



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

LCMS Kansas District Board Report Summaries

November 2023

DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS

President's Office

Rev. Justin Panzer, District President

Third Quarter Meetings and Events. Events over the third quarter include but are not limited to: multiple meetings, both in-person and virtual, with District staff, President's Council, service boards, and various committees; Constitution & Bylaws Committee meetings; De Soto church plant meeting; KC Hispanic meeting; West Africa/Mission Advocates Zoom meeting; "Finishing Well" Zoom meeting with LCMS Foundation and various COP Presidents; Fairmount Ministries "Gathering" in Wichita; Rocky Mountain District Circuit Visitor's presentation on "Visitation"; KSD Campus Ministry dinner event at Fairmount Ministries; 2023 KSD Church Workers Conference at Holy Cross, Wichita; and multiple Circuit Winkel visits.

Ordinations and Installations. There were five pastoral installations in the third quarter (Revs. Magdiel Fajardo, associate pastor, TIG Partnership, Region 4; Michael Brockman, chaplain, Concordia Academy-Wichita, Region 3; Jim Woelmer, Christ, Manhattan, Region 2; Rocky Mease, IIM pastor, Trinity, Hanover, Region 2; Brian Holle, St. Paul, Fairview; and Zion, Hiawatha, Region 1).

Visits/Travel. In the third quarter President Panzer drove 11,080 miles as he traveled to installations, meetings, Circuit Winkels, conferences, and preaching engagements.

Congregational Activity. In the third quarter there were 14 calling congregations in the Kansas District, with nine churches seeking a sole pastor, one a senior pastor, and four an associate/assistant. Nine call lists were completed in the past quarter.

Congregational & School Services

Rev. Daniel Grams, Executive Assistant to the President for Congregational & School Services

Lutheran Schools. Rev. Grams attended multiple meetings in the third quarter, including but not limited to: meetings with School Ministry Coordinator Dr. Patti Hoffman; Lutheran Schools Committee; Principal's Conference, Sept. 14-15; LCMS Schools Executive training in St. Louis, Sept. 28-29; Pre-call meeting for Fairmount Ministries; 2023 KSD Church Workers Conference, Oct. 8-10; Campus Ministry meeting at Fairmount Ministries; and school visits to Trinity, Winfield, and Good Shepherd, Marysville.

Missions and Stewardship. Rev. Grams is learning the role of missions and stewardship in the Kansas District, including the mission grants process, requesting and receiving congregational commitments, and the process of preparing the annual budget. Rev. Grams and Pres. Panzer are organizing a Hispanic Ministry Convocation to bring together the Hispanic Kansas ministries to share ideas and projects.

Goals/Future Projects. Continue congregation and school visitations; attend the LCMS ONM Conference in St. Louis, Nov. 27-30; organize the KSD Hispanic Ministry Convocation, set for March 2024; develop Missions & Stewardship presentations for congregations.

Education & Youth

James Bradshaw, Executive Assistant to the President for Education and Youth

Lutheran Schools. Seven congregations/schools are currently involved in the call process for a Commissioned Minister of Religion: Emporia, Messiah (DCE); Overland Park, Bethany (DCE); Overland Park, Christ (DCE); Garden City, Trinity (DCS); Manhattan, St. Luke's (DCE); Atchison, Trinity (Principal for 2024-25); and Cheney, St. Paul's (Principal for 2024-25). The LCMS *Genesis Project* feasibility study work continues at Faith, Ottawa; Manhattan, St. Luke's; Salina, Christ the King; Salina, Trinity; and Wichita, Ascension. Sabetha, First has also applied.

Youth Ministry. 2024 Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) will be June 2-7, 2024. There were 36 participants at the Middle School Confirmation Retreat, Sept. 29-30 in Augusta. The 2023 District Youth Gathering will be Nov. 17-19 in Topeka. *Higher Things*, an RSO of the LCMS, will hold 2024 conferences in three locations. The 2024 Middle School Huddle will be held April 19-20 at Rock Springs 4H Center, south of Junction City. The LCMS Youth Gathering will be held July 19-23, 2025, in New Orleans. Debbie Dennett (Winfield) will be the lead District Coordinator and Karen Thurnau (Wichita) will assist. DCE Brian Amey (Holy Cross, Wichita) has formed a *YouthLead* team of youth and adult leaders. Two new youth leaders have been recruited.

Older Adult Ministry. A small gathering of older adults was held at Messiah, Hays on Saturday, August 26. The 2024 Saints Alive After 55 (SAA55) event will be held July 21-22 at Christ the King, Salina.

2024 Faith at Work: District-wide Service Projects. A task force is coordinating plans to launch service projects in April 2024. More details can be found on the District website, on the “Faith at Work” webpage.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF)

Jeffrey Maltz, LCEF District Vice President

Financial Update

- Through September 2023, LCEF Kansas District has **26** LCEF loans outstanding with a balance of **\$17,887,491**.
- LCEF Kansas District has **1,610** investors.
- Total amount invested: **\$59,529,017**.
- **4.6%** of LCMS Kansas District members are investors.

Activity in the Kansas District. Zion, Pittsburg paid off their loan on Sept. 5, 2023.

LCEF Business Notes. LCEF Operating Revenue for 2023 LCEF Fiscal Year is \$70,263. LCEF loan rates are increasing slightly with the increase in investment rates. 18-month fixed-rate term note is at 5.0%. New offer coming soon – 6.25% for 2.5 years. LCEF will offer the investment until \$125 million in new money investments are received.

Church Worker Loan Pool. Generate a pool of funds to offer below-market interest rates for all loan products that LCEF offers exclusively to rostered church workers (commissioned and ordained) which presently includes residential mortgage, home equity, debt consolidation and education consolidation loans. LCEF intends to raise a total of \$250 million. Investment rates: 5 years – 0.500%; 8 years – 1.000%; 10 years – 1.250%.

Business Office

Heather Williams, Business Manager

Human Resources. The Business Office reviewed financial compensation for six call documents and planning scenarios this quarter.

Property. District Office – St. John’s Lutheran Classical School is moved in and running smoothly. The fire code was passed with one exception for carbon monoxide detectors to be wired in and programmed with the monitoring system. The District Office annual fire sprinkler inspection identified one deficiency, which will be repaired for around \$2,000. The basement in the District Office has been set up as a meeting space during the time the first floor is leased.

Retreat Center – District Treasurer Brad Brunkow visited the Retreat Center to evaluate the cracking in the walls and foundation. The cracking is not as significant as suspected, mostly attributed to natural settling and can be addressed with caulking. A few other minor repairs were noted and passed along to the Trustees.

Accounting/Finances. Congregational giving is beyond year-to-date commitments and came in at 81.93% of budget. Expenses are reported at 74.91% of budget. There was a loss in net assets completely attributable to paying out \$200,000 in Board Designated Herren grants and realizing a loss on the 2023 Synod Convention. Synod Convention assessments have been received in full from all active congregations. The investment plan passed at the 23B Board of Directors meeting continues to be worked through.

Planned Giving. There were three Planned Giving presentations given at Zion, Linn; the Older Adult Ministry event at Messiah, Hays; and the Joint Church Workers Conference at Holy Cross, Wichita. Another presentation is scheduled for Trinity, Garden City in November.

Salary Review Committee. The 2024 Salary and Benefit Review Guideline has been posted to the website, along with an explanatory letter. As anticipated, there has been a great number of correspondences from congregations and schools asking for clarification and consulting on special situations and creative solutions.

Communications

Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist

Kansas District Website. Website projects this quarter included creating a new “Homeschool Resources” webpage under the Education & Youth section; updating the 2024 Life Conference webpage with the registration form, lunch payment button, schedule, and keynote speaker information; updating the “YouthLead” webpage with new documents, application link and profiles; the “Mission Funding” webpage with 2023 Reformation Offering materials; the KDYG webpage with pre-Gathering Bible studies documents; created a new section under “Church Planting” with information about the Light of the World church plant in De Soto; and continuing to add to the “Congregation at Prayer” webpage the one-year and three-year CAP prayers.

Social Media. Special Facebook posts this quarter included KDYG announcements, Reformation Offering reminders, and an announcement of Light of the World worship services beginning Oct. 29.

Workers Together. Highlights from this quarter included ongoing worker installations, events/conferences around the District, Rev. Daniel Grams introduction article, LLL/LHM State Fair highlights, *Higher Things* conferences article, Guinea/West Africa updates, KSD Mission Advocates, and Church Worker Appreciation Month.

West Africa Zoom meeting with KSD Mission Advocates. There was a Zoom meeting in early September with West Africa representatives and the Kansas District Mission Advocates. The purpose of the meeting was to connect the KSD Mission Advocates with LCMS International Mission Africa representatives and provide the Mission Advocates information/updates in French-speaking West Africa that can be used in Mission Sunday/Festival presentations around the Kansas District.

KSD Mission PowerPoint presentation. The KSD Mission PowerPoint presentation was updated and sent to the Mission Advocates to use for Mission Sunday/Festival presentations.

BOARD REPORTS

Board of Missions

Marvin Schulteis, Chair

Quarterly Mission Grant Reports. The Board of Missions reviewed the third quarter mission grant reports. Some highlights included lots of Campus Ministry activity around the District, and Hispanic Ministry activities at St. Andrews and Trinity in Wichita; Immanuel Community Outreach Association (ICOA) in Kansas City; and Zion, Linn.

Yearly review of Mission Grant Applications. The Board of Missions reviewed the 2024 mission grant applications. There was a total of 21 applications submitted for review. \$152,000 is available for 2024 mission grants.

West Africa Partnership. A total of \$50,000 was sent from the Kansas District to support Guinea/West Africa. These gifts will be used to continue supporting the Lutheran Center for Theological Studies (CLET) Guinea seminary, as well as the provision of Lutheran education and resources to the people of Guinea and West Africa.

Church Planting/Revitalization. Light of the World (LOTW) worship services are set to begin Reformation Sunday, Oct. 29, at Cedar Crest Memorial Chapel in De Soto.

Board of Education & Youth

Dan Thalmann, Chair

Reports. A presentation was given by Mr. Jim MacGregor related to Lutheran schools in Kansas being affiliated with National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) when Kansas State Board of Education is reviewing/updating the accreditation process (KESA) for all schools in Kansas. Discussion focused on the pros and cons of ongoing participation in KESA for schools around the Kansas District. There are five congregations in the process with the LCMS *Genesis Project*, to determine feasibility of a school start-up.

Business. A tax credit scholarship for low-income students was discussed by the Board of Education & Youth. Christ, Topeka was designated at the host congregation of the Divine Service at the Kansas District Youth Gathering (KDYG) Sunday, Nov. 19. The 2022 District Convention Resolution Tracker was updated, and activity is ongoing.

Board of Caring Ministry

Rick Hanebutt, Chair

Reports. Mary Hume, Parish Nurse coordinator, suggested in her report potentially engaging Parish Nursing in the *Faith at Work* service projects. The 2024 Pastor's Wives' Retreat is scheduled for April 19-20 at the District Retreat Center in Herington. Rosie Adle will be the featured presenter. The 2024 Kansas District Life Conference and March for Life will be Wednesday, January 24, 2024.

2024 Districtwide Service Projects. There will be a kick-off Sunday, April 7, 2024. Information packets have been sent to congregations. A video has been prepared and was shown at the Church Workers Conference. Task force members have been attending various events, and a display table was staffed at the Church Workers Conference. More details can be found on the District website, on the "*Faith at Work*" webpage.

Board of Stewardship

Mark Wolters, Chair

2023 Budget Review/2023 Congregational Receipts. 81.93% of congregational giving has been received of the annual budget. Expenses are slightly under budget at 74.91%. Congregational receipts were excellent for the third quarter.

2024 Budget. The Board of Stewardship reviewed the 2024 draft budget, to be presented as a resolution to the Board of Directors for approval at the Nov. 3 meeting. A resolution to designate 25% of the 2024 Ash Wednesday Offering to the KSD Scholarship Fund and 75% to the KSD Education Loan Repayment Fund will be presented to the Board of Directors.

Scholarship and Education Loan Repayment Committee. The Committee awarded \$45,193 to 19 students, for education and scholarships. \$37,400 was also awarded to 11 workers for loan repayment. Thanks be to God!

Board of Administration

Dave Bruns, Chair

The Board of Administration moved, seconded, and passed the following resolution to go before the Board of Directors:

Resolution 23D-01-01 - Acknowledgement of Quarterly Gifts

Resolved, that the Kansas District Board of Directors acknowledge gifts received from July 16, 2023, to October 15, 2023, in the amount of **\$2,637.62**.

The Board of Administration moved, seconded, and adopted the following resolutions:

Resolution 23D-01-02 – 2023 Housing Allowance Designation

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors establish the staff housing allowances for 2024 for: Rev. Justin Panzer, Rev. Daniel Grams, and Mr. James Bradshaw.

Resolution 22D-01-03 – 2023 Auditor Appointment

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors appoint the LCMS auditors for 2024.

Resolution 23D-01-04 – To Establish Uniform Term Limits

Whereas, in 1985 the Kansas District first established term limits for the Office of the District President to three (3), 3-year terms; and
Whereas, the 2009 Kansas District Convention passed Resolution 09-01-02 to increase the term limits for the Office of the District President by one term to four (4); and
Whereas, the 2022 Kansas District Convention passed Omnibus Resolution A: "To Decrease the Term Limit of the Office of the District President from 4 Terms (12 years) to 3 Terms (9 Years)" (Overture 22- 03-07); and

Whereas, the conversation of the open floor committee hearings focused on making uniform terms of elected offices in the Kansas District and were not focused on reducing the term limit of the Office of the District President; and Whereas, conversations with pastors at Circuit Winkel gatherings has provided near unanimous support of the same; and

Whereas, the Kansas District Board of Directors is in unanimous agreement of establishing uniform term limits; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Bylaws be changed to allow 4, 3-year term limits for the following positions: Region Vice-President, District Secretary, Board of Directors members, and Circuit Visitors; and be it finally

Resolved, that these changes be put into place immediately at the 2025 Kansas District Convention for the purpose of elections.

*The Executive Committee moved, seconded, and passed the following resolutions to go before the Board of Directors:

- **Resolution 23D-06-01 – Immanuel, Lawrence**

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the Immanuel, Lawrence Constitution and Bylaws.

- **Resolution 23D-06-02 – St. Paul's, Haven**

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the St. Paul's, Haven Constitution and Bylaws.

- **Resolution 23D-06-03 – Reappointment of Mr. Jim Bradshaw**

Resolved, that Mr. Jim Bradshaw be reappointed to the Kansas District Executive Staff for a 1-year term. Term will conclude at the end of Fiscal Year 2024.