



DISTRICT NEWS

KANSAS

Thanking God with JOY

By Rev. Peter K. Lange
District President

In the December issue of this publication, I commented on 11 words from Philippians 1 that are the biblical basis for our convention theme this summer: “I thank my God ... because of your partnership in the gospel.”

The idea of partnership in the gospel is central to our “Life Together in Mission,” but there’s more to the passage. In Philippians 1:3-5, St. Paul writes more fully:

“I thank my God in all my **remembrance** of you, always in every **prayer** of mine for you all making my prayer with **joy**, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”

Remembrance, prayer, joy — they’re all important, but here, I’d like to focus on joy, beginning with a “joyful” modification of our shortened convention verse: “I thank my God ... making my prayer WITH JOY, because of your partnership in the gospel.”

If brevity weren’t important in publicity, this longer theme verse would have been a nice option, as it highlights the inherent joy of sharing a partnership in the Gospel. And Paul leaves no doubt whatsoever about his joy. In the Greek text, he gives joy prominence by placing it first in the phrase (μετὰ χαρᾶς τὴν δέησιν ποιούμενος), so that one could translate literally, “I thank my God ... WITH JOY making my prayer because of your partnership in the gospel.”

Paul’s joy over his partnership with the

Corinthians is easy to understand. As I look over the last three years, I can identify numerous joys resulting from our life together in mission in the Kansas District. Among them:

- ▶ **GETTING TO KNOW** the workers of the district better through regular visits at several dozen conferences.
- ▶ **GETTING TO KNOW** many lay members through attendance at ordinations and installations, congregational anniversaries and call meetings, and other congregational visits intended simply to build relationships and discuss the congregation’s ministry and how that can be better supported and encouraged by our district.
- ▶ **VISITING SEVERAL** of the schools of our district and interacting with students and staff.
- ▶ **COLLABORATING WITH** the talented and dedicated staff of the district, and being a part of many wonderful improvements to the administration of the district.

▶ **GAINING A BETTER** knowledge and understanding of the workings of our Synod through serving on the Council of Presidents, then sharing that increased understanding with others in our district.

▶ **AND FINALLY, SIMPLY TRAVELING** around and seeing this beautiful state of ours, in which the Lord has placed us together as laborers in His vineyard, and as the Synod in this place.

Should the Lord, through the convention, give me another three years as district president, I look forward to finding joy in doing much more of the same. And I know that new joys will come from implementing, and continuing to implement, the priorities for mission that are confirmed at our convention.

As all of us do our part in the body of Christ to advance His mission, let us always make our prayer with joy because of our partnership in the gospel. And doing so, let us live each day of our lives not only together in mission, but also **JOY:FULLY LUTHERAN!**



President Lange with Gretchen Young of Corsicana, Texas, at an anniversary celebration at St. John, Nashville — one of his many visits in the last triennium.

District welcomes new business manager

HEATHER WILLIAMS HAS JOINED THE KANSAS DISTRICT STAFF as the new business manager. Williams succeeds Debbie Crites, who is retiring June 15 after serving the district for nearly 28 years.



Heather Williams
Business Manager

Prior to joining the district staff, Williams, a Washburn University graduate, worked as an accountant for 13 years. In her previous positions, she gained considerable experience with financial operations, including audits, investment tracking, payroll, taxes, monthly accounting procedures and reporting.

“I love providing information and being of service to people, which there is a lot of opportunity to do in business and accounting,” Williams said. “I especially love not-for-profit accounting and the chance to help an organization to accomplish its mission.”

An important part of that effort is helping people understand financial reports,

which is one of Williams’ specialties. “Accounting doesn’t have to be black and white,” she pointed out. “Colors and pictures are OK!”

Williams is looking forward to using those skills for the benefit of the church. “How often does one get the chance to use their professional experiences to directly serve the church and glorify God in their daily vocation?” she said, reflecting on her new position. “Getting the chance to work with people in my own faith organization, not just daily in the office, but also with congregations throughout the state, is so cool.”

Williams already has quite a few connections to congregations in the state, with ties to churches in Phillipsburg, Coffeyville, Larned and Topeka, where she attends Calvary Lutheran Church with her husband, Matt, and two boys, Jack and Jett. She’s says she’s looking forward to meeting old and new faces at the district convention this summer.

When she isn’t crunching numbers, Williams enjoys watching her boys play baseball, photography, antiques, getting lost in books and camping.

Youth Gathering planning underway



Preparations have begun for the annual senior high Kansas District Youth Gathering (KDYG), to be held at the Atrium in Hutchinson Nov. 16-18. Program planners include, from left, Jim Bradshaw (Kansas District representative), Donna Williams (Zion, Newton), Brian Amey (Holy Cross, Wichita), Katie Morgan (Christ, Overland Park), Rev. Henry Blickhahn (Our Redeemer, Hutchinson), Randi Petrik (Bethany, Overland Park) and Ben Venteicher (Messiah, Hays). Gathering details and registration information will be announced later this summer.

KANSAS DISTRICT CONVENTION



What’s next?

The 73rd Kansas District Convention is being held June 7-9 in Topeka. If you’re a convention delegate or guest, you’ll be able to watch all of the action in person. If you’re not able to attend, you can still stay in the loop by checking for updates on our convention webpage, which you can access from our homepage: kslcms.org.

On the convention page, you’ll be able to see who’s been elected for offices, boards and committees, as well as a list of resolutions and actions taken. Those resolutions will drive the district’s strategic priorities for the next triennium.

We also plan to videotape the convention keynote presentations, which will be delivered by the Rev. Dr. Alfonso O.

Espinosa, senior pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Irvine, Calif., and vice-chairman of the LCMS Board for National Mission.

Espinosa will address *life together* in three contexts — congregations, districts and the world — guided by a fundamental principle from Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s book “Life Together”: “We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ” (Harper & Row, p. 21).



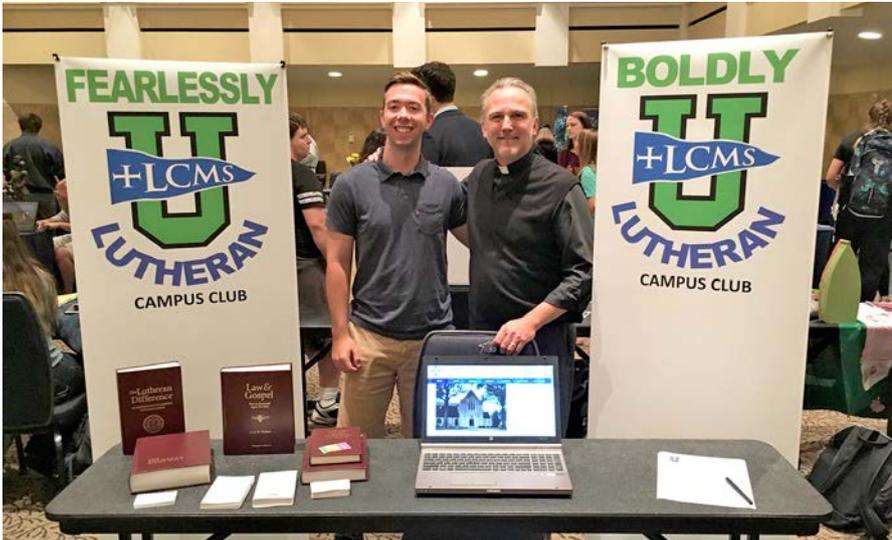
Rev. Dr. Alfonso O. Espinosa

Get convention updates at



CAMPUS MINISTRY

Supporting our students



Collegians need Jesus ... we can help

Now is a great time to think about the young people you know (or have yet to meet) who are off to college in a new city. They'll need spiritual support, which is what campus ministry is all about.

"At college, a young person's faith is going to be tested — not only by some professors but also by classmates and new friends," notes the Rev. Dr. John Tape, director of the Lutheran Student Center at Wichita State University. "To do well with that testing, it's very helpful to know other sincere, dedicated Christians who can strengthen and encourage the students in their Christian faith."

Listed below are campus ministries in the Kansas District. If you don't find what you need, go to lcms.org/campus-ministry, where you can find a map with local chapters throughout the country.

Emporia State University

Gwen Larson
620-341-5528
glarson1@emporia.edu

Haskell Indian Nations University

Haskell LIGHT House
Bob and Deon Prue
785-841-4809
bprue@lutheranindianministries.org

Kansas State University

St. Luke Lutheran Church
Rev. King Crawford
785-539-2604 (church)
kcrawf1014@aol.com

Pittsburg State University

Lutheran Student Fellowship
Zion Lutheran Church
Rev. Ted Cook
620-231-4267
zionpitt@sbcglobal.net

University of Kansas (2)

Lutheran Student Fellowship
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Rev. Randy Weinkauff
785-843-0620
parishpastor@ilcandusc.org

Reedeemer Lutheran Church
Rev. Robert Leiste
785-843-8181
2197rlksole@gmail.com

Washburn University

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Rev. Jon Bruss and Rev. Devin Kerns
785-354-7132
jbruss@stjlcms.org or dkerns@stjlcms.org

Wichita State University

Lutheran Student Center
Rev. Dr. John Tape
316-684-5224
drjohntape@gmail.com
sharingtheloveofjesus.com

Washburn University student Noah Reilly joins Rev. Devin Kerns of St. John's, Topeka, at a student organizations fair on the Washburn campus last fall.



Teachers selected for leadership program

The LCMS School Ministry SLED (School Leadership Development) project management team met in late March and selected participants for the SLED 18 program. Congratulations to Kansas District Lutheran school teachers Whitney Holle (St. John, Alma) and Daniel Gibson (Hope, Shawnee), for being selected.

SLED prepares future administrators for Lutheran schools. Forty percent of Lutheran school administrators now serving are expected to retire within the next five years, creating a significant leadership void. Since 1996, the SLED program has produced a pool of nearly 400 potential administrative candidates.

Holle and Gibson will participate in the first of two three-day trainings in St. Louis June 21-23.

SUMMER WORKSHOP



Wholly Citizens:

Facing the World or How not to Sin in the Voting Booth

Dates: July 9-11 (register by June 25)

Presenter: Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann, professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Location: St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Humboldt

For more information or to register, go to csl.edu and select "Summer Workshop Series" from the "Resources" drop-down menu.

HELP WANTED

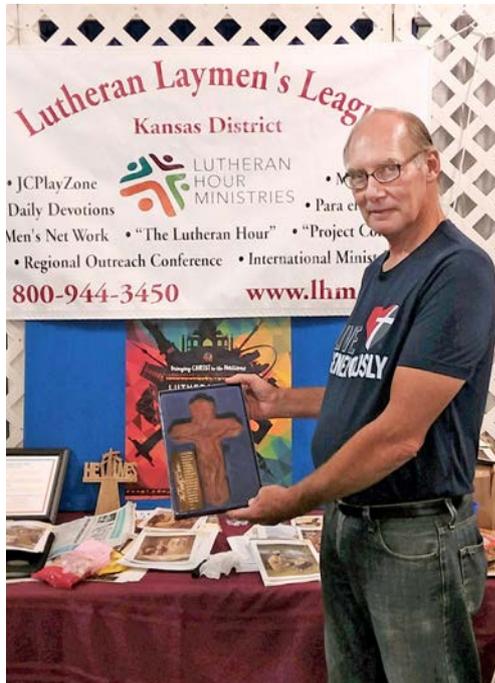
Christian materials, volunteers sought for fair booth

The 2018 Kansas State Fair will mark the 33rd consecutive year that the Kansas District LLL/LHM will have a booth. The fair will be held Sept. 7-16 in Hutchinson.

The booth is located in the southwest section of the Meadowlark Building and will provide visitors a variety of Christian material, including Bibles, *Portals of Prayer*, *My Devotions*, Sunday school items, LHM brochures and more.

Contact Mike Tonn at 620-465-3435 or tonn.mike@yahoo.com if you and/or your congregation can help by providing religious material or serving as a booth volunteer.

Thank you and blessings to everyone who helps provide an LLL/LHM presence at the fair.



Volunteer Mike Tonn, standing at the LLL/LHM booth at the Kansas State Fair, displays a cross to be given away in a drawing.



SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

Send stories and photos to:

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

The deadline for the August issue is June 13.

Photos should be in high-resolution with a minimum 300 dpi.



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Lutheran Church Extension Fund
> where investments build ministry

Photo courtesy of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod/Erik M. Lunsford.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund National Office: 10733 Sunset Office Drive, Suite 300 St. Louis, MO 63127-1020. Phone number: 800-843-5233. Website: lcef.org. LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. Lutheran Church Extension Fund—Missouri Synod (NMLS# 3444).