



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



ABOVE: Concordia Academy-Wichita students, faculty and staff gather for the Rally for Life at the State Capitol in downtown Topeka. BELOW: Rev. Mark Preus leads a keynote session at the Kansas District Life Conference at St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church in Topeka.



Kansas District Life Conference

Around 110 participants attended the Kansas District Life Conference on January 28, 2026, at St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church in Topeka. The keynote speaker was Rev. Mark Preus, pastor of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church and Campus Center in Laramie, Wyoming.

The Kansas March and Rally for Life followed the Life Conference in downtown Topeka, at the State Capitol.

Visit the District website at <https://kslcms.org/2026-life-conference> to see 2026 Life Conference and March for Life photos!

MONTHLY KANSAS DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

WORKERS TOGETHER

FEBRUARY 2026

Regular Features

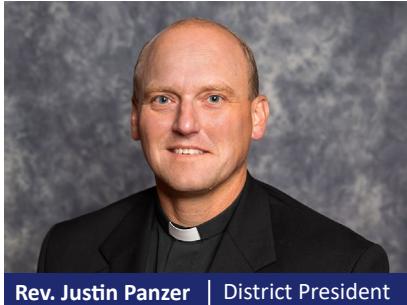
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MONTHLY DEVOTION



Rev. Justin Panzer | District President

February Devotion

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.”

Joel 2:12

Return to the Lord your God” (v. 13). God’s Word penetrates deeply into hearts and consciences, producing genuine outward signs: fasting, weeping and mourning. He shatters the core of our self-idolatry. The Lord summons His wayward people home through His living Word. Let the Holy Law humble your arrogance, driving you to true contrition, even if it wounds your broken heart. Authentic repentance recoils at sin, for sin severs us from the Lord.

When Joel proclaims God’s Word, he reveals a compassionate Savior: “He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love” (v. 13). This is God’s self-description — jealous for His covenant people, yet overflowing with steadfast love, unwilling that any should perish eternally (cf. 2 Peter 3:9).

On Ash Wednesday, the mark of ashes and the sign of the cross are imposed on our foreheads. “You are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Gen. 3:19). They remind us of our mortality and

why we desperately need a Savior — to deliver us from this present evil age and from sin’s curse, and to grant eternal life and light in His presence. Through the cross, God sent His only Son to redeem all. The blessings of Christ’s death and resurrection — forgiveness, life, salvation — are bestowed as pure gifts through faith, created by the Holy Spirit.

I invite the people of the LCMS Kansas District to unite once more on Ash Wednesday in a district-wide “Day of Repentance.” Join in praying the Litany, worshiping together and offering a financial contribution to your congregation. These acts flow from repentant hearts, returning to God what is already His.

What is fasting, and how does it align with the Lord’s call to repentance? If you have *The Lutheran Study Bible*, turn to page 189 for the insightful article “When You Fast” (also online at <https://first-things.com/when-you-fast>). It highlights these key words:

During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke against fasting as a means of salvation. Instead, He commended fasting as a private, voluntary act of humility before God (Matt. 6:16–18). Take a few moments now to read His words and reflect on your own devotion. If you are like most people, you have thought more about dieting than fasting. It is hard to imagine a daylong fast. No doubt fasting for 40 days like Jesus did after His Baptism is out of the question. Yet our Lord’s words clearly reveal that fasting should be part of a Christian’s life: He said, “When you fast” (Matt. 6:16), not “If you fast” (cf Matt. 9:14–15). The early Christians fasted (Acts 13:2–3; 14:23). Why shouldn’t a twenty-first-century Christian do likewise?

Our Lord urges you to return what is His from the start. We merely steward His gifts temporarily. All we “give back” was never truly ours. “Return to me,” the Lord beckons through Joel (2:12) — with your entire life: heart, soul, strength and possessions. **God bless our worship of Him, especially in this Lenten season of reflection and renewal!**

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Pastoral Installations

Pastoral Reading Groups



Rev. Reed Shoaff was installed as pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in Hays on Sunday, January 11, 2026.

From left (front row), Revs. Justin Panzer, Matthew Goehring, Stanley Palmer, Reed Shoaff, Christopher Craig, Rick Schneider; (back row) Revs. Michael Schmidt, Philip Hoppe, Joseph Crosswhite, Joel Hiesterman and Matthew Koterba.

District Pastoral Reading Groups

There are study groups for pastors located around the Kansas District! Please email the listed contact if you are interested in joining one of these study groups.

Cross Connections

(meets the last Tuesday of the month)

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
2200 3rd Ave.
Dodge City, KS 67801

Contact:

jason.toombs@gmail.com

Oratio Meditatio Tentatio

(meets every third Tuesday of the month)

Trinity Lutheran Church
611 S. Erie St.
Wichita, KS 67211

Contact:

pateraaron@gmail.com

Ora. Labora. Lege.

(meets the last Tuesday of the month)

Calvary Lutheran Church
4211 NW Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, KS 66617

Contact:

pastoripkinney@gmail.com



PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Out and About in Kansas

President Panzer's February Travel Schedule

February 1-3
Pre-Lent Conference at Redeemer (Lawrence)

February 5-6
Board of Directors meeting (Zoom)

February 8
50th Anniversary at Redeemer (Lawrence)

February 8-12
Council of Presidents (St. Louis, Mo.)

February 15
Installation of Rev. Richard Bridgman at Messiah (Emporia)



Rev. Christopher Craig was installed as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Ellsworth on Sunday, January 11, 2026.

Rev. Craig (left) also serves as pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sylvan Grove. He is pictured with Rev. Justin Panzer, Kansas District President (right).

God richly bless this new partnership in the Gospel!



Rev. Matthew Jennings was installed as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Chanute on Sunday, February 1, 2026.

Rev. Jennings (left) also serves as pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Humboldt. He is pictured with Rev. Justin Panzer, Kansas District President (right).

God richly bless this new partnership in the Gospel!



CALLS & VACANCIES

PASTORAL CALLS

Rev. Michael Henrichs, Our Savior, WI to First, Paola – **pending**

Rev. Greg Lucido, Grace, Fallon and Our Savior, Glendive, MT to St. John's, Nashville and Trinity, Medicine Lodge – **declined**

Rev. Nathan Neugebauer, St. John's, Revillo and Bethlehem, Milbank, SD to Holy Cross, Dodge City – **pending**

Rev. Jonathan Olson, Hope, Aurora, CO to Trinity, Garden City – **declined**

Rev. David Weaver, Trinity, Stewardson, IL to St. John, Ellinwood – **pending**

PENDING ORDINATIONS / INSTALLATIONS

Rev. Richard Bridgman, Faith, Appleton, WI to Messiah, Emporia – **installation Sunday, February 15, 2026**

SMP Candidate Andrew Gunzelman, Associate Pastor, Lord of Life, Leawood – **ordination and installation Sunday, February 22, 2026**

CONGREGATIONS CALLING or PREPARING TO CALL A FULL-TIME PASTOR

Dodge City, Holy Cross (sole) **Hoisington, Concordia** (sole)

Ellinwood, St. John (senior) **Leavenworth, St. Paul** (sole)

Ellsworth, Immanuel (sole) **Medicine Lodge, Trinity & St. John's, Nashville** (sole)

Garden City, Trinity (senior) **Paola, First** (sole)

Wichita, St. Andrews (sole) (seminary)

CONGREGATIONS CALLING A COMMISSIONED MINISTER

Alma, St. John (Teacher)

Cheney, St. Paul (Teacher)

Leavenworth, St. Paul (Principal) (Teacher)

Shawnee, Hope (5th Grade Teacher)

Wichita, Ascension (Teacher)

FEBRUARY PRAYER REQUESTS

Those grieving the loss of loved ones

- **Rev. Jaron and Liz Melin**, as they grieve the loss of their child Doxa Theodotus Melin by miscarriage. Doxa passed away Dec. 5 and a miscarriage funeral service was held Dec. 23.

Those experiencing recent / ongoing health issues

• Rev. Richard Andrus	• Rev. David Gruoner	• Carrie Meyers
• Simon Begley	• Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan	• Rev. Kevin Peterson
• Rev. Dr. Michael Bingenheimer	• Rev. James Kirschenmann	
• Rev. Dean Christ	• Rev. David McCloskey	

Those celebrating the gift of new life

- **Rev. Joseph and Olivia Goodroad** (son Olaf Martin, Dec. 24).

Special Prayers

- **Deaconess Lara McComack** (Calvary, Topeka). Please pray for Lara as she receives Spanish immersion training in the Dominican Republic.

Congregations / Schools Facebook Prayer List

• Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Hutchinson – Feb. 2	Immanuel Lutheran Church, Oakley – Feb. 16
• St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ellsworth – Feb. 9	• Grace Lutheran Church, Liberal, and Peace Lutheran Church, Beaver, Okla. – Feb. 23
• Immanuel Lutheran Church, Hoxie, and	

MISSIONS & STEWARDSHIP

2026 Ash Wednesday Offering

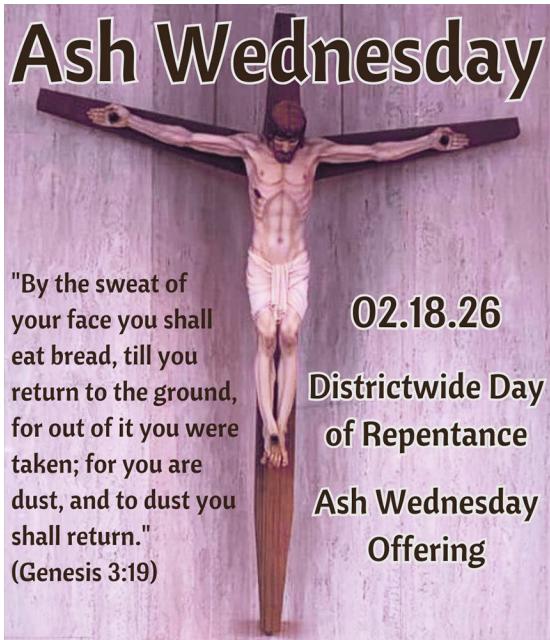
Kansas District Scholarships

LCMS U Campus Ministry

Out and About in Kansas

Rev. Daniel Grams'
February Travel Schedule

- February 1
First Lutheran Church
(Sabetha)
- February 2-3
Pre-Lent Conference at
Redeemer (Lawrence)
- February 4
St. Paul Lutheran School
visit (Leavenworth)
- February 8
Immanuel Hispanic (Kan-
sas City, Kan.)
- February 9
KAIRS Administrators
Conference (Topeka)
- February 10
Circuit 6 Winkel at Christ
(Topeka)
- February 10-14
Best Practices Conference
(Phoenix, Ariz.)
- February 17
Circuit 4 Winkel at Faith
(Ottawa)
- February 25
Trinity Lutheran School
visit (Atchison)



Ash Wednesday will take place February 18, 2026. The 2026 Kansas District Ash Wednesday Offering supports grants for future church worker recruitment visits to Concordia University System (CUS) schools and seminaries, and education loan repayment grants for active church workers. Last year, we were able to award over \$88,000 in scholarships and \$49,500 in education loan repayment grants. Of that amount, over \$32,000 was raised in last year's Ash Wednesday Offering. On behalf of our grateful recipients, THANK YOU!

You can contribute online at <https://kslcms.org/donate> or send a check to the LCMS Kansas District (1000 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS 66604-1104) with the designation, "Ash Wednesday Offering."

Ash Wednesday also marks a **Districtwide Day of Repentance**. We encourage you to pray the Litany (found in *Lutheran Service Book*, pp. 288-289), worship, consider fasting, and give to someone in need. Thank you in advance for your support of current and future church workers in the LCMS!



Pastors and church workers: please help us connect your students to this ministry at this very important time in their life. We want to encourage you to visit your KSU student on a Monday, and bring them to a Bible Study.

DCE William Prann
(St. Luke's, Manhattan)
wprann@stlukesmanhattan.org
phone: 602-930-7870

Rev. Michael Schmidt
(St. Luke's, Manhattan)
srpastor@stlukesmanhattan.org
phone: 785-370-9790

Rev. Jim Woelmer
(Christ, Manhattan)
jwoelmer@verizon.net
phone: 972-704-6722

Scholarships Available

Our LCMS congregations and schools need church workers, and the Kansas District is ready and willing to help. The district is once again offering scholarships to students pursuing a degree in church work at one of the Synod's universities or seminaries. Last year, the Kansas District awarded \$62,787.45 in scholarships to future church workers!



Scholarship amounts are based on available funds and the number of applicants received. The application deadline for 2026-27 scholarships is June 1. The application will be available at <https://kslcms.org/education-grants>. Other organizations offering scholarships to church work students include the Kansas District Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Lutheran Laymen's League, and St. John's Alumni Association.

EDUCATION & YOUTH

2026 Kansas District Youth Ministry

2026 Concordia Early Childhood Conference

2026 KAIRS Administrators Conference

Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation (KLSSF)



2026 Middle School Huddle

The 2026 Middle School Huddle will be held **April 17-18, 2026, at Rock Springs Ranch!** The keynote speaker will be **Rev. Seth Meyer**, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Winfield. Cost is \$100 per person. This year's theme is "Hesed – Steadfast Love, Lovingkindness, Mercy."

Registration is open! Visit <https://kslcms.org/middle-school-huddle> to register and find more information.

The Middle School Huddle is a Kansas District youth event specifically designed for youth who are currently in grades 5-8 and aims to foster faith in Jesus Christ through time of worship, learning, and fellowship with one another. This event takes place at a retreat center, where kids gather over the course of Friday evening and into Saturday afternoon for spiritual growth.

If you have any questions, please contact **DCE Samantha Wagner** (*Christ the King, Salina*) at dcesamanthawagner@gmail.com or at phone number 785-827-7492.

It is the expectation of the Kansas District that congregations have a current background check on file for all adults attending District youth events, just as any adult serving with minors in a congregational setting should. The District recommends running background checks through **MinistrySafe**. The District has partnered with MinistrySafe to provide free child safety resources and training to all member congregations and schools. Background checks through MinistrySafe do have a cost per individual screened.

To access MinistrySafe, visit <https://ministrysafe.com/lcms/> and use the code **LCMS2025** (you will be asked to put in billing information, but won't be charged unless you run a background check). Contact the Kansas District with questions about MinistrySafe. For additional details, please review the [Kansas District Youth Protection Policy and Guidelines](#).



2026 Lutheran Valley Retreat

The 2026 Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) will be held **May 31-June 5, 2026, at Woodland Park, Colorado!** This year's theme is

"Summit" which invites students to explore the mountains of the Bible: places where God reveals His greatness and meets His people. Throughout Scripture, mountains mark moments where heaven and earth come together, not because we climb up to God, but because He comes down to us. Each day highlights a biblical mountain, paired with a Psalm of Ascent, showing how God meets us in His Word and Sacraments, and ultimately reveals His love and power in Jesus Christ.

Registration will open March 1. The cost is TBD. Visit <https://kslcms.org/lvr> for more information. LVR is for high school youth who have completed grade 8. Click on the provided link to learn more: [What to Expect at LVR](#). For questions, please contact **Rev. Michael Ada** (*Beautiful Savior, Olathe*) at mike.ada@bslcks.org.



Join the Kansas District
Youth Ministry
Facebook page!





EDUCATION & YOUTH

2026 Higher Things Dates & Locations

June 23-26, 2026

Washington University
St. Louis, MO

June 30-July 3, 2026

Washington University
St. Louis, MO

July 14-17, 2026

Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO

Visit the *Higher Things* website
<https://higherthings.org/dcrh>.

Pricing

February 1 - April 30, 2026:

WashU - \$605

CSU - \$625

On or after May 1, 2026:

WashU - \$655

CSU - \$675

A nonrefundable deposit of \$150 is required to secure every attendee's spot at their desired conference, especially if said site reaches capacity and the waitlist policy is implemented.

Planning is underway for the **2026 Concordia Early Childhood Conference, June 7-8**, on campus in Seward, Nebraska. Registration information will be available in early April via www.cune.edu/ecc. The conference theme is "Unshakable!"

We are delighted to welcome **Rev. Dustin Lappe** as the Sunday Dinner Keynote Speaker, and **Raelene Ostberg** from Thriving Together for the Monday Keynote sessions. Raelene will share about decreasing stress and increasing success, as well as working with challenging temperament traits and helping all children succeed. Learn more about Raelene via her website, www.thriving-together.com.

KAIRS Administrators Conference

The KAIRS Annual 2026 Administrators Conference registration is live on the kairs.org website! Please note the deadline for this conference will be February 2.

The Conference will be **February 9-10, 2026**, and held at the Ramada by Wyndham (420 SE 6th Street, Topeka, KS 66607). When completing this registration form, please make sure to list every attendees dietary restrictions to better help the catering process.

Click on [This Link](#) to register.

For questions, please contact **Dr. Jamie Finkeldei**, KAIRS President, finkeldeij@catholicdioceseofwichita.org or **Nichole Karungu**, Communications Director, kansas.kairs@gmail.com.



Early Childhood Conference



thriving together we got this!

SAVE THE DATE

June 7-8, 2026




WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
DUSTIN LAPPE AND RAELENE OSTBERG

Join us as Raelene shares how to decrease stress, increase success and enhance joy in our work.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY NEBRASKA



EDUCATION & YOUTH

Empowering Futures *Formed by Faith*



Do you want to transform lives through Lutheran education? Support the Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation and empower students with Christ-centered scholarships!

KLSSF, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Federal Tax ID# 993778196. All donations are tax deductible.



Why Donate?



- 75% State Tax Credit
- 90% of your donation provides up to \$8,000 in scholarships per student
- Scholarships serve low-income students
- Strengthen Lutheran schools and support KLSSF in expanding their mission & impact.

Download the PR Kit

Spread the KLSSF's mission through the downloadable PR Kit, which includes a bulletin insert, social media graphics, email template, and more!

REV. DANIEL GRAMS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 ☎ (785) 357-4441
 📩 www.klssf.org
 📩 dgrams@klssf.org

CARING MINISTRY

EMERGENCY / Disaster Response

2026 Faith at Work

Parish Nurse Ministry



What is Mercy?

"Mercy is an act of love that enters into misery and brings consolation, relief and help. Mercy is love responding to need." - Wilhelm Loehe

Engaging Youth in Response Work (Part 3): In Closing

Engagement refers to the level of involvement, interest and interaction that individuals have in a particular activity, event, or communication.

Lutheran Early Response Team

How do we engage youth in response work? It's really no different than the question, *How do we engage youth in the life of the Church?*

Here are some ways to engage youth in response work and in the Church:

- Invite them
- Offer answers to their "Why"
- Give them opportunities to serve
- Show them they are valued
- Encourage and support their involvement
- Partner with them in projects

Last but certainly not least, build a culture of service from a young age. When we start the conversation and offer opportunities for children to serve alongside

their parents at an early age, then "yes" becomes a natural response to opportunities rather than an afterthought. Be creative, offer age-appropriate activities to children while they are in the faith development stage, encourage parents to look for opportunities to serve together in the community and continue to teach the natural progression of faith to serving their neighbors.

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."
- Isaiah 6:8

Blessings,

Donna Williams
ksddrc@gmail.com

Parish Nurse Medical Mission to Ethiopia

I had the privilege of traveling to Ethiopia with five other Parish Nurses. Upon arrival we met many of the members of Master Builder Center (which had been founded by Rev. Tihahun Mendedo). Our purpose was to teach parish nursing to nurses serving in their local communities. Fifty nurses attended the training and were eager to learn, openly sharing their experiences and challenges.

During our visit, we spent three days teaching the fundamentals of parish nursing, had a great time interacting with the nurses and met and visited with the presidents of synods (equal

to our districts). We also brought 13 suitcases filled with desperately needed medical supplies. These supplies were distributed among a hospital, a prison, and two clinics in the Hosanna area. In addition, we had the opportunity to observe the care nurses provided to patients in these facilities, highlighting the significant need for additional resources and support.

The people of Ethiopia were gracious and welcoming throughout our stay. The experience was truly eye-opening and filled with many blessings.

Mary Hume, Parish Nurse and Kansas District Representative for Parish Nurses



Mark your calendars for this coming April, and the third annual **Faith at Work** service projects!

Faith at Work is a district-wide service event in which groups of all ages and skill sets from our congregations, schools and RSOs find needs within their communities to serve throughout the month.

We are encouraging everyone, young and old, to serve their friends and neighbors in the name of Jesus.

For more information and to register your *Faith at Work* project, visit <https://kslcms.org/faith-at-work>.

BUSINESS OFFICE

Kansas District Resources

Automatically Created GoFundMe Non-Profit Accounts

Recently, GoFundMe has begun automatically creating donation pages for nonprofits using publicly available IRS data—without the organizations' direct consent. This development directly affects many non profit organizations, including congregations, schools, and other ministries.

If your congregation or school appears on Go-FundMe, please note:

- No action is required unless you wish to manage the page directly.
- Claiming a page allows your organization to link a bank account, control the content, view donor information, and ensure proper handling of gifts—but it also brings responsibilities for oversight, donor acknowledgment, and recordkeeping.
- Not claiming the page avoids these responsibilities, but it's wise to check the site occasionally to make sure your organization's name and information are used appropriately.
- GoFundMe's terms allow nonprofits to request removal of an automatically created page if they do not wish to be listed.

You can search to see whether your church or school has a GoFundMe page by visiting: <https://www.gofundme.com/s?nonprofits=1>.

Many LCMS Kansas District ministries are listed here.

While these pages may provide another way for supporters to give, the automatic setup can cause confusion or reputational risk if left unmanaged. We encourage you to check whether your ministry has a GoFundMe page and take action as appropriate.

For more information, see GoFundMe's non-profit terms:

<https://www.gofundme.com/gofundme-pro-terms>

Announcements and Reminders

2026 IRS Mileage Rate

Effective January 1, 2026: The IRS new mileage rates are 72.5¢ per mile for business and 20.5¢ per mile for medical. The Kansas District mileage rate, set by the Board of Directors, is 15 cents below the IRS rate, or 57.5¢ per mile. These new rates apply to mileage reimbursements paid to an employee on or after January 1, 2026, with respect to transportation expenses paid or incurred by the employee on or after January 1, 2026.

The rate used for charitable deduction purposes remains at 14¢ per mile.

2026 Kansas Salary, Benefit Guidelines

The 2026 Kansas District Salary and Benefit Guidelines are available on the [District Resources](#) page of our website. The guidelines provide congregations with an objective approach to developing a suitable compensation plan for church workers.

If you have any questions, call the Business Office at 785-357-4441, ext. 1002, or email **Heather Williams** at heather@kslcms.org.

A Note from Communications: Microsoft Publisher

The desktop publishing software Microsoft Publisher will be discontinued in October 2026. Microsoft suggests a few different alternatives to transition Publisher documents before October, including saving documents as PDFs and converting documents that need to be edited into Microsoft Word and PowerPoint.

Click on this link to learn more: <https://support.microsoft.com/>

There are also other publishing and design program options, including Canva, Adobe products, and Affinity. If you have any questions, email **Jackie Schaefer** at jackie@kslcms.org.

LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND (LCEF)

Kansas District Resources

Announcements and Reminders

LCEF offers fixed rate term notes for 1 year and 18 months at 4%. A term note at LCEF allows you to grow your funds while making a real difference. Choose the term that fits your goals and enjoy peace of mind knowing your investment is supporting LCMS ministries and churches.

Please visit the LCEF website <https://lcef.org/term-notes> to see all current rates.



Dear Kansas District members,

LCEF's goal is to meet your congregations where they are at and to meet their needs, both immediate and long-term. LCEF offers [large construction and renovation loans](#), but did you know we offer smaller loans designed specifically for immediate needs?

Have a leaky roof? Broken organ? Need new carpet? LCEF's [Ministry Improvement Loan](#) may be just what your church needs.

The Ministry Improvement Loan is ideal for repairs, upgrades and enhancements that create a welcoming and functional space for your congregation and visitors. Enjoy features like:

- Interestonly payments for the first two years
- Funding up to \$150,000
- Quick approval process for most unsecured loans

If you find yourself needing a quick fix with a trusted partner, please reach out. I would love to see if a LCEF [Ministry Improvement Loan](#) is what your congregation needs.

Blessings,

Jeffrey Maltz

jeffrey.maltz@lcef.org

785-230-4112

LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC insured, are not federally insured savings or deposit account or insured by any state or federal agency. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. Neither LCEF nor its representatives give legal, accounting or tax advice. Consult your tax advisor as to the applicability of this information to your own situation. UMB Bank n.a. serves as the custodian for the LCEF IRA/HSA programs. 0225N107

Grow Your Future Grounded in Faith



SUPPORT LCMS MINISTRIES
WITH YOUR INVESTMENT



\$100 MINIMUM



ENJOY COMPOUNDED INTEREST
PAID MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY



ONLINE ACCESS AND
MOBILE APP

Individual Retirement Account

Faithful savings for a secure tomorrow

Start building your future today with a Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) Individual Retirement Account (IRA)—an investment that helps you prepare for retirement while supporting the ministry work of Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) churches, schools and organizations.

With competitive interest rates and a focus on your financial and faith-driven goals, your investment can make an impact now and for generations to come.

Contact us today.

800-843-5233
Monday through Friday
7 a.m. to 5 p.m. CT



lcef.org/tomorrow





DISTRICT MEETINGS & EVENTS

DISTRICT CALENDAR

<https://kslcms.org/calendar>

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 1** Circuit Visitors / Vice-Presidents meeting, 6-8 p.m. (Redeemer, Lawrence)
- Feb. 2-3** Pre-Lent Conference (Redeemer, Lawrence)
- Feb. 4** Board of Administration and Stewardship, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (Zoom)
- Feb. 5** President's Council, 1-4 p.m. (Zoom)
- Feb. 6** Board of Directors, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (Zoom)
- Feb. 9-10** KAIRS Administrators Conference (Topeka)

FEB. - APRIL

- Feb. 9-12** Council of Presidents (St. Louis, Mo.)
- Feb. 18** Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 27** Districtwide Professionals Development Day (St. John's, Topeka)
- March 19-22** YouthLead training (St. Louis, Mo.)
- March 29** Palm Sunday
- April 2** Maundy Thursday (District office closes at 2 p.m.)
- April 3** Good Friday (District office closed)
- April 5** Easter

APRIL / MAY / JUNE

- April 6** Easter Monday (District office closed)
- April 10-11** Pastors Wives' Retreat (Christ Lutheran Church, Manhattan)
- April 12-14** DCE Retreat
- April 17-18** Middle School Huddle (Rock Springs Ranch, Junction City)
- April 17-19** Kansas District LWML Convention (Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan)
- April 21** Older Adult Committee, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (Zoom)
- April 22** Administrative Professionals Day
- April 24-30** Council of Presidents (St. Louis, Mo.);
- Fort Wayne, Ind.)**
- April 28** Call Day (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis)
- April 29** Call Day (Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.)
- May 7** President's Council, 1-5 p.m. (District office, Topeka)
- May 8** Board of Directors, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (District office, Topeka)
- May 14** Ascension Day
- May 24** Pentecost
- May 25** Memorial Day (District office closed)
- May 31-June 5** Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) (Woodland Park, Colo.)

2026 Lightwell Ministry Safety Summit

There will be a Lightwell Ministry Safety Summit held **8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. on Wednesday, March 4, 2026**, at Legacy Christian Church (Blue Valley Campus, 14301 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park, KS 66223).

All ministries are welcome to attend! The cost is \$25, plus tax (lunch is included). Lightwell Insurance is an agency for Brotherhood Mutual. Visit <https://www.lightwell.com>.

This training event will equip your staff and volunteers with best practices to help keep your ministry safe, including:

- Situational awareness - seeing a potential issue before it becomes a problem.
- Exploring trends in active shooter violence.
- Best practices to stay vigilant and keep yourself and others safe.
- Having the mindset and abilities to respond to potential threats.
- Abuse prevention and child safety, including case studies on ministry sexual abuse, identifying grooming behaviors, and reporting claims of sexual abuse.

The security presenter will be **Craig Cable**, Director of Ministry Safety and Strategic Partnerships.

2026 Lutherans for Life Essay Contest

The Council of Federation Presidents of the National Lutherans for Life and Lutherans for Life of Kansas (LFL of KS) are sponsoring an essay contest using the theme **"That They May Have Life"** based on John 10:10. This essay contest is open to all students of Lutheran schools or members of Lutheran churches in Kansas in grades 6-12.

Visit the Lutherans for Life website <https://lflofkansas.org/essay-contest> for more information.

Submit your essay to secretary@lflofkansas.org on or before **March 15, 2026**.



Save the date for the 2026 Pastors Wives' Retreat, to be held **April 10-11, 2026**, at Christ Lutheran Church in Manhattan (4592 Green Valley Road, Manhattan, KS 66502).

This year's keynote presenter is **Deaconess Dr. Jennie J. Asher**, Director of Deaconess Studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Check the Kansas District website <https://kslcms.org> for upcoming registration and details.



SYNOD & PARTNERS



Concordia Center for the Family, a Registered Service Organization of the LCMS, is uniting homes and congregations in making lifelong disciples of Jesus.

Through foundational training events, Family Discipleship Facilitators are being equipped and inspired to strengthen the marriages and families served by our LCMS congregations and schools. CCF wants you as a Family Discipleship Facilitator! This training opportunity is for called and commissioned leaders of LCMS congregations and schools, along with lay family ministry leaders.

There are two nearby training sessions scheduled this coming 2026 summer (June 1-3 at St. Matthew in Lee's Summit, Mo., and June 15-19, a family camp at Heit's Point in Lincoln, Mo.) Find out more at [https://www.concordiafamily.org/](https://www.concordiafamily.org/FD-Facilitator-Information) [FD-Facilitator-Information](https://www.concordiafamily.org/FD-Facilitator-Information). There are discounted training rates now available to members of LCMS Kansas District congregations! These discounted rates are provided through mission grant funds. Email the Concordia Center for the Family office to receive the discounted training rate at office.ccfamily@gmail.com.



The DOXOLOGY Classic Series is a continuing education program for pastors, their wives, and congregational lay leaders to experience a time of study, renewal, worship, and growth. The DOXOLOGY Classic Program offers advanced training designed to strengthen pastors for the holy calling of shepherding souls, ground learning in the *cura animarum*—the classic care of souls, integrate insights from contemporary Christian psychology, and provide time for meaningful conversation, encouragement, and worship. The DOXOLOGY Classic consists of three retreats: the Gathering (for pastors), the Encore (for pastors and congregational lay leaders), and the Grand Reunion (for pastors and their wives).

There are upcoming DOXOLOGY conferences at the Spiritual Life Center in Wichita (7100 45th Street North, Wichita, KS 67226). **The Gathering will be held June 1-4, 2026; The Encore will take place Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2026; the Grand Reunion will be held July 30-Aug. 1, 2027 (location TBD).**

Registration is open through May 17, 2026. Visit <https://www.doxology.us/events/2026-kansas-classic/> for more information about registration, fees, and available grants.

Studia Vitae: Concordia University, Nebraska

Michael Fischer, LCMS senior mission advocate, will serve as an instructor for Concordia University, Nebraska's new non-cred-

iting continuing education and lifelong learning program called Studia Vitae. He will teach a course titled "Biblical Foundations of Fundraising and Philanthropy." Studia Vitae offers Christ-centered continuing education opportunities in a variety of focused areas through an online scheduled and self-paced learning platform.

Studia Vitae's Biblical Foundation of Fundraising and Philanthropy course will be held on Mondays from January 12 to February 20, 2026, at 7 p.m. CST. Designed to support leaders whose responsibilities includes fundraising, Fischer's course offers a biblical foundation for thinking about and approaching fundraising and advancement work. We explore the topic through biblical themes of the generosity of God, stewardship, generosity, wealth, partnership in the Gospel and legacy.

Registration is now open for this course and addition offerings in Concordia University, Nebraska's Studia Vitae program. Each CEU course is \$150 and is delivered in six one-hour sessions. Discounts are available for program participants who are members of preferred partner organizations. The short, focused sessions are available as scheduled webinars that will also be recorded for future viewing. Enrollment is flexible and open to anyone with no prerequisites required, and no commitment is needed to take additional classes.

Registration is available at <https://ceu.cune.edu/>. For more information about Studia Vitae, please visit <https://www.cune.edu/continuing-education> and <https://cune.edu/partners> for more information about preferred partnerships.

Life Ministry Matching Grants

The people of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) love children and families, and they demonstrate this love through many acts of mercy in their communities. To support these local prolife efforts — both big and small — the LCMS offers matching grants to LCMS districts and congregations. The online application for congregations will be open from **January 1-February 15, 2026**.

Awards range from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Visit the Life Ministry Matching Grants webpage for more information, <https://www.lcms.org/serve/grants/life-grant>.

For questions on projects or the application process, email Kris Freeman, manager of LCMS Life Ministry, at lifeministry@lcms.org



AROUND THE DISTRICT



On Friday, December 12, **Trinity Lutheran Church in Garden City** hosted a Church Worker Care Team Appreciation Dinner. It was a wonderful night filled with great food and fellowship!

Special thanks to **Brooksie Appel** (pictured seventh from the left) for cooking and coordinating the dinner! Her hard work and dedication is truly appreciated! Thanks also to the team Brooksie assembled to host the event.



Pictured left to right: Judge David E. Bruns, Sen. Kenny Titus and Rep. Kevin Schwertfeger. Not pictured: Rep. Tim Johnson, Rep. Steven Howe, U.S. Congressman Ron Estes (serving the fourth Congressional District of Kansas), Rep. Susan Estes, and Judge John Bosch.

We are blessed to have LCMS members who are serving in state offices gather once a month for Bible study. On January 13, 2026, members of the **Kansas LCMS Public Servants Group** gathered at the Kansas State Capitol in downtown Topeka, for the State of the Judiciary address. Please keep these brothers and sisters in Christ in your prayers as they serve in public office.



KFUO The Coffee Hour: Guest Mark Wolters, Kansas District Board Member!

On Friday, January 16, 2026, **Mark Wolters**, who serves as a member of the Kansas District Board of Directors as laity for Region 4, was a guest on The Coffee Hour for KFUO Radio. The Coffee Hour episode is titled *"Set Apart to Serve: Lessons from the Tractor"* and focuses on the role of church workers in the lives of laity and lay leaders. In the episode, Mark and another lay member Debbie Larson discuss their service in the church, use the analogy of farming and harvest to church worker recruitment, and discuss how laypeople can encourage others to consider church work vocations.

Listen to The Coffee Hour episode with Mark Wolters at <https://www.kfuo.org/coffee-hour-011626-set-apart-to-serve-lessons-from-the-tractor/>.

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