



*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 February 2021

### DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS

#### President's Office

Rev. Justin Panzer

**Day of Repentance/Ash Wednesday.** We are encouraging participation across the Kansas District in the Day of Repentance on Ash Wednesday. A second round of *Together We Pray* for Lent and Easter kicks off February 17 and will run for 50 days, concluding on April 7.

**Congregational Vote to Delay the Synod Convention.** As of early February, 50% of Kansas congregations had cast a vote on the question of whether to delay the Synod convention for a year. If the vote passes, the Kansas District will hold its convention June 9-10, 2022. If it does not pass, the district convention will be held August 19-20, 2021. The voting period closes February 15, 2021.

**Value Them Both.** In January, we informed Kansas congregations about efforts to get the Value Them Both Amendment before Kansas voters. On January 28, the Kansas Senate passed the amendment (House Concurrent Resolution 5003) by a vote of 28-11. The amendment passed in the House the week prior by a vote of 86-33. It will now go before Kansas voters on the August 2022 primary ballot.

**District Activity.** President Panzer drove 7202 miles last quarter and conducted seven installations. St. Paul, Westfall and St. John, Lincoln have formed a new partnership. St. John, Moundridge closed at the end of 2020, bringing the number of LCMS Kansas congregations to 159. Eleven congregations are currently calling.

**Prayers During the Pandemic.** We continue to pray for wisdom and discernment for our congregations, schools, and workers as they lead during these times. We pray for our people to come back as well, to see church as an "essential" part of their weekly and daily life. We continue to pray that God the Holy Spirit would give us open doors to share His message with others through our local congregations and through us as His everyday ambassadors.

#### Missions and Stewardship

Rev. Dan Galchutt

**LCMS Foundation and Planned Giving.** We took a big step forward in our effort to bring back Planned Giving services to the district with the training of several advocates in the middle of January. Those advocates represent a handful of congregations throughout the district as well as several district staff

members. We pray that the Lord will bless our partnership with the LCMS Foundation and the service of these new advocates.

**Kansas City Hispanic Ministry:** The Kansas District continues to collaborate with the Missouri District and local church leaders to support and strengthen Hispanic Ministry in Kansas City. While the Missouri District is working to identify a called pastor to serve Jesus El Buen and the larger metro area, Rev. Galchutt has been working to prepare the ministry at Immanuel, KCK for a transition in leadership expected to occur later this year.

**Congregational Partnerships:** The [Partnership Project webpage](#) is receiving some attention around the Synod. Rev. Galchutt has been invited to present a webinar with LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission (RSTM) on the topic later this year. Partnership discussions around the district are growing and will be a significant part of our interaction with congregations in the years ahead.

**Life Ministry:** The annual District Life Conference, held January 22, 2021, is a significant part of our Life Ministry. The main speaker for the event was Dr. Peter Scaer from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne.

**Lutheran Social Services of Oklahoma and Kansas:** Rev. Galchutt attended the annual Members and Board of Directors meetings of Lutheran Social Services of Oklahoma and Kansas January 13, 2021. Among other items of business, LSS determined an annual grant distribution to its four judicatories, including the LCMS Kansas District.

## [Education and Youth / Caring Ministry](#)

James Bradshaw

**COVID Updates.** The greatest joy that educators have expressed on school visits is the ability to meet in person for classes. The biggest challenge is exhaustion. The Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) program is expected to provide some relief to our schools. In other news, a pandemic extension is available for schools accredited by National Lutheran Schools Accreditation.

**Schools Update.** Concordia Academy in Wichita is holding a Kickoff Banquet and Lutheran Lecture Series on Classical Lutheran Education April 16. Lori Canfield, first-grade teacher at Christ, Overland Park, received the 2021 KAIRS (Kansas Association of Independent and Religious Schools) Distinguished Lutheran Teacher award.

**DCE Retreat.** The 2021 Kansas DCE Retreat is scheduled for April 11-13 at the Kansas District Retreat Center. It will be hosted by the Wichita Cluster. The speaker this year will be Brenda Jank from RSO [Run Hard. Rest Well.](#) She and the Wichita team will be leading the group through videos and sessions to help DCEs "Catch Our Breath," taking time to rest and reflect on "A Rest that Works" so that participants leave recharged.

**Committee Work.** The Children's and Family Life Committee continues to produce monthly reviews of resources aimed at enriching faith life and families in our congregations. The Adult Education Committee will be adding new resources to the Adult Education page and is surveying congregations about resources they would recommend. The Church Worker Care Committee will soon be making its Church Worker Care Team Resource Guide available. The Older Adult Committee is producing a newsletter (print and digital) that will be sent to district congregations every quarter.

**Youth Ministry News:** The Lutheran Valley Retreat Summer camp will be held on two dates this summer: June 13-18 and July 18-23. Around 20 congregations participated in KDYG's virtual event last November. The National Youth Gathering will be held in 2022 as planned, even if the Synod convention is delayed by a year. Confirmation retreats and a middle school rally in the spring are in the works.

## LCEF

Jeff Maltz

**LCEF Discontinues Programs.** LCEF has discontinued its Architect Advisory Services, and Laborers for Christ will discontinue operations June 30, 2021. The decision to discontinue Laborers for Christ was made after an 18-month review of the program. Over its 40-year history, Laborers for Christ, launched in 1980 as a ministry of the LCMS Rocky Mountain District, completed more than 800 construction and renovation projects in service to LCMS congregations, schools and other ministries.

**District Activity.** Trinity Lutheran Church in Leavenworth paid off its loan in December.

### Business Summary

- Through December 2020, the LCEF Kansas District has **31** LCEF loans outstanding with a balance of **\$14,857,035**.
- The LCEF Kansas District has **1887** investors.
- Total amount invested: **\$56,835,682**

## Business Office

Heather Williams

**Financial Update.** Thanks be to God and to our congregations for their continued support despite the hardships the year presented! Congregational giving came in at 98% of budget. Expenses came in at 92.5% of budget. On November 11, the Small Business Association (SBA) granted forgiveness in full of the District's Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan.

**District Phone System.** The District Office will be switching to a VOIP (Voice-Over Internet Phone) system in the next few weeks. This will make our phones more adaptable to in-office, out-of-office and remote working situations. The monthly fees are lower than our current costs.

**Convention Assessments.** We continue to receive district convention assessments. We will hold the assessments already submitted by congregations and extend the due date pending the Synod vote to delay convention.

**Estate Gifts.** The District has received several generous estate gifts designated for missions in Kansas, scholarships for pastoral ministry students, planned giving, ethnic ministries, and new ministries.

**Consulting and Training.** The Business Office reviewed financial compensation for seven call documents this quarter and provided consulting help with Hispanic Ministry activities in Kansas City. Heather Williams, Rev. Dan Galchutt, and Jeff Maltz completed the LCMS Foundation's Planned Giving Advocate training in January and will soon be available for planned giving presentations.

## Communications

Kris Bruss

**Website Traffic.** The website saw an 8% increase in visits from the previous year. The most visited pages were the homepage, Calls and Vacancies, District Staff, Coronavirus Resources, and District Resources. 68% of visitors viewed on their desktop, and 30% used phones.

**District Publications.** We're planning to solicit feedback on possible new directions for *Workers Together* in the coming quarter. Our other monthly publication, the Kansas edition of *The Lutheran Witness*, highlighted Life Ministry (December), our district convention theme (January), and the Kansas District Day of Repentance (February) in the past quarter. Coming in March: A collection of reflections on COVID-19, which will correspond with the one-year anniversary of the declaration of the pandemic.

**Together We Pray/Day of Repentance:** *Together We Pray* prayer booklets for Lent and Easter were made available February 1 on the district website in preparation for Ash Wednesday and the Kansas District Day of Repentance. LCMS Kansans are being encouraged to pray the Litany, reflect, repent, and fast on the Day of Repentance, all of which will be aided by the new *Together We Pray* materials.

**Ash Wednesday Offering.** Along with *Together We Pray* and the Day of Repentance, we'll be holding our annual Ash Wednesday Offering February 17, which supports scholarships for future church workers and educational loan repayment grants for active church workers. Materials for the offering were shared with pastors in January.

## BOARD REPORTS

*Special note: Due to the ongoing pandemic, all service board meetings were conducted via Zoom in January, with board chairs providing brief verbal highlights at the full Board of Directors meeting February 5, 2021.*

### Board of Missions

Marvin Schulteis, Chair (Reported by Rev. Rick Rostek)

**Renewing Agreements with Mission Advancement/Mission Central and the LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM).** Our agreements with Mission Central/LCMS Mission Advancement and the LCMS Office of International Mission are due for review, but with the continuing challenges, uncertainty, and changes related to the pandemic, the review has been put on hold.

**West Africa Missions Committee.** The West Africa Committee will be meeting in mid-February. LCMS missionaries Gary and Steph Schulte have been in the U.S. since March and have been doing some online work while here, including contributing to the "Missions Unpacked" program, a 4-week virtual learning experience focused on LCMS international missions.

**Church Planting.** Pastor Jason Boettcher (Trinity Family of Faith, Basehor) continues to recruit church leaders interested in a church plant in the De Soto area. Prayers for this effort have been requested.

**Church Partnerships.** The T.I.G. Partnership (Grace, Ulysses; Immanuel, Lakin; and Trinity, Garden City) recently installed an associate pastor for their new congregational partnership. Interest in partnership discussions is growing around the state.

**Quarterly Mission Grant Reports.** Not surprisingly, 10 of the 15 mission grant reports for the past quarter mentioned the impact of the pandemic.

### Board of Education

Bruce Schultz, Chair

**Reappointment of the District Education Executive.** The board consulted with President Panzer about the reappointment of James Bradshaw for another three-year term. (The Board of Directors later approved a resolution for Mr. Bradshaw's reappointment.)

### ACTION ITEMS

- The board **approved** a Legacy Fund Request from teacher Emma Taylor of Topeka Lutheran School in the amount of \$500 to help defray the cost of pursuing a master's degree from Concordia University Nebraska.

### Board of Caring Ministry

Rick Hanebutt, Chair

**Parish Nurse Ministry.** Nurse Mary Hume met with the board to discuss Parish Nurse Ministry in the Kansas District, noting the roles and responsibilities of parish nurses. A quarterly Parish Nurse newsletter is sent to 40 nurses and many congregations Kansas. There are 16 Parish Nurse Ministry programs at congregations, including Holy Cross Wichita; Risen Savior, Wichita; and St. John, Alma. The board and Nurse Hume discussed ways to strengthen and improve the Parish Nurse Ministry program in the Kansas District.

**LERT Training.** Events are on hold during the pandemic. The LERT leadership team retreat is still scheduled for the end of February.

**Pastors' Wives Retreat.** Nikki Boyle and Rebeka Cook have joined Shelli Panzer on the planning committee. The committee is exploring ways to have multiple remote host sites for the upcoming virtual Pastors' Wives retreat, scheduled for March 13. The speaker will be Deaconess Tiffany Manor, director of LCMS Life Ministry.

### Board of Stewardship

Dan Thalmann, Chair (reported by Rev. Dan Galchutt)

**Orientation to the Board of Stewardship.** The board welcomed new member Dan Thalmann and used the occasion as an opportunity to review the Board of Stewardship position description.

**2020 Fiscal Year End Budget Review.** Heather Williams reviewed the year-end report with the board. As noted in the Business Office report (see above), congregational receipts came in at 98% of budget, while expenses for the year were held to 92%, thanks to many cost-saving moves made throughout the year. The PPP loan and the loan's forgiveness were not included in calculations for the 2020 year-end budget review. The forgiven loan amount is included as income on financial statements to be audited this spring.

**2020 Congregation Mission Receipts Review.** Heather Williams led the board through a cursory review of the congregation/circuit report, with comparison data from the prior three years. The district will be sending a letter to all congregations to thank them for their continued support in 2020, despite the many difficulties of the pandemic year.

**2022 Budget Projections.** Rev. Galchutt recommended that the board start looking at the 2022 budget at its next meeting, noting that the district will need to be wise about budget decisions in the years ahead.

### Board of Administration

Dave Bruns, Chair

**Financial Report.** Business Manager Heather Williams reported on the financial status of the district, reviewing balance sheets, statement of activities, and budget-to-actual income-to-expenses spreadsheets.

### 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 October 16, 2020 to January 15, 2021 in the amount of \$397,728.04.