



LCMS Kansas District

# COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE

**Editorial Guidelines, Checklists, and Procedures**

May 2019

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## Grammar and Style

In matters of grammar and style, we generally follow *The Official Stylebook* of the LCMS here in the Kansas District (and always do so when writing for LCMS publications). However, we do depart occasionally from the LCMS guide for Kansas District communications (website, correspondence, publications, emails, convention reports, etc.).

Note: The guidelines that follow occasionally refer to “AP,” which is short for *The Associated Press Stylebook*. The LCMS *Stylebook* follows AP style fairly closely, so if you can’t find your answer in the LCMS guide, check AP.

### KANSAS-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

#### Congregation names

**LCMS:** A comma follows the city name; e.g., “Zion, Newton, is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.”

**Kansas:** It’s become commonplace here in the District not to include the closing comma, notably on the internal prayer list (e.g., Rev. Mark Jones – St. Andrew’s, Wakeeny to Grace, Eudora). Feel free to add the comma after the name in other types of writing, though, if you think the situation calls for it.

#### District/District Office

Capitalize when referring to the LCMS Kansas District, specifically. Lowercase when talking about districts or district offices in a general sense (e.g., “The Synod is asking districts to conduct worker wellness surveys.”)

#### Job titles

**LCMS:** Capitalize a title only when it precedes a name. Example: “Kansas District Rev. President Peter K. Lange presented the check.” OR “Rev. Peter K. Lange, Kansas District president, presented the check.”

**Kansas:** We’ve typically capitalized titles regardless of placement, often counting occupational descriptions such as “teacher” and “pastor” as titles (and capitalizing). But with both AP and the *Chicago Manual of Style* calling for lowercased titles (consistent with LCMS guidelines), we should aim to follow suit, especially when writing for Synod publications.

Examples: “Pastor Joe Smith has been installed ...”; “Rev. Joe Smith, senior pastor at Rockland Lutheran Church, will be in the area on Sunday.”

While this is the general guideline, there are many exceptions, including (but not limited to) titles on business cards and nameplates and in email signatures, bylines, position descriptions in the District Operations Manual (DOM), the District Constitution and Bylaws, and the internal prayer list.

## LCMS Kansas District

Please use this name in all communications (occasionally shortened to “Kansas District” or “the District.”). This convention is consistent with the LCMS guide, but “LCMS Kansas District” isn’t always what we’ve called ourselves. We began using the name consistently in the 2015–18 triennium. If you’re updating an older Kansas District publication or document that says Kansas District, LCMS, please change it to LCMS Kansas District.

## Phone extension

**LCMS:** Capitalize the “e” in Ext. (in keeping with the Associated Press guideline to capitalize nouns that precede a number).

**Kansas:** We use a lowercase “e” (so, 785-357-4441, ext. 400). Whatever you use, just be consistent.

## Rev. (title)

**LCMS:** Use “the” before “Rev.” on first reference.

**Kansas:** We *sometimes* use the more formal “the Rev.,” but in many contexts, we drop it. Example (from a letter or newsletter article): “Contact Rev. Galchutt with questions or concerns.”

## School names

**LCMS:** “School,” when not part of a formal title, is lowercased; e.g., vacation Bible school; Sunday school

**Kansas:** Vacation Bible School; Sunday School

## Serial (“Oxford”) comma

**LCMS:** Omit the last comma before the conjunction in a series (e.g., “red, white and blue”).

**Kansas:** We use it! (But if you’re in the habit of dropping it when items in a series are short and the communication is more informal, that’s fine).

## State abbreviations

**LCMS:** Use a shorted form of the name, according to the chart in the guide (e.g., Wis.)

**Kansas:** Use the two-letter postal code (WI)

## QUICK REFERENCE LIST

**Academic degrees.** Lowercase the type of degree (a bachelor’s, master’s, or associate degree); uppercase proper degree names (Master of Arts; Bachelor of Science degree). Abbreviations are fine (e.g., B.S., Ph.D.), especially if saving space is important. Lowercase the field in which the degree is earned (e.g., education, history) unless the field itself calls for a capital letter (e.g., English).

**Boards and committees.** Capitalize names of boards, committees, and task forces. In running text, after the formal name of the group has been identified, you can lowercase “board” (e.g., “The board adopted a motion to adjourn early.”)

**Church Worker Designations** (examples follow; for more details, see the articles on “Membership” in the Synod Handbook—Article V of the Constitution and Article 2 of the Bylaws)

- Minister of Religion—Ordained (clergy)
- Minister of Religion—Commissioned (e.g., teachers, directors of Christian education, deaconesses, etc.)
- Pastor Emeritus; Deaconess Emerita (retired workers)
- Vicar

**Concordia schools.** Following are the names of LCMS colleges and seminaries, punctuated as they appear on each school’s website as of fall 2018. Note the differences.

- Concordia University Chicago (River Forest, IL)
- Concordia University Texas (Austin, TX)
- Concordia University Wisconsin (Mequon, WI)
- Concordia University Irvine
- Concordia University Ann Arbor
- Concordia College New York (Bronxville, NY)
- Concordia University, Nebraska (Seward, NE)
- Concordia University, St. Paul
- Concordia University-Portland
- Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, IN
- Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

**Conference/Event Names.** Don’t add punctuation to the names of groups unless there’s grammatical possession involved.

- Educators Conference
- Pastors Conference
- Principals Conference
- Pastors’ Wives Retreat

**Dashes.** Yes, it would be faster to use a simple hyphen whenever you want to use a dash, but that can create confusion at times. Hence, we have the slightly longer en-dash and even longer em-dash.

- **Hyphen (-).** Use in phone numbers, compound adjectives (24-karat gold), and other compound words. (Note, though, that many words you might think would call for a hyphen now appear as one word, like “preschool” and “stepchild.”)
- **En-dash (–).** Use in inclusive numbers (e.g., January 12–14, 2019; Matt. 1:3–10). In the District, we also use the en-dash in some lists, with a space on either side (e.g., the call list: Rev. Apostle Paul – St. John, Sunnyvale to Trinity, Onekema, MI – accepted).
  - **A note on the en-dash:** It’s not always easy to type! If you can’t produce an en-dash on your device without a lot of hassle (e.g., copying/pasting), just use a hyphen.

- **Em-dash (—)**. Use in sentences in the place of parentheses or colons. In LCMS publications, the dashes are set off with a space on either side (an AP convention), but if you’re not writing for this purpose, it’s fine to use the em-dash with no spaces. One other important use of the em-dash: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

**Ellipses**. Use three dots to indicate omitted words. This sounds easy enough, but guidelines for spacing differ, depending on the stylebook. The LCMS guide calls for no spaces ( ... ), while some other manuals, such as Chicago, call for spaces ( . . . ). Generally, you should follow LCMS style (especially when writing something for an LCMS publication), but there may be some scenarios where the Chicago version (the prettier one) is just fine. Use your judgment.

### **Grants, Scholarships, and Funds (a few examples)**

- Education Loan Repayment Grant
- Kansas District Mission Grant
- LCEF Outreach Ministry Grant
- The Eugene Schmidt Memorial Mission Fund (can shorten to Schmidt Mission Fund on subsequent reference)

**LCMS names**. Note italics, articles, and punctuation in these frequently-used names:

- *Every One His Witness™* (italicized); acronym: *E1HW* (not *EOHW*, and yes, italicized)
- The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (a frequent error; note the em-dash)
- *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)*
- *The Lutheran Witness*
- *Lutherans Engage the World*
- *Reporter* (no “the”) and *Reporter Online*
- *re:Vitality* (note the lowercase “r”)

### **Meeting names**

Capitalize words describing group gatherings such as “meeting,” “conference,” “workshop,” and “retreat” when part of the formal event title. Lowercase in running text (e.g., “The workshop will be held January 21”) UNLESS following a tradition of capitalization (e.g., “the Gathering” for the National Youth Gathering). In calendar listings, lowercase individual appointments (e.g., school visit; chapel talk).

### **RSO Names**

- LeadaChild (note spelling: one word)
- Fairmount Ministries: An Outreach of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (use tagline on first reference)
- St. John’s Alumni Association
- Haskell LIGHT Campus Ministry (can shorten to Haskell LIGHT after first reference)

**Synod**. Capitalize when referring to the LCMS (e.g., The Synod’s disaster relief efforts are ongoing”); lowercase if talking about synods, generally. Avoid “synodical.”

## I'VE SEEN IT BOTH WAYS ...

Go with the BOLD option.

- **LCMS/LC-MS**
- Kansas District **LCMS/LCMS Kansas District**
- October 8<sup>th</sup>/**October 8**
- **a.m./AM/am**
- **e.g./i.e.** (for example)
  - **Note:** This is not just a Kansas preference. “E.g.” is short for *exempli gratia* and is thus the correct choice when you mean “for example.”
- **e.g./i.e.** (in other words)
  - “i.e.” is short for *id est*, “that is to say”
- e-mail/**email**/E-mail (one word)
- **one space**/two spaces after a period
- Flier/**flyer**
- Worshipping/**worshiping**
- Free-will/**freewill** offering
- **5,000**/5000
- **\$1 million**/one million dollars

## Editing Checklist

One of our priorities is error-free communication. To that end, here's a checklist of common errors and typos to watch for as you proofread your material. (Be sure to proofread not just new material but also documents that you're updating. Sometimes it seems like everything has been changed, but errors slip through—e.g., a contact person with a new extension number).

### ACCURACY CHECKS

- Names spelled correctly? Double-check. (The LCMS locator and social media sites are very helpful.)
- Titles correct? Check against official publications.
- Phone numbers correct? Check, or call to be sure (e.g., a phone number for hotel registration for a convention).
- All relevant information included: date, location, time, cost, contact information
- Contact names and information accurate? Are the contacts who have been listed aware of information being communicated? (This gets overlooked more than you might think.)
- Facts checked
- Accurate photo captions (e.g., everyone identified accurately and in the right place in the photo)

### STYLE CHECKS

- Spell-checked
- LCMS Kansas District (instead of Kansas District, LCMS)
- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (instead of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)
- a.m./p.m. (instead of AM/PM)
- One space after a period
- En-dash in dates (January 12–14, 2019)
- Apostrophes used correctly
- Consistency of elements throughout (e.g., font, font color, font size—watch out especially when copying/pasting items)
- Capitalization: Not overused
- Outdated information removed (watch for this especially in repeated items in newsletters or time-sensitive information on the web)
- Formatting checked (no unexpected indenting; unexplained symbols)
- Numbers: spell numbers under 10; use numerals for numbers 10 and up
- Hyphens in phone numbers



## Submission Guidelines: *Workers Together* and *The Lutheran Witness*

The District has two monthly publications: *Workers Together*, a newsletter targeted to members of the District (workers, congregations, and schools) and other interested subscribers, and the Kansas insert of *The Lutheran Witness*, which is aimed at all LCMS Kansans.

We welcome submissions to both publications. If you have a timely item or story idea of interest to our readers, send it to our communications specialist. When you submit an item, please observe the following guidelines:

### DEADLINES

- ***Workers Together*: Items need to be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.** (Example: January 15 for the February issue.)
- ***The Lutheran Witness*: Items must be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month six weeks before publication.** (Example: December 15 for the February issue.)

Send items to the District communication specialist.

### TARGET PUBLICATION

Please indicate what publication you have in mind with your submission (e.g., LW submission; WT submission). **Sample subject line:** Photo for LW.

### PHOTO SUBMISSIONS

Most submissions to our publications are photos, or they're accompanied by a photo. (If an item is ever submitted without a photo, in fact, we typically ask for one.) When submitting photos, **THINK BIG FILES** (i.e., high-resolution). High-resolution files are an absolute requirement for *The Lutheran Witness*, since photos in that publication are published in print. **Send us the largest size file possible.** If you have an image that you received via email or saved from the web, there's a good chance it's too small.

Here's a quick look at the difference:



The photo on the left is small: 576 x 768 pixels (similar to the typical “small” option for emailed photos). Notice the blurriness? If we submitted it to *The Lutheran Witness*, they’d ask for a better file, like the one on the right. That photo is noticeably sharper, thanks in part to its size; it was cropped from an image that’s 4439 x 6658 pixels.

## **CAPTIONS**

If you’re submitting a photo, please submit a caption with the names of subjects (checked for accuracy). One exception: You might be asked by a District staff member to submit a photo (e.g., at an installation service). In this case, don’t worry about the caption; we’ll take care of the identification.

## **EVENT GRAPHICS**

Sometimes we receive “save the date” graphics and event flyers, with a request to include them in our publications. We can accommodate some of these requests easily, but in other instances, we run into problems. The layout, for example, might not work well in *Workers Together*, or the item may use a font we don’t have. If you’re thinking of submitting something like this, please take layout constraints into account when designing. (In *Workers Together*, for example, a landscape orientation is preferable to a portrait orientation.) Also note that we typically don’t run full-page flyers.

## **PUBLICATION POLICY**

We try to publish as many items as we can, but submission is not a guarantee of publication. An item might not be published due to space limitations, timeliness, or suitability for the publication and/or audience. If you’re not sure about an item, feel free to send a query to the editor prior to submission.

Note that the Kansas District generally does not publish sales and advertising items.

## **PERMISSION**

If you submit an item, please be sure that you have permission to use all material, including photos, content, and graphics. (I.e., you either created the material yourself, obtained it from a free source, or secured permission to use it). If you’d like us to include a photo credit on submitted photos, let us know (e.g., “Photo credit: Susan Smith”).

## District-Affiliated Committees/Coordinators

The following section is for anyone who communicates on behalf of a District-sponsored group, program, or event. We appreciate your work and want to assist you in getting the word out about your activities. If you remember nothing else from this section, remember these four main points:

1. Work closely with District staff.
2. Get your information nailed down early.
3. Edit carefully.
4. Route all materials through the District Office for review.

### COMMUNICATING ABOUT YOUR EVENT: DOs and DON'Ts

#### DO

- Identify your communication needs early in the process. How would you like to use the following to promote your event?
  - District website
  - Eblasts
  - *Workers Together* (newsletter)
  - *The Lutheran Witness*
  - Registration forms/sites
- Create a rough timeline of communication activities.
- Consult with the District communication specialist early in the process about your plan and your timeline. Adjust as necessary.
- Submit all materials to the District well before your deadlines.
- When submitting items for review, you can either email attachments (clearly labeled) or provide a link to the file. If you're submitting material via a link to cloud-based storage, be sure that reviewers have the necessary permissions and that files for review are easy to locate.
- Update the District about changes regularly in the months/weeks leading up to your event.

#### DON'T

- Submit materials the day before something is scheduled to go live (e.g., a registration site link). The District staff might be tied up with other pressing projects, out of the office, on vacation, or unable to help for some other reason. We want things to go smoothly with your event; advance planning is key!
- Send materials in PDF format unless 1) you send the documents well in advance, and 2) you're prepared to do the editing yourself after the materials are reviewed in the District Office. PDFs

are editable, but there are some instances in which our powers to edit are limited (e.g., if you've used a unique font that we don't have).

- Arrange for your registration to go live on a weekend. We need to be here in the office to “flip the switch” (and troubleshoot as needed). The first of the month is a popular choice as an opening registration date, but if it's a Saturday or Sunday, you'll need to choose an alternative.

## WEBSITE PAGES

If you're interested in having a page on our site for a program or regular event (e.g., Kansas District Youth Gathering, Lutheran Valley Retreat), please get in touch with the District communication specialist early in the process with a description of what you need and when you're hoping to launch. All materials should be submitted **no later than three weeks before the page is scheduled to go live** (assuming you've arranged for the page build much earlier to allow the project to be scheduled). Typical materials include:

- Event logo
- Registration information
- Hotel information
- Photos (from previous events; headshots of speakers)
- Speaker bios
- Program information

Check details of all submitted material CAREFULLY. If you're not 100% sure of those details (location, theme, speakers, fees), work to confirm them before publishing (or simply say, “Details TBD”). Once we publish something (a fee, for instance), that information is out there. We want our information to be as reliable as possible, so plan to keep changes to an absolute minimum.

Edit all material carefully. It's easy to miss errors when you're proofing your own work; we recommend enlisting the help of someone with an eagle eye (and familiarity with District style guidelines) to ensure accuracy. Is the speaker's name as he or she wants it to appear? Is his or her title correct? Does the phone number for the hotel go to the right place?

We'll also do a final edit in the District Office; **be sure to build in time for this review in your work plan.**

## REGISTRATION FORMS/ONLINE PAGES

Check for accuracy of all information. Be especially careful with documents or registration sites that are updated from year to year; it's easy to miss old information in these materials.

- Are contact names correct?
- Are dates correct?
- Do clickable links work, and do they go where they're supposed to?

Fonts, colors, and layout: Is the form is readable and user-friendly? If you're using an event logo, is it a high-quality image? If including photos, are they sharp? Is the form properly formatted?

Consistency: Does the information on your registration page match information you've published elsewhere?

If you're creating a registration form online, complete the form at least a week before go-live and send a link to the District staff to allow for testing.

If submitting a single-page form, submit it as a Word document to allow for editing. Although we edit in-house, we ask that you also run your document by another person for review before sending it to us. Check the spellings of names, phone numbers, event times, speaker titles, etc. (See the Editing Checklist of this guide for reference.)

**IMPORTANT NOTE!** Keep the appropriate administrative assistant fully informed about your registration process. When people have questions or issues, they often contact the District Office, even if there are other contact names listed on forms. What kinds of registration decisions can be made by the District staff? When should inquirers be directed to the event coordinators/leaders?

## PUBLICATIONS

If you'd like to include items in *Workers Together* (monthly newsletter), plan on submitting them by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication. (Example: July 15 for the August issue.)

If you'd like to promote an event or feature in *The Lutheran Witness*, which reaches a more general audience, submit the item six weeks prior to publication. (Example: June 15 for the August issue; published every month except July.)

For additional information, see the section on Publication Submission Guidelines.

## MASS EMAIL

We try to keep our mass email messages to a minimum, but we do typically send an eblast or two about major or special events. If you'd like us to send an email about your event, submit copy a week in advance, and specify the groups to which the eblast should be sent. (All subscribers? Commissioned workers? Ordained workers? All rostered workers? Youth workers?)

## LETTERS ON DISTRICT LETTERHEAD

If you need to send a letter on behalf of a District-affiliated group or ministry (e.g., the Board of Education; District Disaster Response) and would like to use District letterhead:

- Discuss your needs with a District staff member, who will work with you to determine how best to handle the workflow.
- Draft the letter. (Note the editing guidelines in this document.) Our letterhead font (body text) is Palatino Linotype.
- Send the draft to the District Office for review. If your letter includes a contact name other than yours (e.g., "Contact Mary Jones in the Business Office with questions"), share the letter with that person, as well.
- Typically, the letter will be reviewed, edited as needed, sent back to you for final approval, and sent with your electronic signature on District letterhead (but if you have an alternative procedure in mind, you can work that out with your staff contact).

## MASS MAILINGS

If you're sending a mass mailing using District materials (letterhead; envelopes):

- Follow the basic procedure above for sending letters.
- Be sure that the relevant District staff contacts are aware of everything that's being included in the mailing. This review will help ensure that all material is accurate (e.g., you're sending the latest version of a District brochure) and that the District staff is fully informed if recipients call with questions or issues regarding the mailing.

# Conference Presentations

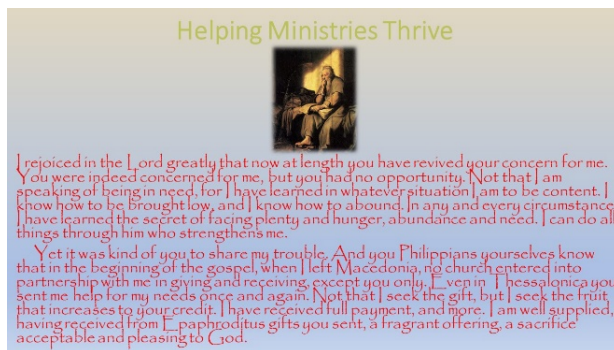
Giving a presentation at a Kansas District event? Fantastic! We look forward to hearing what you have to say. Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you're preparing.

## GENERAL

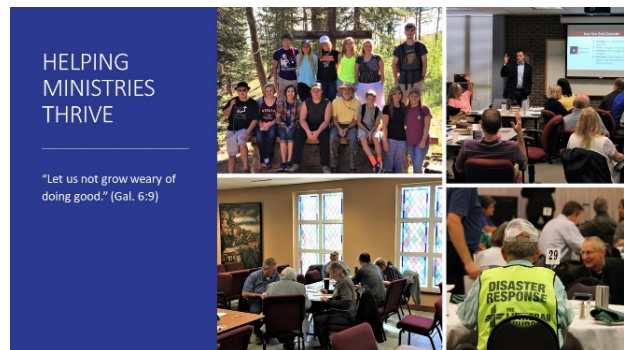
**Keep in mind the face-to-face setting.** Conferences provide great opportunities for engagement and interaction, particularly if presentations are tailored to the setting. For District events, we strongly recommend that speakers “just say no” to reading papers and instead speak from an outline, notes, or a conversationally worded manuscript. If you're concerned about the need to word certain points precisely, think about creating a handout that includes those statements (and resist the temptation to put everything on slides).

Think “conversational presentation” rather than “conference paper.”

**Design your visuals well.** We've all heard the common complaints about slides. Too much text! Hard to read! Too many! Ugly! If you're using slides, keep things simple, with readable fonts, good color contrast, and limited use of text. And when you get to that one slide and say, “But I really need this entire passage up there,” ask yourself if that's *really* the case. (And if it is, okay, but just try to keep those types of slides to a minimum.) Remember the power of pictures, too. Use them!



*This slide IS memorable, but not in a good way.*



*Better.*

**Leave time for questions.** When planning your presentation (especially breakouts), allow sufficient time for questions and interaction with your audience. Ideally, your presentation will get people thinking. Try to leave enough time to get those thoughts circulating.

## TECHNOLOGY

**If you have a slide presentation,** please send it to us the week before the conference (preferred) OR plan to meet with staff at least one hour prior to the start of the event to ensure that everything is working properly.

**If you plan to bring your own equipment** (e.g., personal computer; pointer), please check with District staff before the event to ensure compatibility.

**If you plan to show videos**, it's preferable to embed them in the presentation rather than switch over to YouTube during the presentation.

**If something goes wrong with your technology**, do you have a back-up plan? Technology is great when it works, not so much when it doesn't. What will you do if you don't have the right adapter? Or a video won't play?

**If you want to make last-minute edits**, resist the urge. We typically have someone on hand at events to assist with technology and troubleshooting, but things get hectic as we approach the time to get started. To keep things running as smoothly as possible once attendees are in the room, we ask that you make no last-minute editing requests and changes.

**If you need to make copies**, we can help IF we receive your materials a week in advance.



# Requests

## LETTERS

On occasion, you may need a letter from the District President (e.g., endorsement letter for a grant; letter of welcome or congratulations). When requesting a letter, please allow sufficient time for completion (minimally four weeks before the deadline) and include the following information:

- The recipient's name and address. To whom should we direct and mail the letter?
- Mode of delivery. Regular mail? Email? If nothing is specified, a print copy will be sent.
- The due date of the letter.
- If you're requesting a letter of endorsement for a grant, please include grant program information, including criteria for assessment. Send a copy of (or link to) the grant application, if possible. Also include your proposal (or a summary of highlights).
- If you're requesting a ceremonial letter (congratulations, welcome), please provide a few details about the occasion/organization/person of interest.

We'll send a confirmation email when the letter is on its way.

## PRAYERS

The District staff prays every week for people and groups on our internal prayer list. We add names to the list as we become aware of needs; if you'd like to be added to our staff prayer list, please contact Tami Lierz, assistant to the District President.

We also publish prayers in *Workers Together*. The prayers in *Workers* include items of public record, including deaths and births, along with requested prayers that we've been asked to share with the District. If you'd like your prayer request to be shared publicly in *Workers Together*, please indicate that clearly when making your request. We want to be sure to handle your information according to your wishes. We routinely publish prayers for the grieving for two months and maintain prayers for those with health issues and other concerns until we receive updates.

## EMAIL MAILING LISTS




Occasionally, we get requests for our email mailing list. We understand the request, but we don't share the list, since the individuals on our list haven't granted permission for their information to be shared in this manner.

Our website *does* include a Kansas District directory of pastors and congregations, which is updated quarterly. The homepage also includes links to the LCMS locator, which is another handy source of contact information about workers, congregations, and schools.

## KANSAS DISTRICT LOGO

Kansas District congregations are welcome to use the Kansas District logo and icon (i.e., small-use logo). If you're interested in using these materials, please keep the following information in mind.

The current Kansas District logo, introduced in 2017, is used in blue and white; it could also be used in grayscale. If you're using the logo, stick with these color options (i.e., no army green Kansas District logo).

Logos	Use	Specifications
	<p><b>Primary Logo</b>            Minimum size on page: 1"            If lettering or details will be hard to see in your design, use the icon instead.</p>	<p>Blue RGB: 43, 57, 144            Hex: 2B3990</p>
	<p><b>Small-Use Logo (Icon)</b>            Use for small applications.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>
	<p><b>Retired Logo</b>            DO NOT USE            If you see this logo on any District materials, let us know (or remove it).</p>	<p>N/A</p>

If you're resizing a logo, please take care not to stretch it or change its form in other ways. If you need an assist with resizing, let us know.



*Oh . . . poor logo.*

The font in the logo is LCF Uncial Caps. We use Constantia for the District name on our letterhead, which is close.

If you need vector files (which you will if you're making t-shirts, banners, etc.), let us know. We can get you what you need.