



# Workers Together



*"The servant mission of The Kansas District is to equip, encourage and empower each congregation in its mission vision and Christ-care ministry."*

Volume 16, Issue 1 January 2009

## President's Office

### "Customer Service"

by President Keith E. Kohlmeier

Please allow me a moment to vent. I have discovered a new world in what we used to call "customer service." It was a week in which I had to do repairs to both an appliance and a vehicle. When I called about the appliance, they said they could only come during regular business hours since their technicians didn't work outside of regular hours. When I suggested that I could come home early that day and be home by 4:00 p.m. they said, "Well, our technicians like to wrap things up by at least 4:30 so that they are not inconvenienced."

Secondly, I called a local business to have repair done on the vehicle and we set up a time for them to come and pick it up for repair. He called me that morning and left a message. This one is verbatim. I kept it on my voice mail to give me "inspiration" for this article. It said, "This is (name) from (company) - (the names have been withheld to protect the guilty). I am calling to tell you that I won't be there this morning. I am busy. I will call in a couple of days and see if we can find a time that works better for MY schedule." (The emphasis is mine.)

I was feeling very justified in my angst with what has become of what we used to translate as "we are here to serve the customer" and now has become "the customer serves us." That is, until the next day.

As God in His wisdom always does, the next day for me included this reading from the biblical text, **"Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."** Matthew 20:26-28

I reflected on the Word. And the Word convicted me that we may have succumbed to today's version of customer service. I really believe that we do not hear that idea as much any more. More importantly, I believe that we as a church and individually as members of it do not ask the question enough anymore.

We are each beneficiaries now and in eternity because our Savior never lost sight of why He was among us. He came to serve! And He designed His church, and gave birth to His children, that they might be people who never lose sight of their role, purpose, mission and reason for being in and among this world.

I have tried to learn from this. I have made it a practice at the end of every phone call, when I can remember to do it, no matter if I called them or they called me, to end the visit with the words, "Is there any other way that I can serve you today?" It doesn't change the world, but I do pray that it changes me. I won't bow to the idea that the church is about "customer service," but I believe that we should be the examples of what it means when our Lord says, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve." God bless your service.



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### District Website/Email

Website: [www.kslcms.org](http://www.kslcms.org)

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#### Mission & Stewardship

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#### Planned Giving

Garry Niehoff - [servantwo@kslcms.org](mailto:servantwo@kslcms.org)  
Doris Wilson - [servantwo@kslcms.org](mailto:servantwo@kslcms.org)

#### Caring Ministry

Chaplain Rocky Mease - [chaprm@aol.com](mailto:chaprm@aol.com)

#### District Disaster Response

Chaplain Rocky Mease - [chaprm@aol.com](mailto:chaprm@aol.com)

A monthly publication of  
The Kansas District of The Lutheran  
Church Missouri Synod for  
congregations, schools, professional  
church workers and lay leaders.  
If you have any news items to  
share with congregations in our  
district, please direct them to:  
Workers Together Editor  
Kansas District LCMS  
1000 SW 10th Ave  
Topeka KS 66604-1104  
Phone: 785-357-4441, ext. 223  
Fax: 785-357-5071  
Email: [lori@kslcms.org](mailto:lori@kslcms.org)  
Deadline: 15th of each month

## Calls Accepted

- Rev. James Bender from St. Stephanus, St. Paul, Minn. to Faith, Topeka, Senior Pastor

## Calls Pending

- Rev. Vern Oestmann from Trinity, Mission to Bethany, Vacaville, Calif. as Sr. Pastor
- Rev. Randall Weinkauff from Christ, Hilo, Hawaii to Immanuel, Lawrence

## Calls Declined

- Rev. Greg Zillinger from St. Peter, Hannover, N.D. to Calvary, Topeka

## Calling Congregations/Schools

St. Luke, Bazine  
St. Paul, Duluth  
Zion, Independence (Principal/Teacher)  
Immanuel, Lawrence (Senior Pastor)  
St. Paul, Lincoln  
Christ, Manhattan  
Trinity, Mission (Min. of Outreach, DCE)  
Faith, Ottawa  
Trinity, Salina (DCE)  
Bethlehem, Sylvan Grove  
Calvary, Topeka  
St. Luke, Wheaton  
Holy Cross, Wichita (Senior Pastor, Principal)  
Risen Savior, Wichita (DCE)

## Circuit Counselor/Pre-Lent Retreats

**When:** January 18-21, 2009

**Where:** Spiritual Life Center, Wichita

### Circuit Counselor Conference

Sunday, Jan. 18 6:00 p.m. Opening  
Monday, Jan. 19 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### Pre-Lent Retreat

Monday, Jan. 19 6:30 p.m. Opening  
Tuesday, Jan. 20 All Day  
Wednesday, Jan. 21 11:30 a.m. Closing

## 2009 Kansas District Convention

**When:** June 4-6, 2009

**Where:** Capital Plaza Hotel in Topeka

**Essayist:** Rev. Dr. Robert Newton, President of the LCMS  
California-Nevada-Hawaii District

## District Congregation Mission Receipts

Last month: Nov. 16, 2008 - Dec. 15, 2008 ..... \$133,957  
Nov. 16, 2007 - Dec. 15, 2007 ..... \$137,170  
Year-to-date: Jan. 16, 2008 - Dec. 15, 2008 ... \$1,472,793  
Jan. 16, 2007 - Dec. 15, 2007 ... \$1,512,873  
To LCMS: Jan. 16, 2008 - Dec. 15, 2008 ..... \$618,573  
Jan. 16, 2007 - Dec. 15, 2007 ..... \$635,407

## District Calendar

### January

1 District Office Closed, New Year's  
2 District Office Closed, New Year's  
10 Outreach Team, Emporia  
16-18 Lay Leadership Training, District Office  
18-19 Circuit Counselor Retreat, Wichita  
19-21 Pre-Lent Retreat, Wichita  
26-27 DCE Retreat, Hesston  
30-31 Board of Directors, District Office

### February

9-10 KAIRS Conference, Topeka  
20-22 Lay Leadership Training, District Office  
27-28 Pastors Wives Retreat, Salina

## Prayers

- Rev. Peter Lange, St. John, Topeka, and family at the death of his grandmother
- Rev. Richard Boyer, Grace, Larned, recovery from knee replacement
- Garry & Lila Niehoff, District Office, at the birth of a granddaughter
- Rev. George Bruening, Topeka, health concerns

**Pastors Wives Retreat**  
**Feb. 27-28 in Salina**  
**More details coming soon!**

## Area Chaplains

♦ *Wichita & Topeka* - Contact Rev. Rocky Mease. Home: 316-788-9627. Cell: 316-993-0746. Email: chaprm@aol.com.

### Wichita Hospital Referral

♦ *Kansas City* - Our Saviour Lutheran Church has an apartment available for families who have patients in Kansas City area hospitals (sleeps 4). Families must live outside a 35 mile radius of Kansas City. Contact Donna Bottemuller at 913-236-6228 for more information.

### Kansas City Hospital Referral

## District Directory

**Phone** 1-785-357-4441  
**Toll Free** 1-800-357-4421  
**FAX** 1-785-357-5071

### Extensions:

**President's Office** press 7  
Pres. Kohlmeier (219)  
Marie Holt (219)

**Business Office** press 3  
Debbie Crites (204)  
Tami Lierz (200)

**LCEF** press 3  
Steve Bremer (118)  
Barb McComas (100)

**Education** press 5  
Jim Bradshaw (206)  
Joyce Tate (206)



**Mission & Stewardship** press 4  
Mark Frith (223)

Lori Hennessey (223)

**Planned Giving** press 6  
Garry Niehoff (101)

Doris Wilson (101)

**Directory** press 8

**Extension by name** press 9

**Operator** press 0



## Serving You Better by Rev. Mark Frith

Our Mission and Stewardship Department has been expending energy and time on understanding a number of new technologies. As you know, we experimented with a webinar with the Conversations of Grace conference on November 8. We continue to seek ways of being very good stewards of your mission dollars by taking advantage of conference calls with our various District Committees, saving hundreds of dollars that would have been spent paying mileage. In 2009 we'll be working hard at increasing the productivity of our electronic resources so that we can serve you with excellence.

I want to reflect to you that we had terrific response to our Conversations

## "Reaching Out Together" Conference

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, is hosting an evangelism conference titled "Reaching Out Together" on Feb. 14, 2009. This event is designed for pastors, evangelism boards, church leaders and lay people in the Missouri District and adjacent LCMS districts.

Dr. Dale A. Meyer, president of Concordia Seminary, will serve as the conference keynote speaker. Other presenters will include Rev. Scott Snow, director of national outreach with LCMS World Mission; Rev.

of Grace conference. We know that there were technical difficulties, but I was amazed at how positive everyone's attitudes were at this first web conference attempt. Thank you for your patience and willingness to try something new. We are providing monthly mini-webinars that you and your evangelism teams can utilize. We have an Outreach Blog for ongoing interaction with you. Also, you should be able to view the tapes of our web conferences and webinars by going to the website:

[www.conversationsofgrace.org](http://www.conversationsofgrace.org).

This is a joint website that we share with the Rocky Mountain District.

I pray that the New Year brings you great joy for serving in our Lord's Kingdom!

Joseph Sullivan, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Mo.; and Dr. Yohannes Mengsteab, national director of new mission fields development with LCMS World Mission.

Registration is required. The cost is \$20 per participant for the first four from a single congregation; \$12.50 per participant for each additional participant. Fees include all materials and lunch. Registration is due by Feb. 6.

For more information or to register, call 314-505-7486 or e-mail [ce@csf.edu](mailto:ce@csf.edu).

**Marvin Kohlmeier,**  
**Mission Awareness Coordinator**  
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Home phone: 785-284-3591  
Cell phone: 785-547-6096

## Stewardship Resources

Pastors and Stewardship Committee members, there is a plethora of resources at your fingertips that can make stewardship an enjoyable and rewarding exercise beyond three weeks a year. On our [Stewardship Resources](#) webpage, there are links to great resources, such as:

- ◆ Consecrated Stewards
- ◆ New Consecration Sunday
- ◆ "12 Months of Congregational Stewardship"
- ◆ Stewardship Advisors
- ◆ LCMS Stewardship Ministry

## Ash Wednesday

The Board of Directors designated 2009 Ash Wednesday offerings to be divided equally between the Scholarship and Education Loan Repayment Funds. A newsletter article, bulletin blurbs and a bulletin insert are available on the district website - [www.kslcms.org](http://www.kslcms.org), click on the Publications tab and scroll down to Mission & Stewardship Resources.

## Mission Commitments

We ask that you prayerfully consider your support of District and Synod. You can submit your commitment any of the following ways: 1) send the **green** copy to Lori Hennessey, 1000 SW 10th Ave, Topeka, KS 66604; 2) call Lori at 800-357-4421 ext. 223; 3) email Lori at [lori@kslcms.org](mailto:lori@kslcms.org). For budget purposes, we would appreciate receiving your commitment as soon as possible.

## Fan into Flame News

Need more information about *Fan Into Flame* in Kansas? Visit our District's [Fan Into Flame web page](#) to find:

- ◆ [Kansas Ablaze Mission Plan](#)
- ◆ [FIF Monthly Newsletter](#)
- ◆ President Kohlmeier's [Monthly Letter](#)
- ◆ [Ablaze/Fan into Flame Facts](#)
- ◆ [How to Get Started](#)
- ◆ and much more!

Nationally, gifts and pledges have reached the \$38 million mark. In Kansas, gifts and pledges total \$354,761.

## Financial Aid Available

Do you know of any student(s) pursuing a career in professional church work at one of the LCMS colleges or seminaries? Financial aid is available for these students from the Kansas District, LLL, LWML and St. John College Alumni. Scholarship information was sent to all congregations in December. Scholarship applications, instructions, and financial aid contact information is available on the district website - [www.kslcms.org](http://www.kslcms.org), click on the Publications tab and scroll down to Mission & Stewardship Resources.

If you have any questions, please contact Lori Hennessey at 800-357-4421 ext. 223 or [lori@kslcms.org](mailto:lori@kslcms.org). The deadline for the Kansas District is June 1.

## Christians Trust by Steve Bremer

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.  
Have no fear of sudden disaster. Proverbs 3:5, 25*

Some things are just going to happen. Despite our best “preventative” measures, something will happen to our air conditioner, our internet connection, our automobile, our selves and even our children. None of us can totally shield our belongings, our lives and our children from the results of this imperfect world.

As Christians, we believe, we pray and we trust in the Lord to richly and daily provide us with all that we need and to shield us from all harm and danger.

But some things are still going to happen: changing fuel cost; trade imbalance; weakening dollar; media hype; declining real estate values; sub-prime mortgage; accelerating decline of the stock market; increasing unemployment; and multi-billion dollar financial bailouts.

The last U.S. recession was 17 years ago in 1990-1991. The last major recession period was 28 years ago from 1980-1981, with another following from 1981-1982. That was a long time ago. We forget. Recessions are going to happen in this imperfect world of greed and selfish want. Despite our

best “preventative” measures, these economic cycles happen. None of us are smart enough to figure out how to shield our investments and hold our economy safe from recession.

The good news is that most recessions are short-lived and are followed by long periods of prosperity. In the last 60 years the U.S. has recorded 10 recessions – about one every 6 years, with an average length of 10.6 months.

How does recession impact the church? The data for the recessions from 1980-1981 and 1981-1982 indicate that Bible class attendance increased and so did contributions. Yes, contrary to conventional wisdom, LCMS congregations experienced increased attendance and giving.

LCEF has seen investors remain faithful, the loan delinquency rate is virtually non-existent and our operating income has remained normal. Yes, the market impact on LCEF has been significant, just as it has been on our own individual 401K plans. However, we know Christians respond differently in times of economic crisis.

As a young father and husband in

## LCEF Interest Rates

December 2008 

### Steward Account Rates:

#### Congregational Certificates

Demand	1.875%
Steward Account	2.875%

#### Individual Accounts

Less than \$1,000	1.250%
\$1,000 - less than \$5,000	1.375%
\$5,000 - less than \$10,000	1.750%
\$10,000 and over	2.875%

#### LCEF provides loans for LCMS

#### Congregations, Schools and Professional Church Workers:

Monthly, quarterly or annual adjustable	5.750%
5 Year fixed	6.250%

#### Congregation Endowment

#### (60-Month Fixed or Floating):

Min. Investment	Rate	APY
\$1,000	3.655%	3.705%
\$10,000	3.780%	3.834%
\$100,000	3.905%	3.963%

1980, I was whining to my dad about a 14% interest rate on my home mortgage. I was scolded and commanded, “Tell me the date, show me on the calendar the day you think the Lord is going to stop blessing you.” As Christians may we believe, pray and trust in the Lord. God is going to take care of us. It’s just going to happen.

## Human Care Ministry

Rev. Rocky Mease, Chaplain

### Take a Deep Breath and Hear the Good News

September, October and November were tough months. While I cannot be specific, due to the confidential nature of the work I do with church workers and their families, I can generally say these were anxious times.

I am sure December was a busy and probably anxious time in the parish. It seems to me, however, that the anxiety of the busy “holiday” season is different. From Thanksgiving morning until just after New Year’s, the phones don’t ring as often at the District Office.

There are probably many reasons for this apparent change. It could be

that the church workers are too busy to deal with their acute anxiety. It could be that church workers have better things to do this time of year than call someone at the District Office.

I wonder though, if just possibly, the reason might be the “reason of the season.”

These seasons of national Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, New Year’s and Epiphany shout and scream, even from secular sources, “Peace on earth,” and, “Good will to men.”

It seems this season comes with so much busyness that we may miss that

Good News. We need to take a deep breath, slow down and hear this Good News as we teach and proclaim it in classrooms and from pulpits.

I also hope we can carry some of this “peace” with us into the New Year. I have no doubt the phones at the District Office will ring more often again. I have no doubt that there will

be anxious times to work through. My prayer is that the peace that was brought by the Christ Child can ease our anxiety and encourage our ministry.

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year to you all.



## Looking to the New Year

As I look to the New Year, many things cause me to wonder what this year might have to offer.

We have a new President and we are wondering how he might help our economy or address world peace. He will be introducing new leadership in Washington.

The economy and stock market may be affecting you in a very troublesome way. You may have been one of the people who find yourself without a job. Your net worth may have been reduced and that is causing concern. You may be approaching retirement or children in college, but now your resources are diminished.

However the government, the economy or the lack of

jobs may affect us all, we need to remember that Jesus is still in charge. He is in control.

In these troubled times, putting together a good estate plan may be the last thing on your mind. If you need a will or trust, please call my office for help. Perhaps your church could benefit from a Wills Seminar or a seminar that answers the question, "What in the world are we here for?"

For more information on these seminars and others, please call Doris at 785-357-4441, ext. 101.



*The Year Ahead*

## Business Office

Debbie Crites, Business Manager

### District Fiscal Year to Close

The District will close its 2008 fiscal year on **Thursday, January 15, 2009**. Any receipt received after that date will be credited to the fiscal year 2009. In order to meet the standards for a not-for-profit corporation audit, we cannot credit any 2008 mission gift received after the close of our fiscal year, so please work to meet this deadline. If you are sending any 2009 gift prior to January 15th, please clearly indicate that the gift is for 2009 so that we may credit it correctly for your congregation.

Please carefully check over your Year-To-Date Statement of Receipts to be sent Jan. 16 and report any discrepancies no later than Jan. 23 to Tami at 800-357-4421 ext. 200 or tami@kslcms.org.

### W-4

Have all full-time and part-time employees complete a new W-4 for 2009. This will ensure that your withholding records for the year will be accurate. If the employee does not provide a completed W-4, the employer must withhold federal income tax as if the worker were single with no withholding allowance.

### 2009 Salary Guidelines

The District Board of Directors, at their regular October meeting, decided to re-address their previous decision regarding the base salary increase for the upcoming 2009 year. In light of the economic downturn during the previous quarter, the Board moved to make an adjustment in the base salary for 2009. The Board decision was to re-adjust the base salary to \$27,245, a 4% increase from 2008.

This change has been made to the Kansas District Salary Guidelines and is available on our website at: [www.kslcms.org/ks\\_departments/business\\_office/2009\\_Salary\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://www.kslcms.org/ks_departments/business_office/2009_Salary_Guidelines.pdf).

### Lutheran Witness

Lutheran Witness billings were mailed in November using the current subscription number, so please make sure that your congregation is up to date as soon as possible. Payments are due January 6, 2009. If you have any questions or need the change forms, please contact Tami at 800-357-4421 ext. 200 or tami@kslcms.org.

### IRS Mileage Rates

Beginning Jan. 1, 2009, the standard mileage rate will be 55 cents per mile (3.5 cent decrease from the current rate of 58.5 cents) and charitable standard rate remains unchanged at 14 cents per mile; and medical and moving rate will be 24 cents/mile (3 cent decrease from the current rate of 27 cents).

### 2009 403(b) Regulations

Concordia Plan Services has revised their Official Plan Document for the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP) to meet the new 403(b) regulations that will be effective January 1, 2009. If you are offering the CRSP as your only 403(b) plan, the Concordia Plan Services plan document will fulfill the new IRS requirements. The restated plan document can be found on their website: <http://www.concordiaplans.org/graphics/assets/documents/11284.pdf>.

### 2008 Resources Available

Do you need help with W-2 and 1099 preparation? The updated 2008 Congregational Treasurer's Manual is now available online and will guide you through the process. Go to [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org) and click under the link "Resources" for Congregations. You are able to view or print the manuals from this site. If you are not able to access it on the website and would like us to send you a copy, contact the Business Office at 800-357-4421 ext. 200 or tami@kslcms.org. Cost of a CD of the 2008 Treasurer's Manual is \$6.00.

## Faith and the Home – Marriage Ministry

The second in a series of four *Faith and the Home* family ministry training workshops will be conducted at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Olathe on Saturday, February 21, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Marriage Ministry will be the featured topic and will be presented by Pastor Jeff Meyers (Christ, Overland Park) and Pastor Charlie Adams (Trinity, Salina). Pastor Meyers will focus on marriage preparation practices in the parish while Pastor Adams will highlight congregational strategies for marriage enrichment.

*Faith and the Home* is unique in providing training for leader teams or individuals in congregations who

have a passion for family ministry. These workshops are intended to make training and development more user friendly by providing a series of individual workshops that can be completed on a selected basis or could be completed in its entirety (lack of participation in module one does not prohibit anyone from attending this workshop as module one will be repeated in the future). Individual workshop registration has been set at \$25 per event. This includes all instruction costs and a lunch. Contact the Kansas District Office, Educational Services at 1-800-357-4421 ext. 206 to register. Deadline to register is February 13.

## Youth Ministry Academy Training Continues

Trinity Lutheran Church in Salina will serve as the host site on Saturday, March 7, for the second Youth Ministry Academy training workshop for adults serving in youth ministry.

This workshop will focus on nurturing youth ministry.

- ◆ Who are we? - What is our Lutheran identity?
- ◆ How do I grow? - Personal spiritual development as an adult leader with youth.
- ◆ How do we grow together? - How to teach the Bible and support young people along their faith journey.

Led by professional youth ministry leaders, the three modules will engage

the participants through a variety of instructional strategies: lectures, experiential learning, reflection, and small group processes. The cost is \$25 for the day (this includes all instruction costs and a lunch). Contact the Kansas District Office, Educational Services at 1-800-357-4421 ext. 206 to register. Deadline to register is February 27.

Note: Workshops can be completed on a selected basis or in its entirety (lack of participation in workshop one does not prohibit anyone from attending this workshop as workshop one will be repeated in the future).

## 2009 LEA National DCE Conference

**When:** April 16-18, 2009

**Where:** Marriott Quorum Hotel, Dallas/Addison, Texas

\$99.00 per night single-quad occupancy

**Theme:** Faithful God ... Faith-Filled Servants

**Registration:** Online only at [www.lea.org](http://www.lea.org)

(only \$4 increase over last two DCE conferences)

*Early Bird Registration - thru Jan. 31*

LEA member ..... \$199.00

Nonmember ..... \$299.00 includes one-year LEA membership

Spouse ..... \$99.00

Student ..... \$99.00

Emeriti ..... \$99.00

*Registration after Jan. 31*

LEA member ..... \$249.00

Nonmember ..... \$349.00 includes one-year LEA membership

Spouse ..... \$149.00

Student ..... \$149.00

Emeriti ..... \$149.00



## Education Calendar

- Jan. 9-11 LCMS Youth Ministry Symposium, Houston, TX
- Jan. 17 Adult Education Committee, District Office
- Jan. 17 Adult Singles Ministry Committee, District Office
- Jan. 26-27 DCE Retreat, Cross Winds, Hesston
- Jan. 29 Early Childhood Consultants, San Marcos, TX
- Feb. 8 Principals & Early Childhood Directors, District Office
- Feb. 9-10 KAIRS Conference (Principals), Ramada Inn, Topeka
- Feb. 20-21 District Youth Ministry Team Retreat, Risen Savior, Wichita
- Feb. 21 Faith & the Home (Family Ministry – Module 2), Beautiful Savior, Olathe

## Technology Workshop

Dr. Perry Bresemann, LCMS School Ministry - Director of Technology, will be the featured presenter at an afternoon workshop for Lutheran school principals, early childhood directors, respective faculty, and school board members. This FREE workshop will be held at the Kansas District Office, 1000 SW 10th Ave in Topeka on Sunday, February 8, from 2:00-5:00 p.m. Dr. Bresemann will share strategies that will enhance the effectiveness of the use of technology in our Lutheran school settings. Please pre-register by Monday, February 2, by contacting Joyce Tate at 1-800-357-4421 ext. 206.

## DCE Retreat

The 2009 District DCE Retreat will be held on January 26-27 at the Cross Wind Retreat Center in Hesston.

Come for rest and renewal! Recharge your ministry batteries! Spend time together with your brothers and sisters in Christ and build relationships with one another and the Lord through spiritual renewal.

## Visit Concordia, Seward

Trinity, Garden City is planning to take a bus to Seward on April 2-4, Thursday – Saturday, for 8th graders and older. If there are others in the District who would like to jump on board, contact DCE Leland Jackson by March 1 at 620-276-3110 or [dceleland@tlcgck.kscoxmail.com](mailto:dceleland@tlcgck.kscoxmail.com). Cost is \$10.00 for the bus ride along with money for meals up and back.

## Lutheran Schools Ablaze - Zion, Independence

Zion Lutheran Church and School in Independence is in a state of transition like many LCMS churches with schools. Zion was established in 1898 for the purpose of providing Christian education for the members of the congregation. In 2008, Zion, mirroring the nationwide statistics, has seen a decrease in the number of school age children in the congregation. But rather than see this as a negative, we see this as a blessing and an opportunity. God writes to us in Acts 10:36, "You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all." Because we know this message of salvation, we are determined to share it in our community and world through the gift of Zion Lutheran School.

Three years ago, in conjunction with the National Lutheran School Accreditation school improvement process, we established the following goal: "Zion Lutheran School demonstrates its Christian mission in the school, community, and world." A key strategy in implementing this goal stated, "In conjunction with the Board of Evangelism, we will develop, implement, and regularly evaluate a comprehensive plan to reach out to the un-churched students of Zion Lutheran School, preschool through 8th grade."

### Shifting Paradigm

The plan did not bear fruit immediately, but as a result of education, prayer, and trust in the Lord, the harvest has begun. First of all, Zion Church members needed education and time to understand the shifting paradigm of ministry. The school was established to serve as daily

## Servant Event

Trinity, Garden City is heading south across the border into Mexico to help build homes through Amor Ministries, March 14-21, 2009. The cost of \$350 includes transportation from Garden City or Wichita, meals, housing (tents in Mexico) and materials for the house. Contact DCE Leland Jackson at 620-276-3110 or [dceleland@tlcgck.kscoxmail.com](mailto:dceleland@tlcgck.kscoxmail.com)

reinforcement of the faith taught in the home and at church. As the community of Independence changed due to an increasingly mobile society with a more diverse population, the purpose of our school was no longer just to reinforce Lutheran Christian parenting, but rather to intentionally focus on mission outreach. Ten years ago, 62% of our students came from the congregation, while today only 34% are members of our church. In an even more dramatic shift, 28 of our 76 families do not claim a church home. Our teachers are in the mission field each and every day. What an opportunity we have to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

### Blessed by God

God is good! This school year we experienced a 15% growth in enrollment and our preschool was filled to capacity in early spring. A new parent shared a comment from her son, "Mom and Dad, I know you don't have to pay to send me to a public school, so I really want to thank you for sending me to Zion Lutheran School! I really love hearing about Jesus every day!" Hebrews 11:1 tells us, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

We thank God, the Creator of the Universe, for using a small Lutheran school to create disciples and followers of the King!

*by Dawn Oldenettel, Principal*

## Retreat Center

Volunteer opportunities continue to be available at the Kansas District Retreat Center. Call Barb at the District Office, 1-800-357-4421 ext. 100, if you want to volunteer.

## Choir Workshop

Concordia Seminary will offer its 17th Annual Schola Cantorum: An Adult Choir Member Workshop, on Saturday, Jan. 24, 2009, from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Schola Cantorum is open to all choir members, choir directors and ministers of music. Dr. Kurt von Kampen will serve as this year's clinician.

The cost for the Schola Cantorum is \$60 per individual or \$110 per congregation (\$70 or \$125 after Jan. 16, 2009). Lunch and the choral music are not included in the fee. For more information or registration forms, call 314-505-7486 or e-mail [ce@csl.edu](mailto:ce@csl.edu).

## National Lutheran Alliance

A partnership of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Concordia University, Wisconsin and Lutheran Education Association

**The Purpose:** "...to build relationships, encourage good citizenship, bring the expertise and experience of Lutheran entities to help strengthen government, give expression to values and theological positions, and to develop internship and other educational opportunities for individuals/groups

[www.nationallutheranalliance.org](http://www.nationallutheranalliance.org)

## CCCS Benefit Concerts

The Children's Christian Concern Society (CCCS) is presenting two benefit concerts featuring Christian singer/songwriter Nate Douglas.

- ◆ Friday, Jan. 23 at Faith Lutheran Church in Topeka at 7:00 p.m.
- ◆ Sunday, Jan. 25 at Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Leawood at 7:00 p.m.

Nate Douglas has been spreading the message of Jesus Christ in congregations, coffee shops, festivals and youth gatherings over the past two years in North America, with his unique musical style, high-energy, stage presence and authenticity.

Make group reservations by calling 785-357-7688 or emailing [cccs@kslcms.org](mailto:cccs@kslcms.org)

Visit [www.ccskids.org](http://www.ccskids.org) for updated concert information and to learn how CCCS shares the love of Jesus with children around the world through Christian education.

# Guinea Prayers

## Andrea Herman's Prayer Requests

Please join her in thanking God for:

- ✠ a wonderful month with friends in Guinea
- ✠ progress in language learning
- ✠ her language helper's daughter's (S.S.) interest in and curiosity about God's word
- ✠ restored health
- ✠ His protection and provision
- ✠ wonderful neighbors, who God used to protect people and property during the last strike
- ✠ resolving the water crisis that has been a problem since she arrived there almost two years ago
- ✠ the gift of His Son

Please join her in praying for:

- ✠ relief from the itchy, painful rash that is once again affected her hands
- ✠ respiratory health (there is a lot of smoke and dirt in the air this time of year and it's hard to stay healthy)
- ✠ SK, an older woman, who recently had part of her foot amputated
- ✠ SK & her family - that God would bring healing and faith in Jesus to the hearts He has opened
- ✠ MK, a dear friend - that God would miraculously heal her marriage & bring MK & her kids to faith in Him
- ✠ a smooth transition back to the village in Mali and God's blessings on relationships and language learning there
- ✠ open hearts desiring God's word
- ✠ continued peace in Guinea

## Heiney Family Prayer Requests

- ✠ for safe travel for the Heiney children as they travel back after Christmas break
- ✠ for Tim and Beth as they look for a house in Bamako
- ✠ for the Forest Region church - good leadership and protection from the enemy especially in the area of corruption
- ✠ for the Conakry church - for a place to worship as they have just been kicked out of their place again
- ✠ For Jonathan, dealing with health issues

## Carlos Family Prayer Requests

- ✠ Safe travel as they go to Florida to visit Jack's family to celebrate his father's 70th birthday
- ✠ Thanksgiving for those individuals and churches who have already pledged to support our work in Guinea
- ✠ Thanksgiving that decisions have been made for Jack and Cathy's French schooling to happen in Albertville, France and Hannah's senior year of high school will be at Black Forest Academy in Germany
- ✠ That Jack and Cathy are able to identify and register for the right health care and medical classes the first part of the year
- ✠ Guidance as Raymond decides where to continue his education next school year and for his current EMT studies as well
- ✠ That they will have many opportunities after the first of the year to share their story with lots of churches



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Missouri Synod

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*Arise, shine  
for your light has come,  
and the glory of the  
LORD rises upon you.  
Isaiah 60:1*