

The VOICE

July 2024

Missouri District Newsletter



Growing College Ministry

*Pictured: Youth Servant Event
at Heit's Point Ministries*

From the President's Desk

Caring for College Students

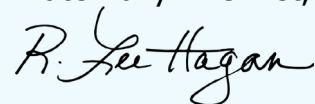
There are lots of considerations for families when a college is chosen for the children. Program of student, cost, location are among the most important considerations. Even room and board factors into the decision-making process. However, many families neglect one of the most important things to consider: where will the student be cared for spiritually during these years?

The college years are some of the most exciting and challenging times for young adults as they make decisions and manage their time without their parents daily oversight. Quite often students are challenged in terms of their Christian worldview by professors. Congregations serve parents and college students well when they prepare them for the experience and connect them with congregations and campus ministries where they will be supported during those critical years.

There was a time when each of the state universities in Missouri would provide a list of all the Lutheran students to our campus ministries. Those days are long gone. It is up to others to take the initiative to help congregations and campus ministries to connect with the students. While it is great when the students take that initiative or even parents, congregations can also be helpful in this process. When my children went on college visits, we not only toured the college campus, but also the congregation and/or campus ministry where they would attend worship while there. Pastors or church leaders can meet with graduating high school seniors to talk about the importance of remaining connected to Christ during those years.

This issue of *The VOICE* of the Missouri District features an article about campus ministry. The Missouri District Campus Ministry Network is a tool to help connect the students and the local congregations/campus ministries in Missouri. Go to **molcms.college** to share contact information for students with one of over 16 congregations or campus ministries that are part of the network. If a student is attending a college outside of Missouri, use the LCMS website to find nearby congregations or go to LCMSU website to see if there is a campus ministry in the area. Taking the extra effort to support the spiritual life and care of young people during their college years is one of the most important things that congregations can do to help keep young adults connected to Christ and the Church!

Fraternally in Christ,



President Lee Hagan



Campus Ministry Network

Students heading off to college or university this fall—have you connected with your campus' Lutheran Ministry? The Campus Ministry Network is an easy way to get engaged to a community of believers (and friends!) that will support and feed your faith.

Students, parents, and church workers can use the Campus Ministry Network to help connect students with their college's LCMS campus ministry. It's an easy process. Simply visit molcms.college, click on the school where the student is attending, fill out the short form, and the information will be passed on directly to that campus ministry.

"Campus Ministry is important on multiple levels," says Rev. Dr. Kent Pierce, who oversees the Campus Ministry Network. "It's really important that they have people who share their faith and their values and they can remain rooted in Christ as they navigate all of the new opportunities and challenges that college life brings. But campus ministry is also so important because it's a time where students are really connected in a discipling community. They are not only being fed spiritually, but they have an opportunity to go deep and learn what it means to be a baptized child of God and how they take their baptismal identity with them into all of the places where God would lead them."

There are 16 LCMS campus ministries right here in Missouri. They are working hard to greet new students, but they often don't have the contact information of new students as schools no longer provide information of Lutheran students to the campus ministries. Also several universities have decreased tabling opportunities (where student organizations can have tables of information and greet students.) This makes it very difficult to make connections and reach students. But, filling out a form through the Campus Ministry Network greatly helps our student ministries. It only takes a few minutes, but the impact for students is long reaching.

"Through campus ministry, we raise up wonderful leaders in the church," Pastor Pierce continues. "Some folks, after graduation, move onto their careers and become leaders in the congregations where they land. And in some cases, they end up going into church work. Through our campus ministries at our public educational institutions we often end up with students who graduate and go to seminary or even one of the other Concordias for a church work career."

Not attending a school in Missouri? The Campus Ministry Network also has links for finding an LCMS-U chapter around the country at molcms.college/partners.

Additionally, a great way to let students and their families know about this resource, is including it in your church's communications. Find bulletin inserts and additional information at molcms.college/resources.

The first 30 days on a college campus sets up habits for the whole year. Get connected to a campus ministry near you through the Campus Ministry Network!



TOMORROW'S Teachers & Preachers

"I knew I wanted to become a Lutheran teacher by my senior year of high school for a couple reasons," Aaron Hentges shares. "I felt God was calling me, both through my instructors and pastors and my heart. I would never have become a teacher if not for teachers and coaches who demonstrated a Christ-like love for me consistently for four years."

For Aaron, his career path has recently brought him back to where it all started—St. Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia. After several years of teaching History at The Lutheran High School of Kansas City, Aaron is now beginning his new role as Director of Admissions and teacher for his alma mater. It's now his opportunity to do for others what his teachers did for him.



Aaron Hentges and His Family

As is our tradition each fall, the Missouri District is pleased to celebrate *Tomorrow's Teachers & Preachers*—the campaign to promote church work vocations and give a boost to our scholarship endowment. For more than 40 years, students from Missouri preparing for service in the church have benefitted from these scholarships to help defray the cost of tuition at schools within the Concordia University System or either LCMS seminary.

Aaron Hentges himself was a recipient of one of these scholarships while in college and is well aware of the impact it can make. Even beyond the collegiate experience, he also notes this assistance will have an impact for years to come. "A scholarship could help jump start families that have a greater level of financial freedom without college debt. A scholarship will allow for education, but an education allows for the building of strong families of faith."

It's for this reason—the impact on families present and future—that *Tomorrow's Teachers & Preachers* is in place. Today I invite you to continue your encouragement for these upcoming workers by joining the effort. **Would you please prayerfully consider making a gift to the scholarship endowment that will provide support to those furthering their education in preparation for these roles in God's kingdom?** Gifts can be made online at mo.lcms.org/donate, via mail, or through your congregation's offering plate.

We boldly take these steps today so that—by God's grace and with His guidance—the ministries of the LCMS will be served by an abundance of workers for years to come. Thank you for caring for these servants and the generations they will serve.

Aaron Hentges on a School Trip



Campus Ministry Update: LSC at Springfield

One of our 16 campus ministries in Missouri is the Lutheran Student Center in Springfield. Located just across from the Missouri State University campus, this campus ministry is jammed packed with activities for students.

While the LSC was without a part-time director for the 2023–2024 school year, the Student Board (student lead leadership) wanted to work to make LSC a place of welcoming fellowship. So last year, they hosted a week of back to school welcome activities (like mini golf and a scavenger hunt), took a day at the lake in Branson, attended a Springfield Cardinals game, partook in Trunk or Treat at Trinity Lutheran, and helped with *SHINE!* events, plus hosted a variety of student game nights, Halloween parties, bonfires, and more! The students are seeing a change and they have been blessed to experience growth in their ministry.

Additionally, in the Spring semester, their student leader and Director of Spiritual Life, Corey, started a new Bible Study on Sunday afternoons walking through the book "The Screwtape Letters" by C.S. Lewis. The study was well received and attended and provided a great outlet for the students.

Another great way for students to join together are on Tuesdays at LSC with the "Prayer & Praise" evenings. About 20-30 students gather each week for a home cooked meal, listen to a speaker, and have worship. Some of the speakers have included Dr. Joe Western from College of the Ozarks, DCE Hannah Hayden from Redeemer in Springfield, Rev. Scott Schmieding from Immanuel in St. Charles. It's a wonderful way for churches to support students and for students to engage in Lutheran fellowship and learning!

If you or someone you know is headed to Missouri State this fall, you can connect with their campus ministry through the Campus Ministry Network at molcms.college. Simply visit the website, click on the "Missouri State University" button, and the completed form will be sent directly to their student ministry.

We pray God's blessings on this ministry, their work and efforts, and for their continued growth in the 2024-2025 school year!





Youth Unite and Serve



In June, 73 middle school students, high school students, and adult leaders joined together for a Servant Event at Heit's Point Lutheran Ministries. Six churches (four from Missouri, one from Kansas, and one from Minnesota) came together to serve at Heit's Point and in the surrounding community of Lincoln. The students completed several work projects. In Lincoln, the groups repaired a deck at one home, painted a second home, and made minor repairs to a third home. At Heit's Point, groups painted cabin decks, moved equipment from an older shed to a new building, cleaned the chapel area, installed a new fire pit, rebuilt retaining walls and a dam, and mucked out ponds to allow better flow for the natural spring.



The latter activities, rebuilding the retaining walls and dam, and mucking out the ponds, served as the connecting point to the theme for the week "Water of Life" and the theme verse from John 4:14 "Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." In this theme, youth heard from Pastors and DCEs from the six churches who shared stories and made connections to the Bible about the power of God and the gift of life He provides to us through our baptism, and how that gift of life is a gift for everyone.

In addition to serving in Lincoln and at Heit's Point, youth were able to take advantage of the many opportunities Heit's Point has for fun. Students played disc golf, fished, swam in the Lake of the Ozarks, and enjoyed nightly campfires, which culminated with s'mores on the last night of camp.



Luca from Timothy in St. Louis, was excited for the opportunity to serve the Lord and grow in his faith. "It was great to get to know so many people from the Midwest who love and want to serve the Lord."

Janine Mallardi, program director of Heit's Point expressed her gratitude and appreciation for the hard work of all of the participants, saying, "It was amazing to see kids from all over come together to serve as one body of Christ. It was an amazing week with amazing servants of the Lord."



Business Manager Learning from LCEF and the Missouri District

Lutheran Church Extension Fund partnered with the Missouri District to invite several St. Louis area church and school business managers to a lunch and learn session in late June with Holly Perryman of HR Managed, LLC. She led a discussion about human resources, legal compliance, and best practices. Those that attended shared their experiences and received advice and direction. The time spent together learning and in fellowship provided opportunities for our brothers and sisters in Christ to have a better understanding of the nuances of managing personnel at their congregation or school.

Churches often task their business managers with understanding all facets of organizational operations including human resources, legal, and accounting. This can be challenging as laws and practices change. While some congregations are blessed with the resources to hire individuals very experienced in some of these operational areas, many Lutheran churches rely on volunteers to handle these complicated tasks. It is important that we recognize the varying degree of expertise across our church organizations, both paid and volunteer, and help these individuals to grow their skillset.

As we continue to experience limited resources in many areas of our ministry, we must be diligent in collaborating to ensure that those serving our congregations and schools have every opportunity to succeed in their vocation. LCEF will continue to work with the Missouri District, congregations, schools, and RSO's to encourage and assist those serving the ministry, no matter their role. This effort helps to steward the resources God has granted to our community in a way that is efficient and effective.

We anticipate quarterly sessions similar in nature to the one held in June. The topics will change from session to session. If you would like to receive communication from LCEF and invitations to events designed to assist business managers in their role in the Missouri District, email Mike Wadley at mike.wadley@lcef.org.



MOScholars

Use your state tax dollars to support Lutheran education! Through the MOScholars tax credit program, scholarships are awarded to students attending LCMS schools in Missouri. Taking part in this effort is simple and a blessing to many.

Go to mo.lcms.org/mo-scholars to learn more and reserve your tax credits

Select "The Missouri District" as the EAO you'd like to make use of your funds

Mail your confirmation number and check to the Missouri District. *Contact us to send funds electronically!*

Questions can be directed to Leah at 314-590-6211 or leah.sieveking@mo.lcms.org

With no additional cost and minimal effort, it's easy being a part of this opportunity. Thank you for your participation!



Upcoming Events

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

- Jul 18-19** **Summer Admin Conference**
Campus Lutheran, Columbia
- Aug 8-9** **Circuit Visitor Training**
Campus Lutheran, Columbia
- Aug 22-23** **New Called Worker Orientation**
Missouri District Office
- Sep 17** **Philippians Stewardship Workshop**
Campus Lutheran, Columbia
- Sep 20-21** **New Teacher Orientation**
Margaritaville, Osage Beach
- Sep 27-28** **Servant Leadership Academy**
Missouri District Office
- Oct 20-22** **Pastors' Conference**
Margaritaville, Osage Beach
- Nov 24-26** **Educators' Conference**
Four Seasons, Lake Ozark



Missouri District
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