



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

August 2024

DISTRICT STAFF REPORTS

President's Office

Rev. Justin Panzer, District President

Second Quarter Meetings and Events. Events over the second 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; Zion, Concordia church plant meetings; ADF webinars for churches and schools; Pastors Conference planning meetings; Church Worker Care Committee; LCMS Church Worker Wellness webinar; Kansas SGO (Scholarship Granting Organization) meeting; Theology on Tap in Manhattan; New Worker Orientation at St. John's, Topeka, and multiple Circuit Winkel visits.

Ordinations and Installations. In the second quarter there were six pastoral ordinations (Pastor-elect Matthew Goltl, Risen Savior, Wichita – Region 3; Pastor-elect Josiah Schultz, Beautiful Savior, Olathe/KS District; Pastor-elect Christopher Warneke, Redeemer, Arkansas City/Trinity, Winfield – assisting capacity call – Region 3; Pastor-elect Nathan Nelson, Trinity, Leavenworth – Region 1; Pastor-elect Frank Johnson, SMP – Zion, Hillsboro– Region 2; Pastor-elect John Kastner, Beautiful Savior, Olathe – Region 1); one deaconess commissioning/installation (Deac. Ashley Nelson, St. Paul, Leavenworth – Region 1); and eight pastoral installations (Rev. Jacob Mueller, Hope, Shawnee – Region 1; Rev. Anthony Masinelli, St. Paul, Cheney – Region 3; Rev. Randy Jahnke, Bethlehem/St. Peter's, Greenleaf/Barnes – Region 2; Pastor-elect Matthew Goltl, Risen Savior, Wichita – Region 3; Pastor-elect Christopher Warneke, Redeemer, Arkansas City/Trinity, Winfield – assisting capacity call – Region 3; Pastor-elect Nathan Nelson, Trinity, Leavenworth – Region 1; Pastor-elect Frank Johnson, SMP – Zion, Hillsboro– Region 2; Pastor-elect John Kastner, Beautiful Savior, Olathe – Region 1).

Visits/Travel. In the second quarter President Panzer drove 11,300 miles as he traveled to ordinations, installations, meetings, Circuit Winkels, conferences, and preaching engagements.

Congregational Activity. In the second quarter there were 15 calling congregations in the Kansas District, with nine churches seeking a sole pastor, two a senior pastor, and four an associate/assistant. Eight 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 & Youth. Rev. Grams attended multiple meetings in the second quarter, including but not limited to: meetings with Youth Ministry Coordinator Miriam Wehling; Educator's Conference Planning meetings; KSDE officials concerning state board accreditation; KAIRS Executive Committee; Principals and school leaders, and Early Childhood Cabinet. Pastor Grams also attended School Leadership Development (SLED) training and Genesis Project training.

Missions and Stewardship. Rev. Grams reported ongoing meetings with the De Soto and Zion, Concordia church plants. Rev. John Kastner was ordained and installed in July as the associate pastor of Beautiful Savior, Olathe, and will serve as the pastor for Light of the World in De Soto. The 2024-2025 Mission Grant cycle will be starting soon. There will be Philippians Conferences Sept. 5-6 for Circuits 1 & 6 in Holton, and Circuit 13 in Ellsworth.

Education & Youth

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

Jim read a letter to the BOD regarding his last day with the LCMS Kansas District (Friday, Aug. 30) before entering into the District Board approved three-month sabbatical leave. Jim will retire in January 2025. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunities he has been given during his time with the District.

Lutheran Schools. One congregation is currently involved in the call process for a Commissioned Minister of Religion: Lord of Life, Leawood (DCE). There were two commissionings/installations in July (Deac. Claire Gerrard (CTSW) to Trinity, Garden City; Deac. Candidate Ashley Nelson (CSL) to St. Paul, Leavenworth) and five upcoming commissionings/installations in August (Principal David Birnbaum to Trinity, Atchison – installation, August 4; Teacher Amy Goltl to Holy Cross, Wichita – installation, August 11; Teacher Sarah Warneke (Candidate) to Trinity, Winfield – installation, August 11; DCE Hannah Elsey to Fairmount Ministries, Wichita – installation, August 11; CUNE Teacher Candidate Anna (Sommerer) Johnson to Bethany, Overland Park – commissioning/installation, August 25).

Worker Conferences. The 2024 church worker conferences will be held as follows: Pastors Conference, Oct. 7-8 at St. John's, Topeka. Educators Conference, Oct. 13-15 at Beautiful Savior, Olathe.

Parish Education. The Parish Education Committee has scheduled six Marriage Enrichment seminars to be held around the Kansas District, from August-November.

Youth Ministry. 2024 Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) was June 2-7. There were 95 youth plus adult leaders who attended. The 2025 Middle School Huddle will be April 4-5 at Rock Springs 4H Center, south of Junction City. The 2024 Fall Confirmation Retreat for grade 5-8 youth will be Oct. 4-5 at Rock Springs 4-H Center. 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.

Older Adult Ministry. The 2024 Saints Alive After 55 (SAA55) event was held July 21-22 at Christ the King, Salina.

2025 Faith at Work: District-wide Service Projects. Rick Hanebutt, Elaine Whiteneck, Jenn Eickman, and Kris Alsin will be on the 2025 Faith at Work Task Force. Rick Hanebutt has agreed to serve as the Faith at Work Task Force Chair in 2025.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF)

Jeffrey Maltz, LCEF District Vice President

Financial Update

- Through June 2024, LCEF Kansas District has **27** LCEF loans outstanding with a balance of **\$15,493,468**.
- LCEF Kansas District has **1,521** investors.
- Total amount invested: **\$60,842,139**.
- **4.5%** of LCMS Kansas District members are investors.

LCEF Business Notes. LCEF rebranding coming in 2024. LCEF is upgrading to a new banking system called Horizon. Forecasting a full payout of 2024 Operating Revenue. LCEF/Kansas District Outreach Ministry Grants paid out totaling \$16,000. 32 churches applied and received a grant.

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 five call documents and planning scenarios this quarter. An all-staff meeting was held to discuss District-wide duties among the administrative staff. Tasks were realigned to prepare for Janet's upcoming retirement and our future new employee. A retirement send-off for Jim Bradshaw is being planned to take place at the Educator's Conference (Beautiful Savior, Olathe) the evening of Sunday, October 13, 2024.

Property. District Office – Maintenance and repair expenses are significantly over budget for the year-to-date, with repairs required for the fire systems and elevator and many repairs due to code changes in the industry and between city and state. Building security continues to be a concern, especially the exterior stairwell. We have received a proposal to close the stairwell from the outside to eliminate trash collecting in the bottom and loitering. It would remain an emergency exit from the inside. Additional security improvements are being explored. St. John's Classical School has been granted a two-year extension on their office space lease contract.

Retreat Center – The water filtration system is failing, and the Board will review a bid to replace it.

Accounting/Finance. Congregational giving is beyond year-to-date commitments and came in at 51.48% of budget. Expenses are reported at 49.76% of budget. While we have a loss in net assets from operations, we also incurred a number of one-time costs in the first half of the year, including worker's compensation insurance, property and liability insurance, directors' and officers' insurance, some of the mission grants, and our Ministry Safe Synod assessment. The first board meeting of the Scholarship Granting Organization was held. The organization is called the Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation. We are incorporated with the State of Kansas and have received our federal identification number. Our bylaws are pending attorney review. The first draft of the 2025 budget is offered for review, and includes proposed salary amounts from the Salary Review Committee, and the reduction in personnel. Health insurance premiums are decreasing approximately 3% for 2025, however pension contributions are increasing by 1%.

Stewardship. There are two pending Planned Giving presentations in the next several months. Planned Giving is an area of focus at the Treasurer Workshops described below. The Scholarship and Education Loan Repayment Committee met in July and approved awards totaling \$40,300 to 15 recipients.

Congregational Treasurer Workshops. The first Congregational Treasurers Workshop took place at Faith, Derby (Region III) on July 13. Jeff and Heather presented to an audience of 12. Please let your congregational treasurers know that this will still be offered in Regions I, II, and IV between August and October. Pastors and other congregational lay leaders are also welcome to attend. At the workshops, we review the Congregational Treasurers Manual, learn about LCEF, and hear about the Kansas District and how we steward congregational support dollars. We discuss topics including narrative budgets, salary guidelines, board governance, internal control, Planned Giving, clergy taxes, document retention, employer resources, Fair Labor Standards Act, and religious exemptions.

2025 District Convention. Congregational assessment invoices were included in the May Convention mailing. Assessments have already been received in full by 48 congregations, and the deadline is May 15, 2025.

Communications

Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist

Kansas District Website. Website projects this quarter included creating the Pastors and Educators Conferences webpages and adding registration/details to the Pastors Conference page; adding the registration link, instructions, and other needed documents to the Fall Confirmation Retreat webpage; updating the *Faith at Work* main webpage with the 2024 Evaluation; creating a new page for the Middle School Fall Confirmation Retreat; updating the Kansas District Youth Gathering webpage with new information; updating the Middle School Huddle webpage with highlights/photos after the event; updating the layout on the main Youth Ministry webpage; adding the Marriage Enrichment Seminars flyers to the Parish Education webpage, and continuing to add to the *Congregation at Prayer (CAP)* webpage the one-year and three-year CAP prayers received from Trinity Lutheran, Wichita, and the Parish Education Committee.

Social Media. Special Facebook postings include final *Faith at Work* posts from congregations, schools and RSOs; Pentecost Offering posts in May; upcoming events in the Kansas District such as the Marriage Seminars this summer and fall, and weekly memory Bible verses from the LCMS Synod.

Workers Together. Highlights from *Workers Together (WT)* publications this past quarter included ongoing worker installations, events/conferences around the District, Pentecost Offering highlights, 2025 District Convention reminders, Congregational Treasurers workshops, Campus Ministry articles/photos from congregations involved in campus ministry, *Faith at Work* highlights, Marriage Enrichment Seminars, Pastors and Educators Conferences, announcements and friendly reminders, and District and Synod available resources.

Monthly Newsletter to School Principals / Lead Teachers. Starting in August, Jackie will assemble the monthly newsletter for Kansas District school principals and lead teachers and send it out to them every month. Included in the newsletter will be highlights from educator events/conferences around the District, important announcements and reminders, and monthly articles from TEC21. This newsletter will not be as lengthy as the main District newsletter and will only be sent to principals and lead teachers. Jackie reformatted the principal's newsletter in a similar style to the District newsletter for consistency purposes.

BOARD REPORTS

Board of Missions

Marvin Schulteis, Chair

Quarterly Mission Grant Reports. The Board of Missions reviewed the second quarter mission grant reports. Some highlights included Immanuel, Kansas City as construction continues with the third floor of the house building to create a retreat space, conference room, and prayer center; Trinity, Wichita continues to offer worship services for the Hispanic community and a monthly meal; Risen Savior, Wichita received a generous gift of \$3,000 from a member of Risen Savior that has helped with the food pantry in the congregation's multicultural outreach to a local apartment complex; LCMS U had a retreat for college students at LVR in April; Immanuel, Hepler received additional donations for the shower comfort care station for bicyclists on the local bike route. The Immanuel, Hepler project has been gaining publicity through the '76 Bike Route map and a recent article in the Kansas 105 Meadowlark Reader; Christ, Topeka ordered 100 ESV Bibles and 100 Mini Arch Books from CPH to give away at community outreach events.

Hispanic Ministry: LUMA / ICOA / Rev. Daniel Jordan. There is a possibility that funding from the LCMS Church Planting Initiative would be available for a "new" Hispanic church plant at Immanuel, Kansas City.

2024/25 Mission Grant Cycle: Review of Applications and Letters. The Board of Missions reviewed and discussed the 2025 Mission Grant Application, main cover letter, Award letter and Denial letter.

Board of Education & Youth

Dan Thalmann, Chair

Reports. Rev. Daniel Grams and Jim Bradshaw presented their Executive reports to the Board of Education & Youth. Some highlights included KESA 2.0 being approved by the Kansas Board of Education on July 10. In interactions with KSDE, it has been reiterated that the Kansas District would like KSDE to recognize NLSA accreditation or a tiered accreditation model as proposed by KAIRS. An organizational meeting for the Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation was held on June 17. A board of directors is in place. Articles of incorporation are being reviewed by a lawyer and plans are in place to submit the articles, when reviewed/approved, to the IRS for determination of 501(c)3 status. Rev. Grams reported that he continues to build a working relationship with each of the coordinators, Miriam Wehling and Patti Hoffman. Jim presented a letter to members of the district, which provided a timeline for his retirement from the Kansas District and new contact information. This letter was published in the most recent issue of *Workers Together*. Reports were also received from the Parish Education Committee, Lutheran Schools Committee, Accreditation, KAIRS, the Early Childhood Consultant, the Professional Development Committee, and the Youth Ministry Committee.

Business. The Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation (KLSSF) is being created and will likely need some funding over the next year or two to defray startup costs (estimated at \$3,000).

Renewal of 1 Year Agreements with NLSA Commissioner and PDC Director for 2024-25. Dr. Bruce Schultz moved that Resolutions 23C-03-02 and 23C-03-03 be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. The motion was seconded and passed.

Resolution 24C-03-01 – To extend a contract to fill the position of District National Lutheran School Accreditation Commissioner for the 2024-2025 school year

Resolved, that a contract be extended to Ms. Jane Limback to fulfill the duties of the position of District National Lutheran School Accreditation Commissioner for the 2024-2025 school year, as outlined in the district operating manual and stipulated by contract, with a stipend of \$2,500.

Resolution 24C-03-02 – To extend a contract to fill the position of Professional Development Coordinator for the 2024-2025 school year

Resolved, that a contract be extended to Ms. Lottie Lee to fulfill the duties of the position of Professional Development Coordinator for the 2024-2025 school year, as outlined in the district operating manual and stipulated by contract, with a stipend of \$1,500.

Budget 2025. Board of Education & Youth budget line items for 2024 were presented as a starting point for discussion. It was proposed to collapse the Family & Children Ministry and Adult Education lines into a single line for Parish Education with no effect on the budgeted amount. It was proposed to provide a stipend for the Early Childhood Consultant (\$1,000) and to budget support for the activity of an 'Early Childhood Cabinet' (\$2,000), both additions to the line item for the Early

Childhood Consultant. Consideration was given for an added line item to support the start-up of Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation. It was determined that support for this activity would likely come through the Board of Administration. A draft BOEY budget reflecting these changes was approved by unanimous consent and is being forwarded to the Business Office.

Board of Caring Ministry

Rick Hanebutt, Chair

Reports. A LERT information and training opportunity will be available just prior to the Pastors conference in October with Rev. Michael Meyer, Synod Disaster Response (Director of Disaster Training). Registration via the District website is available on the Pastors Conference webpage. The 2025 Pastors' Wives Retreat will be held March 21-22 with speaker Renee Gibbs. There will be a Lutherans for Life Midwest Regional Conference Saturday, October 12 at Hope Lutheran, Shawnee. Lutherans for Life of Kansas will have their annual membership meeting in conjunction with this conference.

2025 Budget Requests. The Board of Caring Ministry discussed making the following changes to the BOCM budget items from the 2024 budget: add a \$1,000 line item for *Faith at Work* administration; add \$250 to Pastor's Wives Retreat. The BOCM submitted these additional requests along with their human care budget line items to the Board of Stewardship.

Board of Stewardship

Mark Wolters, Chair

2024 Budget and Financials Review. Heather Williams presented the second quarter budget-to-actual report, noting the fiscal year was at the halfway point as of July 15, and 50% is the operative number. Total income so far is \$970,834 which is 49.74% of what was predicted. On the expense side, most departments are at or under budget. We have been able to give more to Synod as the congregational receipts have been up and we have spent a bit more than predicted on insurance across the board. Scholarship awards have been approved and will go out next quarter. The Lutheran Center is over budget on maintenance and repairs, but a new HVAC system was needed. Overall, the expenses are looking good at 49.76% of the predicted expenses.

2024 Congregation Receipts Review. Congregational receipts were great in May. However, June was way under normal. There have been issues with the mail service at the District Office, which could be part of the low giving in June. The month of July brought some recovery. Total gifts so far are about \$782,000 which is about \$8,000 below the 3-year average, but that average includes a very generous one-time gift.

2025 Draft Budget Discussion. Heather Williams presented the draft budget for 2025. The total predicted income is about \$200,000 less than last year, but most of that is due to the change in Jeff Maltz's payment situation as we are not being refunded for that anymore. One major change is under the Lutheran Center and Retreat Center, with needed maintenance and repairs bringing this area over budget. There is a preference to see the maintenance and repair budget based on a certain percentage of the value of these facilities. Heather reported that Board Treasurer Brad Brunkow was leaning towards 1.25% of the value which would add about \$30,000 to our budget. Another idea that will be discussed is instead of keeping 9 months of reserves on hand, keeping 6 months of reserves on hand, therefore allowing about \$200,000 to be set aside for repairs and maintenance. This will be discussed further with the Board of Directors. The increase to net assets is predicted to be about \$35,512. There will also be about another \$10,000 from LCEF for rent, bringing the total to \$45,512.

***Initial Discussion- Resolution 24C-05-01 – District Operations Manual: Revision to Position Description**

Resolved, that the Position Description for the "Scholarship and Education Loan Repayment Committee" be amended as presented.

Discussion was held about wording for some of the changes. After being satisfied with the changes, Rev. Alan Stahlecker motioned to adopt the changes to Resolution 24C-05-01. Rachel Goodpasture seconded; the motion carried.

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 24C-01-01 – Acknowledgement of Quarterly Gifts

Resolved, that the Kansas District Board of Directors acknowledge the gifts received from April 16, 2024, to July 15, 2024, with the designation as follows:

Undesignated/Unrestricted	\$2,919.54
Scholarship	\$10,050.00
Middle School Huddle	\$53.69
Pentecost	\$675.00
West Africa	\$75.00
Total	\$13,773.23

Reports. Heather Williams presented her quarterly report. This quarter she assisted five congregations with compensation plans for call documents. There was a meeting in June to discuss tasks among the administrative staff given Janet’s upcoming retirement. There was discussion about the exterior stairwell of the District Office and safety concerns associated with it. St. John’s Classical School has been granted a two-year extension on the office space lease contract. The Retreat Center needs a replacement of the water filtration system. Congregational giving is coming in above budget, and expenses are below budget. The first Congregational Treasurer Workshop took place at Faith Lutheran Church in Derby and was well attended. Three other workshops are planned in the coming months. Heather presented the Financial Dashboard, balance sheets, the statement of activities, and the budget-to-actual tables that she has prepared. She presented the draft 2025 Budget. The Board of Administration discussed the 9 month reserve fund as well as a facility contingency fund. The Scholarship Granting Organization was also discussed, and the expenses associated with starting it up. The first board meeting of the Scholarship Granting Organization has been held, and it is incorporated with the State of Kansas. Bylaws are pending attorney review.

Resolution 24C-01-02 – Start-up Expenses for the Scholarship Granting Organization

Resolved, that the Kansas District Board of Directors approves the expenditure of up to \$5,000 from unrestricted funds for start-up expenses for the Scholarship Granting Organization.

Resolution 24C-01-03 – District Office Exterior Stairwell

Whereas, the external stairwell of the Lutheran Center has led to security risks related to loitering; therefore be it Resolved, that the Kansas District Board of Directors approve up to \$10,000 to enclose the exterior stairwell and install an emergency access door, pending the fire marshal’s approval.

The Light of the World, De Soto church plant was discussed. Rev. John Kastner has been ordained and installed to serve as the De Soto church plant pastor through Beautiful Savior, Olathe. There are ongoing discussions about purchasing land.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee proposed, seconded, and approved the following resolutions to go before the Kansas District Board of Directors:

Resolution 24C-06-01 – Immanuel, Bremen

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

Resolution 24C-06-02 – Trinity, Leavenworth

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the Trinity, Leavenworth Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolution 24C-06-03 – Peace, Natoma

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the Peace, Natoma Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolution 24C-06-04 – Appointment of Rev. Dean Christ and Rev. Justin Panzer

Resolved, that Rev. Dean Christ and Rev. Justin Panzer be appointed as the two “Members” to Lutheran Social Services, Inc. to represent the LCMS Kansas District for 2025.

Resolution 24C-06-05 – Kansas District Bylaw Revisions – Terms Limits

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve changes to Bylaws 3.3.2 and 3.3.6. Proposed wording changes to be included for 2025 Kansas District Convention will be subject to CCM approval.

3.3.2 The term of office for the Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Circuit Visitors, and the Board of Directors shall be three (3) years. None of these officers shall serve more than ~~three~~ four consecutive terms.

- 3.3.6 Members of District boards and commissions shall be ineligible for reelection or reappointment to the same board or commission after serving ~~three~~ four (3) (4) consecutive terms unless otherwise provided in the bylaws. They may become eligible again for election or appointment to the same office, board, or commission after an interval of three (3) or more years. More than one half (1/2) term shall be regarded as a full term.

Resolution 24C-06-06 – Kansas District Bylaw Revisions – District Church Worker Conferences

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve changes to Bylaw 5.2.1.3. Proposed wording changes to be included for 2025 Kansas District Convention will be subject to CCM approval.

- 5.2.1.3 ~~In the odd-numbered years~~ At least once a triennium, the ordained ministers conference and the commissioned ministers conference shall be held at the same time and in the same city so that both conferences shall be enabled to meet together in joint session at least part of the time. Exceptions may be made by the District President in consultation with the President's Council.