



DISTRICT NEWS

KANSAS

State of the district

Dear members of Christ's body in the LCMS Kansas District,

January is a fitting time to take stock of how we've used the "talents" the Lord has given us (Matthew 25) — to reflect on where we are and where we're going.



Rev. Peter K. Lange
District President

To that end, I give you "the list of 24."

The list includes items that we, your servant leaders in the Kansas District, have checked off our "to do" list during this triennium as we've worked to be faithful stewards of the gifts and resources entrusted to us.

I'll be sharing the list with our pastors as I make my annual visit to each circuit's monthly conference, but I wanted to share an overview more broadly here since it affects all members of our LCMS congregations in Kansas.

Before I get to that overview, though, I'd like to clear up a common point of confusion concerning the term "members," which appears in our newly revised mission statement: "Our mission is to support and encourage the members of the District in carrying out the mission Christ has given His Church."

Technically speaking, our members are the congregations and rostered workers of the district (see Article V of the LCMS

Constitution: "Membership in the Synod is held and may be acquired by congregations, ministers of religion-ordained and ministers of religion-commissioned ..."), rather than all Missouri Synod Lutherans in Kansas.

Nonetheless, we still recognize that everyone here shares in our life together in mission. As we work to support and encourage our members — LCMS Kansas congregations and rostered workers — we strive to keep in mind the best interests of *every* LCMS Kansan.

Now, on to the list. In what follows, I'll share a few highlights in five areas.

Congregational Support

We've improved the efficiency of the call process for pastors, as well as communication between congregations and the district office during that process. On av-

erage, the amount of time "the ball is in the district's court" during the pastoral call process is now less than 10 percent of the total time of the vacancy.

In addition, the district president, circuit visitors and vice presidents have significantly increased the number of intentional, proactive visits to congregations to build relationships, listen and offer support and encouragement for the advancement of Christ's mission.

Worker Support

Church worker care is a high priority in the district. To that end, we've undertaken a significant survey to understand the most significant needs of our church workers, and we've appointed a very capable Church Worker Care Committee to work alongside other committees and

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Ordained and commissioned Kansas District workers at their fall conference in Topeka.

THE DISTRICT CURRENTLY HAS:

208 ordained workers	201 commissioned workers
160 congregations	

AROUND KANSAS

INSTALLATION



The Rev. Gary Wolf was installed at Concordia, Hoisington, on Nov. 19. Participants in the service included, from left (front row) the Revs. Jim Judson, Wolf, Chris Craig; (back row) Luke Brown, Matt Schneider, Timothy Dorsch (Enid, Okla.) and Nicholas Martinez.



Share your news with us!

Send stories and photos to:

- › kbruss@kslcms.org
- › 785-357-5071 (fax)
- › Lutheran Witness Editor
LCMS Kansas District,
1000 SW 10th Ave.
Topeka, KS 66604

Deadline for the **March** issue is **Jan. 15**. Photos should be in high-resolution with a minimum 300 dpi.

Celebrate our schools

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK will be held Jan. 21-27, with the theme “It’s Still All About Jesus.” The week provides our schools in Kansas and throughout the country an opportunity to proclaim and celebrate God’s work among us in our Lutheran schools.

The Kansas District is blessed to have 14 elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) and 45 pre-schools, all of which are committed to helping students grow spiritually as well as academically. We’re grateful to be able to share Jesus’ love with children and their families throughout Kansas.

Resources for celebrating are available at lcms.org/lutheranschoolsweek.

Please report your stats

Congregations should be on the lookout this month for a mailing from LCMS Rosters, Statistics and Research Services on reporting your 2017 statistics. The mailing provides information on how to submit online figures for such things as membership, worship attendance and contributions from members. Reports are due by Feb. 28.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED



▲ With the Rev. Jonathan Schultz are new members of Trinity, Caney, who were welcomed on Reformation Day. Six were also baptized.

▲ Immanuel, Norton, welcomed new members on Nov. 12. From left, the Rev. Rick Rostek, Dave Mora, Linda and Steve Jennings, and Dale and Pat Batka.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

individuals to address those needs.

We've also joined, along with 31 other districts of the LCMS, in the Synod's PALS program (Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support), which provides support and continuing education to pastors during their first three years in the pastoral ministry.

Missions

We've filled two vacancies by calling a full-time assistant to the President for Missions and Stewardship and hiring an administrative assistant for that office. We've also established a new partnership with LCMS Mission Advancement and Mission Central in Mapleton,

Iowa, for the support of international missions.

In addition, we've refreshed and expanded our 20-year partnership with Guinea and West Africa, in close partnership with the LCMS Office of International Mission.

Lastly, we've partnered with congregations and individuals to plant a new congregation in Pratt and have begun efforts toward that end in Concordia.

Communication

As I mentioned earlier, we have a new mission statement and, with it, a new vision statement. We've added a communications specialist, revamped our website and unveiled a new district logo. In addition, we now make available on our website brief summaries of executive staff reports and service board reports from our quarterly Board



OUR MISSION
is to support
and encourage
members of
the District in
carrying out the
mission Christ
has given his
church.

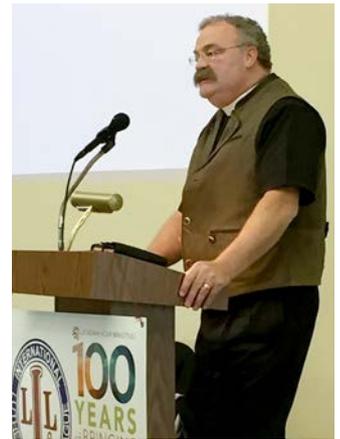
of Directors meetings.

Administration

We've developed a new strategic plan, which we revisit each quarter. We've realigned and balanced the district budget, and we're completely overhauling our personnel manual and updating our policy manual. We've also assessed and improved the Retreat Center in Herington.

In summary, we're striving to support and encourage our members — congregations, schools, pastors, teachers, deaconesses, DCEs, musicians — in a variety of ways. But as we do that, we hope to support and encourage each of you, the 54,155 baptized in the 160 LCMS congregations of the Kansas District. Thank you for the privilege of doing so.

Convention has distinguished guest



The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, LCMS president, attended two Kansas District Lutheran Layman's League (LLL) events in November. He spoke during the 78th LLL Convention at Mount Calvary, Marysville, on Nov. 4 (above), and was the preacher during the Convocation Service at Washington County High School on Nov. 5 (left).

Feb. 4 is Lutheran Hour Ministries Sunday

By Tim Voelker,
President, Kansas LLL/LHM

WHAT IS YOUR CONGREGATION DOING FOR LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES SUNDAY?

Lutheran Hour Ministries Sunday is celebrated the first Sunday of February. (Actually, it can be celebrated any Sunday that is convenient for the congregation.) LHM Sunday is a time to let your congregation know all the wonderful things God is doing through Lutheran Hour Ministries.

Please plan to celebrate LHM Sunday in your congregation. Simply go to lhm.org/lhmsunday, where you'll find LHM Sunday resources that can be ordered or downloaded, free of charge. Resources



Lutheran Laymen's League

include LHM Sunday giving envelopes, bulletin inserts, a tips sheet with speaking points, a video and other items.

Then talk to your pastor and plan an LHM Sunday. Show the video, talk to the congregation, give them inserts and giv-

ing envelopes. Collect the envelopes and send them to Lutheran Hour Ministries.

This isn't the only way to do it!

Be creative!

But whatever you decide to do, please work to get people excited and involved. Let's set the bar high. Let's have a high percentage of members in each church become Lutheran Hour Ministries sponsors.

Again, get the materials ordered or downloaded and use them in a way that is best for you, your pastor and your congregation. God is truly blessing the work of Lutheran Hour Ministries, and we need to do all we can to support these efforts.



Jeffrey Maltz, center, with Ryan McIvor, LCEF senior vice-president, left, and the Rev. Bart Day, LCEF president and CEO.

District VP receives award

Jeffrey Maltz, Lutheran Church Extension Fund district vice-president for Kansas and Oklahoma, was honored with an achievement award during the LCEF Fall Leadership Conference, held Nov. 17-19 in New Orleans. Maltz was one of four district vice-presidents recognized for their outstanding work in promoting the ministry of church extension.

Factors taken into consideration for the honor included performance against ministry targets, which are established at the outset of each year for the vice-presidents and their LCEF region.

"These goals, as the DVPs will tell you, are not that easy to reach," said Ryan McIvor, senior vice-president of District and National Operations. "It requires dedication, focus and more than anything, a reliance on the power

of the Holy Spirit at work in their district."

Maltz was recognized for outstanding achievement in districts with \$35 to \$70 million in assets. In the past year, Maltz oversaw a tremendous outpouring of blessings, with more than \$6.5 million of new lending activity. The list of LCEF investors grew by 155, and four new ministry agreements were established.

"The Kansas District LCEF and I are blessed to have the continued support of Kansas investors, churches, schools and Recognized Service Organizations," Maltz said. "It takes a combined effort to achieve these goals, including support from national LCEF and the Kansas District staff."

Maltz has been with LCEF and the Kansas District since 2013.