



*Our mission is to support and encourage the members of the District in carrying out the mission Christ has given His Church.*

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## LCMS Kansas District Board Report Summaries October 2020

### DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS

#### President's Office

Rev. Justin Panzer

**2020 Pastors Conference.** The Pastors Conference required a last-minute adjustment after our keynote speaker tested positive for COVID-19. Rev. Dr. Rick Marrs of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis was able to take over on short notice. Praise be to God for His abundant provisions! With so many unknowns, we have decided to cancel our Pre-Lent Conference for pastors in 2021.

**Creating Healthy Church Culture.** At the October meeting of circuit visitors and vice-presidents, President Panzer gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on Ted Kober's book, *Built on the Rock*, which points out the importance of Bible study, confession, and absolution in a congregation. President Panzer has given circuit visitors the presentation and the companion Bible study and asked them to use time at one of their monthly winkels to share the presentation with their circuit brothers and encourage the use of the book for Bible study in our congregations across Kansas.

**District Activity.** President Panzer drove 7473 miles last quarter as he traveled to pre-call meetings, installations, winkels, and partnership discussions. Calvary, Council Grove and Faith, Emporia have formed a new partnership; several other congregations are involved in partnership discussions. District congregations continue to wrestle with pandemic-related challenges, including getting people back to in-person worship.

**Calls.** Call lists are being filled for congregations in a timely manner. The estimated turnaround time for a call list being delivered to a congregation once they have submitted their self-study and self-nominations is roughly 14-20 days. President Panzer keeps congregations informed throughout the process. Five call lists were completed this quarter.

#### Missions and Stewardship

Rev. Dan Galchutt

**Continuing COVID-19 Response:** The staff continues to navigate COVID-19 changes and challenges as we serve the members of the Kansas District. We still have funds available through the Soldiers of the Cross Amplified program, a joint effort of the LCMS, LCEF, and districts to assist church workers and other eligible parties who have suffered a financial setback due to the pandemic. We've distributed a little over \$12,000 since the program was initiated in the spring.

**KC Hispanic Ministry:** A new social ministry based at Immanuel, Kansas City is being started. The Kansas District and Missouri District continue to work together on calling a pastor to serve current Kansas City Hispanic ministries and increase outreach with Hispanic ministry in the greater Kansas City area. The call process has been delayed because of the pandemic, but there are four finalists who are being considered for this call.

**LCMS Foundation and Planned Giving:** We have recruited planned giving advocates from Kansas District congregations who will attend a training with the LCMS Foundation in early 2021. (The training was originally scheduled for November but had to be postponed due to COVID-19). Four District staff members will also be attending the training event. We pray that the Lord will bless this training and our emerging partnership with the LCMS Foundation.

**Campus Ministry:** The LCMS U Campus Ministry director position was recently eliminated as part of the Synod's Reduction in Force in September. Closer to home, Haskell LIGHT Campus Ministry in Lawrence has experienced a transition with personnel. We are keeping all campus ministries in our prayers.

**Congregational Partnerships:** The Partnership Project [webpage](#) is live, and a few resources have been added since the last meeting. Rev. Galchutt has used these resources when visiting with congregations about potential partnership opportunities. He is currently working on Church Consultant certification with "Church Answers" and Thom Rainer, which will help him serve the District in this and other areas.

## Education and Youth / Caring Ministry

James Bradshaw

**Schools Update.** All fourteen Kansas District Lutheran Schools (K-8) returned to class for the 2020-21 school year. Census reports (as of Sept. 15, 2020) indicate that 1,087 students are enrolled. Work over the summer allowed for a return to on-campus learning. Additional contingencies are now in place if our schools need to adapt the educational environment due to challenges associated with the pandemic. Three Kansas District teachers have started the colloquy process. In the early childhood area, 43 of the 44 KSD preschools/childcare programs reopened their centers in August and September.

**Worker Conferences.** The 2020 Pastors Conference was held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Junction City October 4-6. The Educators Conference was conducted virtually on October 12-13; 136 educators registered for the conference. In 2021, the Educators Conference will be held October 3-5, and the Pastors Conference will be held October 10-12, both in Junction City.

**Adult Education Committee:** At its August 8 meeting, the committee encouraged the Board of Directors to write a resolution for the 2021 District Convention titled *Encouragement towards Daily Family Prayer and the Advancement of the Resources Produced by the Kansas District Adult Education Committee*. The committee is currently producing three video projects for the District website addressing how to pray, finding time for prayer, and forming the prayer habit.

**Youth Ministry:** Representatives from the Kansas City LVR camp week (which usually meets in June) have been talking with the District Youth Ministry Committee (DYMC) about merging planning efforts and managing camp resources while maintaining two separate camps. In other news, Lutheran Youth Fellowship has been rebranded as YouthLead, and LCMS Youth Ministry has announced the theme *In All Things* (based on Colossians 1 :15-20) for the next Lutheran Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas July 9-13, 2022.

**Church Worker Care Committee:** The Church Worker Care Team pilot project has slowed down due to the pandemic. Three worker care articles regarding church worker wellness, written by committee members Dr. Rebecca Weller, Rev. Dr. Neil Buono, and Rebeka Cook, were published in *Workers Together*.

## LCEF

Jeff Maltz

**LCEF Website Refreshed.** The LCEF website has been revamped. LCEF customers and ministry partners now have the opportunity to chat live with a Customer Relations Specialist via a new online chat feature from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (CST), Monday – Friday. LCEF is also implementing a remote management system that will allow Customer Relations Specialists to access a customer’s computer to help them troubleshoot online challenges. The site also now includes a page dedicated to District Vice President (DVP) information.

**District Activity.** Three Kansas District congregations paid off loans in the last quarter. No new loans were approved.

## Business Summary

- Through September 2020, the LCEF Kansas District has **30** LCEF loans outstanding with a balance of **\$14,450,032**.
- The LCEF Kansas District has **1906** investors.
- Total amount invested: **\$57,207,120**

## Business Office

Heather Williams

**District Office Exterior.** We’ve received several bids to potentially repair or replace the roof of the office building. There is no weather-related damage to the roof beyond our deductible, so all costs will be out-of-pocket.

**Technology.** We continue to utilize Zoom meetings whenever possible to accommodate both budget challenges and COVID concerns. On October 15, our server failed and left us without connectivity for several hours. Though we were able to get back up and running, we may be looking at replacing our server soon.

**Finance.** On September 23, we submitted the paperwork for PPP forgiveness. The bank has 60 days to submit this paperwork to the SBA, and the SBA has 90 days to determine forgiveness. We will continue to carry this as a liability on our financial statements until we know otherwise. In related budget news, a draft budget was prepared for presentation at this Board of Directors meeting for final approval.

**Convention Assessments.** District Convention assessments are due May 21, 2021. We have received full assessments from 75 congregations.

**Education Loan Repayment Grants.** 18 workers will benefit from awards totaling \$36,000. These grants must be paid out before the end of this fiscal year.

**Estate Gift.** In September, the District received notice that it is the beneficiary of an estate gift designated for missions in Kansas, scholarships for students entering the pastoral ministry, and a planned giving endowment fund.

## Communications

Kris Bruss

**Website (and related editing/content creation).** This quarter's projects have included Youth Ministry webpages and event promotion (KDYG, Junior High Rallies, Youth Ministry page, LCMS Youth Gathering, YouthLead); Workers Conference webpages; congregational commitment materials, and Reformation Offering materials. **NEW pages:** ["Together We Pray" page](#) (more below); [District Offerings page](#).

**"Together We Pray."** We've been on [Facebook](#) every day since September 1, when we launched our "Together We Pray" 90-day prayer campaign. The President's Council has suggested another campaign leading up to Ash Wednesday, with a focus on repentance.

**Lutheran Witness Kansas Insert.** In the past quarter, we've focused on campus ministry (August), "Together We Pray" (September), and congregational partnerships (October). On tap for November: Luther's "On the Freedom of a Christian" (500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the treatise). Throughout the quarter, we've looked for opportunities in LW and elsewhere to encourage people to return to church, if they're able.

**2021 Convention Projects.** We've been working on several projects in advance of our November 9 convention planning meeting, including convention videos (there will be three), convention report guidelines, and a document describing how lay delegates might serve throughout the triennium as District lay representatives in their congregations (similar to Synod convention delegates serving three-year terms and acting as resource people in their circuits; LCMS Bylaw 3.1.2.2).

## BOARD REPORTS

*Special note: Due to the ongoing pandemic, all service board meetings were conducted via Zoom in October, with board chairs providing brief verbal highlights at the full Board of Directors meeting October 30.*

### Board of Missions

Marvin Schulteis, Chair

**2021 Mission Grant Application Review.** The board reviewed 23 applications for mission grants, with \$217,720 requested. The board is recommending that the Board of Directors approve awards in the amount of \$138,938 as part of the 2021 District budget, which will be considered at the October 2020 meeting.

**Reallocation Request: 2020 Mission Grant.** Fairmount Ministries had earmarked part of their 2020 Mission Grant for a mission trip, which they couldn't take due to the pandemic. They requested that the money be reallocated for a discipleship project. By consensus, the board authorized the reallocation.

**Renewing Agreements with Mission Advancement/Mission Central and the LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM).** Our agreements with Mission Advancement/Mission Central and OIM are overdue for review. We'll reach out to OIM and Mission Advancement/Mission Central for input on next steps in our collaborative work.

**District Convention Resolutions.** Dan Galchutt encouraged the board to think about important mission priorities for resolutions. In related news, the LCMS mission boards are sending materials soon to

pastors, circuit visitors, and district presidents that encourage districts to provide input into the Synod's mission and ministry emphases.

## **ACTION ITEM**

The board approved the following for consideration by the Board of Directors:

- **Resolved**, that unspent grant money set aside in 2020 for the Kansas City church plant be moved to a board-designated fund to support a church plant in the K-10 corridor.

## **Board of Education**

Bruce Schultz, Chair

**School Visits.** Jim Bradshaw reported on activities in our District schools, noting that visits are scheduled annually with each principal. These visits include a meeting with the principal and the pastor (if available) as well as participation in the school chapel service and meetings with each teacher, as time and circumstances permit.

**NLSA Update.** Jim Bradshaw commented on a report from Jane Limback on the Kansas District NLSA process; he and Jane meet monthly with Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) representatives to discuss school accreditation. Timelines and visits have been upset by COVID.

**Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) Proposal.** The board reviewed a proposal regarding the Kansas District Summer Camp at LVR. Kansas City area churches for many years have organized their own week at LVR, and the Kansas District Youth Ministry Committee has organized a separate week for youth from the Kansas District. The proposal is aimed at having all LVR summer camps sponsored by the Kansas District Youth Ministry Committee under the Ministry Committee LVR planning team. It was the consensus of the board to encourage the Youth Ministry Committee to continue working in this direction.

**Legacy Fund.** There are no Legacy Fund requests at this time.

## **Board of Caring Ministry**

Rick Hanebutt, Chair

**Disaster Response.** LERT training events are on hold during the pandemic.

**Ministry with Comfort Dogs.** The District has completed a transfer of responsibility for Ministry with Comfort Dogs to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Topeka. The Board gratefully received a courtesy copy of the KLCK9 (Kansas Lutheran Comfort K9) policies and procedures and appreciate how well the transfer of the responsibility for Comfort Dog Ministries to Prince of Peace has been accomplished. For the LCMS Kansas District, this ministry will respond when invited to be part of Kansas LERT activities. Funding, when appropriate, would come from the District's Disaster Response fund.

**Parish Nurse Ministry.** The board approved two motions related to Parish Nurse Ministry, including increasing the 2021 general budget line item (to be forwarded to the Board of Stewardship) and adding a 2021 line item for one-time conference attendance (also to be forwarded to the Board of Stewardship). The board would like to invite Mary Hume, Parish Nurse Ministry Representative, to its February meeting to further discuss the future of Parish Nurse Ministry.

## Board of Stewardship

**2020 Budget Review.** Heather Williams presented the 2020 Budget-to-Actual report through October 15, which marks the 75% point (9 of 12 months) in the budget year. Income continues to trend below the budget with congregational receipts at 70% of the budget while total income is over 71%. At the same time, total expenses are also tracking below budget at just under 69%. The resulting increase in net assets in excess of \$47,000 reflects that cost modifications have kept the District finances in good shape.

**2020 Congregational Receipts.** Heather Williams displayed for the board the monthly Congregational Giving Chart for 2017-2020 reflecting the current year activity on a monthly basis in comparison to the prior three-year average. October's congregational receipts were \$7,500 less than the three-year average.

**2021 Budget.** Heather Williams presented the proposed 2021 budget, which reflected a few changes from the one presented at the September meeting. The resulting budget reflects a deficit of \$47,288.

**Building Discussion.** The Board of Directors will continue its discussion of next steps with the District office building, focusing on bids for roof replacement and potential sale or lease scenarios. A local realtor will address these topics at the BOD meeting.

**Planned Giving.** The board discussed plans for Planned Giving advocate training (see Missions Executive's report).

### ACTION ITEMS

The board **approved** the following for consideration by the Board of Directors:

- **Resolved** that the proceeds of the 2021 Ash Wednesday Offering be allocated 25 percent to the Kansas District Scholarship Fund and 75 percent to the Kansas District Education Loan Repayment Fund.
- **Resolved** that the Board of Stewardship track and report on what constitutes nine months of reserve funds and that the Board of Stewardship may present an annual budget to the Board of Directors using unrestricted funds in excess of nine months of reserves to balance the budget while continuing to monitor the LCMS Kansas District's financial health in the years to come.
- **Resolved** that the 2021 budget as presented be approved by the Board of Directors.

## Board of Administration

Dave Bruns, Chair

**Draft Budget Review.** The draft budget proposal was reviewed, with some changes from what was presented in July. The current draft budget includes a proposed deficit of approximately \$45,000 for 2021, as LCEF does not intend to contribute an operating result (line 25 in the budget) in 2021. (This change was prompted by LCEF's significant contribution to the Soldiers of the Cross Amplified COVID-19 response initiative in 2020.)

## **ACTION ITEMS**

The board **approved** the following for consideration by the Board of Directors:

- **Resolved** that the Kansas District Board of Directors acknowledge gifts received from July 16, 2020 to October 15, 2020 in the amount of \$2,484.03.
- **Resolved** to approve the housing allowance for 2021 as designated by Rev. Justin Panzer, Rev. Daniel Galchutt, and Mr. James Bradshaw.
- **Resolved** to contract with LCMS Internal Audit as auditors for the District.
- **Resolved** that the Kansas District Board of Directors authorize the replacement of the District office building roof at a cost not to exceed \$37,500 with the use of rolled-over unrestricted funds.