



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

February 2024

DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS

President's Office

Rev. Justin Panzer, District President

Fourth Quarter Meetings and Events. Events over the fourth 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; Council of Presidents; 83rd KS LLL Convention presentation at Risen Savior, Wichita; Kansas District Convention Planning meetings; NLSA Accreditation meetings; Pre-Lent Conference/CV-VP meeting at Christ the King, Salina; Lutheran Social Services (LSS) meeting in Wichita; Board of International Mission/Board of National Mission meeting (included KSD Board of Missions); and multiple Circuit Winkel visits.

Ordinations and Installations. There were five pastoral installations and one pastoral ordination in the fourth quarter (Rev. Jerome Brownlee, Trinity, Holton, Region 1; Candidate Jaron Melin Ordination, Holy Cross, Wichita; Rev. Jaron Melin Installation, Our Redeemer, Herington/OIS Partnership, Region 2; Rev. James Kirschenmann, Zion, Vassar, Region 1; Rev. Marty Reed, Trinity, Atchison, Region 1; Rev. Luke Jacob, Trinity, Mission & Shawnee, Region 1).

Visits/Travel. In the fourth quarter President Panzer drove 8,981 miles as he traveled to installations, meetings, Circuit Winkels, conferences, and preaching engagements.

Congregational Activity. In the fourth quarter there were 14 calling congregations in the Kansas District, with eight churches seeking a sole pastor, one a senior pastor, and five an associate/assistant. Four 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 fourth quarter, including but not limited to: meetings with Youth Ministry Coordinator Miriam Wehling and School Ministry Coordinator Dr. Patti Hoffman; Educator's Conference Planning meetings; District Convention Planning meeting; meeting with LCMS State legislative leaders regarding accreditation; meeting with education leaders from the Diocese of Salina and a representative from the State Treasurer's office; and school visits to Hope, Shawnee; St. Paul, Leavenworth and Holy Cross, Wichita.

Missions and Stewardship. Rev. Grams attended the Office of National Mission meeting Nov. 27-30 in St. Louis. He provided an update with the Light of the World De Soto church plant and next steps. Planning continues for the Hispanic Ministry Convocation on March 7, at the District office in Topeka. Rev. Grams will be attending the LCMS Stewardship Leaders Conference Feb. 15-17 in Tempe, AZ.

Goals/Future Projects. Rev. Grams continues congregation and school visitations and developing Missions & Stewardship presentations for congregations. He will also be completing LCMS Reconciler Training.

Education & Youth

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

Lutheran Schools. Six congregations/schools are currently involved in the call process for a Commissioned Minister of Religion: Emporia, Messiah (CUI DCE intern); Overland Park, Christ (Principal); Garden City, Trinity (DCS intern); Cheney, St. Paul's (Principal for 2024-25); Leavenworth, St. Paul (Teacher); and Fairmount Ministries, Wichita (Commissioned Minister). The LCMS *Genesis Project* feasibility study work continues at Faith, Ottawa. Christ the King and Trinity, Salina, and Ascension, Wichita began working with a consultant. First, Sabetha applied for a consultant in October.

Youth Ministry. 2024 Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) will be June 2-7, 2024. There were 330 youth and adults who attended the 2023 District Youth Gathering, 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 five youth and two adult leaders.

Older Adult Ministry. 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. The task force continues to coordinate plans to launch service projects in April 2024. Registration and more details can be found on the District website, on the “*Faith at Work*” webpage.

Awards. Jim Bradshaw will be receiving two awards in February. The first award is Jim being the recipient of the Dale Griffin Master Statesman Award at the NADCE Conference in Houston, TX, on Feb. 1. The second award is Jim being inducted into the Kansas Association of Independent and Religious Schools (KAIRS) Hall of Fame in Topeka, on Feb. 12. Congratulations!

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF)

Jeffrey Maltz, LCEF District Vice President

Financial Update

- Through December 2023, LCEF Kansas District has **25** LCEF loans outstanding with a balance of **\$17,262,936**.
- LCEF Kansas District has **1,576** investors.
- Total amount invested: **\$59,677,919**.
- **4.5%** of LCMS Kansas District members are investors.

Activity in the Kansas District. Ascension, Wichita paid off their loan on Oct. 24, 2023; Immanuel, Lawrence paid off their loan on Dec. 18, 2023.

LCEF Business Notes. LCEF Operating Revenue for Fiscal Year 2023 paid to District is \$70,263. LCEF loan rates are increasing slightly with the increase in investment rates. 18-month fixed-rate term note added at 5.0%. Special offer continues – 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 10 call documents and planning scenarios this quarter.

Property. District Office – Maintenance and repairs expenses are significantly over budget for the year, with significant repairs to the basement plumbing, the air conditioning, the boiler pumps and the fire sprinkler system. Six District staff computers were also upgraded. There were significant IT hours and expenses with the crashing of the Sage accounting software on the server, and the configuration of the machines and software.

Retreat Center – The chair lift for the Retreat Center is being installed the first week in February. This will require an annual inspection and report. This was made possible through a grant provided by the LWML.

Accounting/Finances. Congregational giving is beyond annual commitments and came in at 109.82% of budget. Expenses are reported at 103.86% of budget. While there was a gain in net assets from operations, there was also a loss in total net assets completely attributable to paying out \$200,000 in Board Designated Herren grants and realizing a loss on the 2023 Synod Convention. The investment plan passed at the 23B Board of Directors meeting continues to be worked through.

Planned Giving. There was one Planned Giving presentation given at Trinity, Garden City. These presentations are designed as a stewardship resource for Kansas District congregation members.

Herren Grant Funds. The LCMS Foundation has produced three out of the four videos highlighting Planned Giving and the Herren Estate. Links to the videos can be found here:

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7133096536036556800>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7133169028289761280>

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/lcms-foundation_thanksgiving-gratitude-godsgifts-activity-7132484804524089344-tlrj

Communications

Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist

Kansas District Website. Website projects this quarter included updating the *Faith at Work* main webpage with the registration link, instructions, the T-Shirt ordering link and a separate *Faith at Work* Communication Resources page; updating the “Grants and Scholarships” webpage with the 2024 Ash Wednesday Offering materials; Pastors’ Wives Retreat registration link and schedule; updating the Middle School Huddle webpage with information and the registration link; updating the LCMS Youth Gathering webpage on the District website with the new 2025 graphic and links to the LCMS Youth Gathering and National24 Conference websites; updating the 2024 Kansas District Life Conference webpage with photos taken during the Conference and March/Rally for Life, 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 *Faith at Work* announcements, Ash Wednesday Offering reminders, and Life Conference/March for Life photos and highlights.

Workers Together. Highlights from this quarter included ongoing worker installations, events/conferences around the District, bios for new Kansas District Coordinators, highlights from the Light of the World De Soto church plant, Herren Grant photos and highlights, *Faith at Work* articles and updates, March 7 Hispanic Ministry Convocation article, front page feature for National Lutheran Schools Week Jan. 21-27, Campus Ministry highlights, announcements and friendly reminders, and District and Synod available resources.

2025 Kansas District Convention Graphic. Jackie is designing the main graphic to be used for the 2025 Kansas District Convention. The Convention Planning Committee will provide suggestions and final review.

BOARD REPORTS

Board of Missions

Marvin Schulteis, Chair

Quarterly Mission Grant Reports. The Board of Missions reviewed the fourth quarter mission grant reports. Some highlights included campus ministry activities at Fairmount Ministries and LCMS U; Grace, El Dorado’s Annual Basket Social to raise funds for their Care Committee; Lord of Life, Leawood’s new website and Hispanic Ministry activities at Zion, Linn.

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. John Wolf, the LCMS Africa Project Manager, provided updates regarding the construction of the seminary buildings in Guinea. Construction began in April 2023, and the buildings should be completed soon.

Hispanic Ministry Convocation, March 7. Around 15-20 people are expected to attend the March 7 Convocation. The main presenter will be Rev. Juan Zamora, the associate pastor of Our Redeemer Lutheran in Irving, TX.

Board of Education & Youth

Dan Thalmann, Chair

Reports. Rev. Daniel Grams and Jim Bradshaw presented their Executive reports to the Board of Education and Youth. Reports were also received from the Parish Education Committee, Lutheran Schools Committee, Accreditation, the Early Childhood Consultant, the Professional Development Committee, and the Youth Ministry Committee.

Business. A tax credit scholarship for low-income students and the potential development of a Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) continues to be discussed.

Board of Caring Ministry

Rick Hanebutt, Chair

Reports. Donna Williams, the Disaster Relief Coordinator, reported that the planned Jan. 5-6 LERT training at the District Retreat Center was rescheduled due to inclement weather. The Pastor's Wives' Retreat is scheduled for April 19-20 at the District Retreat Center in Herington. Deaconess Rose Adle will be the featured presenter. The Saints Alive After 55 Conference will be held July 21-22 at Christ the King, Salina.

2024 Faith at Work. Registration and T-Shirt orders are open for *Faith at Work*; both links are found on the District website on the *Faith at Work* main page. President Panzer has been promoting *Faith at Work* at Circuit Winkels and at the Pre-Lent Conference in Salina. A limited number of free T-Shirts (covered by a \$25,000 grant from LCEF) will be available.

Board of Stewardship

Mark Wolters, Chair

2023 Year End Budget. 2023 was a good year for congregational giving, with 109.82% congregational giving received. Expenses were at 103.86% of what was projected.

Resolution – Designation of Excess Funds from 2023. The following resolution was motioned, seconded, and carried by the Board of Stewardship to go before the Kansas District Board of Directors:

Resolution 24A-05-01 – To Establish a Board Designated Fund for Mission Project Support using Excess Unrestricted Reserve Funds

Whereas, the unrestricted funds of the LCMS Kansas District have grown substantially due to accumulated additions to unrestricted net assets in the past few years; and

Whereas, the Lord has especially blessed the LCMS Kansas District throughout this past year; and

Whereas, there are significant opportunities for mission work in Kansas, including, but not limited to a potential church plant in De Soto, therefore, be it

Resolved, that \$150,000 from the overage funds received in 2023 be board designated to a general Kansas mission fund so that these funds would be available to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the opportunities that the Lord gives us in the days ahead.

Board of Administration

Dave Bruns, Chair

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

Resolution 24A-01-01 - Acknowledgement of Quarterly Gifts

Resolved, that the Kansas District Board of Directors acknowledge gifts received from October 16, 2023, to January 15, 2024, in the amount of **\$5,553.98**.

Reports. Heather Williams presented her report, highlighting maintenance and repairs at the District Office building; congregational giving is above annual commitments, and the LCMS Foundation videos highlighting the Herren Grant. Dave Bruns provided updates on the Light of the World De Soto church plant. The church plant is worshipping at the Cedar Crest Memorial Chapel for Sunday morning services and The Barn for midweek services. The search continues for land for a church building.

Executive Committee

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

Resolution 24A-06-01 – First, Phillipsburg

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the First, Phillipsburg Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolution 24A-06-02 – Zion, Downs

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the Zion, Downs Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolution 24A-06-03 – Risen Savior, Basehor

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the Risen Savior, Basehor Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolution 24A-06-04 – Voting to Fill Vacancies on the Kansas District Nominations Committee

KSD Bylaws 3.7.4 Vacancies in the other elective or appointed offices or any other board, special committee, or commission shall be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors. At least one nominee shall be submitted by the Executive Committee. A vacancy in a position of a regionally elected layperson on the Board of Directors shall be filled with an appointee from that region.

The Ordained Minister position on the Nominations Committee may only be filled by someone from Regions 2 or 3. Rev. Sean Kilgo will represent Region 1, and Rev. Michael Hageman will represent Region 4. The Commissioned Minister position is not region-bound; it is the only Commissioned Minister representative on that Committee. The nominees not elected during the 2022 convention for this position are Betty Amey and Cynthia Lavrenz. (Cynthia Lavrenz has retired and is no longer living in the Kansas District.)

Pastors: Rev. Mark Boxman (Region 2); Rev. Seth Meyer (Region 3); Rev. Troy Slater (Region 2)

Commissioned: Betty Amey (Region 3); Chris Dehning (Region 3); Bethany Johnson (Region 1); Beth Stephens (Region 1)