volunteers due to his numerous responses and leadership in the past year," says LCMS Director of Disaster Training Rev. Michael Meyer. "He volunteered over 1500 [hours] in the past 12 months (more than double the next closest [candidate]), primarily in response to flooding in O'Fallon and St. Peters last July. He also led his team in flood cleanup at St. Matthews in St. Louis and wind events in New Melle and various other locations in the western STL metro region."

Congratulations Kris on all your hardwork and thank you for your efforts to help those impacted by natural disaster!

Interested in helping with disaster response? LERT volunteers must have at least the basic training. Trainings occur several times throughout the year and in different parts of the state. The next basic training is November 4 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in St. Charles. LCMS adults and high school youth (aged 14-17) are welcome to attend. For registration, visit mo.lcms.org/disaster-response





CONFERENCE

EQUIP & ENCOURAGE

Mark your calendars in early 2024 for the Missouri District's E2 Conferences. Held at a location near you, the E2: Equip and Encourage Conferences are morning conferences that serve as a support and training for congregations and their ministries. Everyone (lay people and church workers) is invited to attend.

Presented by Missouri District staff and leaders from across Missouri, sessions include topics like Shared Youth Ideas, Family Discipleship, Stewardship Resources, Intergenerational Faith Formation, Serving Your Community, and more.

Held on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., the conferences are free to attend, and light refreshments and coffee will be provided. The dates and locations of the conferences are:

- Kansas City (St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Lee's Summit) – January 20, 2024
- Southeast Missouri (Saxony Lutheran High School, Jackson) – January 27, 2024
- St. Louis (St. John's Lutheran Church, Arnold) – February 3, 2024
- Central Missouri (Calvary Lutheran High School, Jefferson City) – March 2, 2024
- Springfield (Faith Lutheran Church, Springfield) – March 9, 2024

If you haven't been to one before, a great way to go to these conferences is to gather a group from your congregation and attend together! This way, people can divide up, attend many breakouts, then come back together after the conference, perhaps on the ride home or over lunch, and discuss what works best for their ministry.

There is no cost to attend the conference, but we ask that you register so that we can have enough materials for everyone. Registration, schedule, and breakout sectional information, will be available beginning in November at mo.lcms.org/e2-conference-equip-encourage.



District Continuing Education

These last weeks, there were several opportunities for continued education of church workers. Read through these next pages to learn all about it!

New Church Worker Orientation

The New Church Worker Orientation was held August 24–25. This orientation had an all day bus tour with 21 vicars, interns, and newly called workers seeing different churches and missions across the greater St. Louis area. The training continued the second day at the Missouri District Offices with 11 newly called workers. During lunch, these church workers got to eat and meet with current church workers in their field. A great introduction into the next phase of these workers' vocation.



Circuit Visitor Training

In August, a circuit visitor meeting was held in Columbia. There is time for fellowship, but the primary purpose for these biannual trainings is to equip the circuit visitors to be able to carry out the functions assigned to them by the Synodical Handbook: church and pastoral visitation, call processes, installations, retirements, circuit meetings and convocations, etc.

“These trainings help to equip the Circuit Visitors in their responsibilities to circuit congregations and pastors. It also provides time to encourage them as they deal with many challenges from a high number of vacancies to congregational conflicts to worker health issues. The New Worker Orientation is a great time to meet and encourage new workers to the Missouri District, to support them in new responsibilities and to educate them in how the District can be a resource for their ministries.”

Rev. Peter Kirby
Missouri District

Executive Director of Congregational Services

St. Louis Area Winkel

“Winkels” are trainings and meetings where pastors within circuits gather together for fellowship and learning. This September, there was an especially large winkel– over 60 pastors were in attendance at the St. Louis area winkel! (This included pastors from St. Charles county and Arnold.)

Hosted at the St. Louis Seminary, their day began with chapel. Then pastors had a study on text and confessions, with plenaries focused on Family Discipleship. Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann of Concordia Center for the Family served as plenary speaker.

We give thanks to God for this time of learning and fellowship among fellow pastors.



Servant Leadership Academy I

In a continued effort to equip, support, and mentor administrators and rising leaders in the District with practical tools to effectively serve and impact others, a new initiative in partnership with Concordia Irvine’s Leadership Institute was launched in September.

Around 20 educational leaders from around the District attended a unique, power packed, two day academy focused on how to build teams through effective communication. This included how to create a positive culture that encourages, values, and empowers others, and understanding the importance of selfcare so that effective servant leadership can occur.

It was a great time of learning, and we look forward to more Academy opportunities in the future.

LUTHERAN COLLEGE FAIR

Join us November 4 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on the beautiful campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Meet with representatives from the Concordia Universities and seminaries. Learn the latest information with presentations on topics like financial aid and tips for choosing a college. Drawings will be held for gift cards and giveaways!

This open-house styled event is free to attend. Participants who register ahead qualify for prizes and free lunch (it's Chick-fil-A!) Register at mo.lcms.org/college-fair.

Bring your questions and learn why our Concordias are amazing places to continue your education and grow your faith!





A REASON FOR OUR HOPE

1 PETER 3:15

Missouri District PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS' CONFERENCE

October 10-13, 2023
Margaritaville Resort, Osage Beach

Our Professional Church Workers' Conference is just around the corner! Over 650 church workers are joining together Margaritaville Lake Resort in Osage Beach from October 10-13.

We will be learning from featured speakers Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, Rev. Dr. Justin Hannemann, and Dr. Brad Alles, plus many breakout presenters. We pray God's blessings on the travel, learning, and fellowship of all in attendance to learn how God is "A Reason for Our Hope".

Upcoming Events

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

Oct 10-13	Professional Church Worker Conference
Nov 4	Lutheran College Fair
Jan 20	E2 Conference <i>St. Matthew, Lee's Summit</i>
Jan 27	E2 Conference <i>Saxony High School, Jackson</i>
Feb 3	E2 Conference <i>St. John's, Arnold</i>
Mar 2	E2 Conference <i>Calvary High School, Jefferson City</i>
Mar 2	Early Childhood Conference
Mar 9	E2 Conference <i>Faith, Springfield</i>



Missouri District

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