



*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 2026

### 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; Council of Presidents meetings; Pastors' Church Worker Conference planning meetings; District Youth Ministry Executive Committee meeting; Lutheran Social Services; LCMS Foundation; Kansas District Life Conference/March for Life on Jan. 28; multiple Circuit Winkel visits and preaching engagements.

**Ordinations and Installations.** In the fourth quarter there were five installations (Rev. Albert Bader - Immanuel, Bremen/Bethlehem, Bremen – Region 2; Rev. Jody Walter - Immanuel, Oakley/Immanuel, Hoxie – Region 4; Rev. Phil Augustine - Grace, El Dorado/Christ, Augusta – Region 3; Rev. Christopher Craig - St. Paul, Ellsworth – Region 4; Rev. Reed Shoaff - Messiah, Hays – Region 4).

**Visits/Travel.** In the fourth quarter President Panzer drove 6,954 miles as he traveled to ordinations, installations, meetings, Circuit Winkels, conferences, and preaching engagements.

**Congregational Activity.** In the fourth quarter there were nine calling congregations in the Kansas District, with seven churches seeking a sole pastor and two churches seeking a senior pastor. Four call lists were completed in the past quarter.

#### Congregational & School Services

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

**Missions and Stewardship.** Rev. Grams provided updates regarding the Light of the World, De Soto and Zion, Concordia church plants, as well as ongoing church planting efforts in Spring Hill and Immanuel, Kansas City, Kan. Zion, Concordia was officially chartered with the LCMS on January 4, 2026. There have been information meetings held regarding the Spring Hill church plant, with positive reception. The Spring Hill church plant has a new website, <https://lutheranspringhill.church>.

Christ Lutheran Church in Manhattan is a great example of church revitalization, as there have been 50 new members added since 2023, and currently 50-60 worshipping regularly on Sundays. This rapid growth of Christ Lutheran is a result of Rev. Jim Woelmer's evangelism efforts in the local Manhattan community.

**Lutheran Schools.** Rev. Grams attended multiple meetings in the fourth quarter, including but not limited to: numerous school visits; Youth Ministry meetings; DCE Cluster meetings; Parish Education meetings; KAIRS Executive meetings; several meetings with KSDE and KAIRS representatives; the Confedex Conference; several KLSSF presentations, and the Kansas District Youth Gathering, Nov. 14-16, 2025. Updates from Kansas District Lutheran schools include Harmon Butler accepting a call to Fairmount, Minn., and Mindy Sanders-Miller named as the Principal at St. John Lutheran School in Alma. School starts have included Ascension, Wichita (Congregation authorized September 2026 start date); Faith, Ottawa (Microschool; will be working with the Herzog Foundation), and Christ, Manhattan (Classical; fundraising to begin Fall 2026).

**Kansas Lutheran Schools Scholarship Foundation.** Rev. Grams has given several KLSSF presentations in the fourth quarter. Scholarship information includes 51 students, seven schools, \$91,720. For the year 2025, there were 53 donors to KLSSF totaling \$271,527 in donations.

**Parish Education.** There are plans for a District Family Retreat in August 2026. There are also Family Discipleship Facilitator Training sessions coming up in June, through Concordia Center for the Family. Kansas District participants receive a discount through a mission grant for CCF. Visit <https://www.concordiafamily.org/FD-Facilitator-Information> to learn more about the upcoming training sessions.

**Youth Ministry.** There were 137 youths from 17 congregations (16 congregations from the Kansas District) who attended the Nov. 14-16 Kansas District Youth Gathering at Rock Springs Ranch. Upcoming youth events include YouthLead training, March 19-21, 2026, in St. Louis; the Kansas District Middle School Huddle, April 17-18, 2026; Lutheran Valley Retreat, May 31-June 5, 2026; *Higher Things* Conferences, St. Louis, Mo. June 23-26 and June 30-July 3, Fort Collins, Colo. July 14-17; Conformation Retreat, Oct. 2-3, 2026, at Rock Springs, and the Kansas District Youth Gathering, Nov. 20-22, 2026, at the Drury Inn in Wichita.

### Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF)

Jeffrey Maltz, LCEF District Vice President

#### **Financial Update**

- Through December 2026, LCEF Kansas District has 74 loans with a balance of almost \$23 million.
- LCEF Kansas District has **3,190** investors.
- Total amount invested: **\$67,132,600.**

**Loans Approved in Quarter.** None to report.

**Loans Paid Off in Quarter.** None to report.

**LCEF Business Notes.** Improvements continue to be made to the LCEF website and app, and it is easier to make ACH initial deposits into investment accounts. Higher rate notes maturing in 2026: 6.25% for 2.5 years. Current loan rate: Adjustable 6.50%. Loan rates dropped in January by 1/8<sup>th</sup>. LCEF Canada is operational. 1 year and 18 months Term Notes at 4%. Operating Distribution will be available for Fiscal 2025 – \$68,006.

### Business Office

Heather Williams, Business Manager

**Human Resources/Personnel.** The Business Office reviewed financial compensation for 11 call documents and planning scenarios this quarter.

**Property. District Office** – The District office is under contract with Krause Mechanical for replacement of the air conditioners and control system. A complete installation is anticipated by March 2026. The fire marshal school inspection and fire alarm testing and inspection took place in January, and both were passed. The District office is waiting to hear on a grant from the Kansas Highway Patrol/Department of Homeland Security that would potentially cover the replacement of the office doors, the securing of the exterior stairwell, and updates to the camera/security system.

**Retreat Center** – The Retreat Center sales transaction is final, and funds have been released from escrow. Total sale proceeds were \$455,053 after the realtor commission.

**Spring Hill Church Plant** – In January, District staff visited the potential site for the Spring Hill church plant. The property is in good condition, with no foreseen deferred maintenance issues. If acquired, the District will be responsible for maintenance, utilities, and insurance until the new congregation is ready to assume those costs.

**Accounting/Finance.** Congregational giving is beyond year-to-date commitments and came in at 107.9% of annual budget for year. Expenses are reported at 101.1% of budget. Synod Convention assessments were mailed out at the end of September. Congregations were given the option of paying the full assessment rate or the subsidized rate approved by the Board of Directors. Assessments have been received by 76 congregations, and of those, 45 have chosen to pay the full assessment.

**Stewardship. Planned Giving** – The District’s planned giving contract with the LCMS Foundation came to an end December 2025. The Board of Directors will be reviewing a proposed plan to continue offering planned giving education, advocacy, and services in Kansas. Education Loan Repayment Grants – At the end of 2025, 11 church workers were given grants of \$4,500 each toward their student loan principles.

### Communications

Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist

**Kansas District Website.** Noteworthy website projects this quarter included:

- Created new pages for ADF Church & Ministry Alliance and MinistrySafe as subpages under “Congregation Resources.”
- Updated the Middle School Huddle webpage with new registration link and necessary forms.

- Updated the 2026 Kansas District Life Conference and Life Ministry webpages with photos and highlights from the Jan. 28 Life Conference and March/Rally for Life.
- Added a large *Workers Together* graphic on the District homepage, for better visibility.
- Added to the Lutheran Schools Pre-K-8 webpage new information and resources about Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM).
- Updated the Kansas District Youth Gathering (KDYG) webpage with highlights and photos.
- Added the 2026 Pre-Lent Conference registration link and information to the District homepage.
- Updated the *Faith at Work* webpage with new information and registration link.
- Updated the Lutheran Valley Retreat (LVR) webpage with new 2026 information.

**Social Media.** Noteworthy social media projects this quarter included:

- 2026 Life Conference reminders, photos, videos and highlights.
- Lutherans for Life of Kansas Essay Contest reminders and guidelines.
- Ash Wednesday Offering posts.
- Lightwell Ministry Safety Summit in March.
- Upcoming DOXOLOGY Classic Series in Kansas with registration information.
- *Faith at Work* registration information.
- Upcoming 2026 Middle School Huddle with registration information.
- Concordia Center for the Family training sessions in June.
- LCMS Life Ministry video tailored to the Kansas District March for Life on the District's YouTube channel and Facebook post with the video.
- 2025 LVR highlights video on the District YouTube channel and embedded the video onto the LVR page on the District website.

**Special Projects.** Microsoft Publisher will be discontinued in October 2026: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/microsoft-publisher-will-no-longer-be-supported-after-october-2026-ee6302a2-4bc7-4841-babf-8e9be3acbdf7>.

Jackie reached out to 28 communications/press release contacts from other LCMS districts, to gather information about alternative software replacements for Microsoft Publisher. Canva was recommended for brochures, flyers, and social media graphics. Adobe products were recommended for more complex, multi-layout documents like newsletters. In December, Jackie navigated the three-monthly District publications (*Workers Together*, Principals' newsletter, and the monthly devotions publication) out of Publisher into Adobe InDesign. The *Lutheran Witness* Kansas monthly insert draft was already being created in Adobe InDesign. Jackie began converting other Publisher-created documents into other formats, including Microsoft Word, Canva, and PDFs.

Mission of the Kansas District Ministry PowerPoint Presentation – Jackie created a PowerPoint presentation of the mission work in the Kansas District for the February Benevolence Partner of the Month at Christ Lutheran Church in Overland Park and gathered together Kansas District materials to be used at the vendor table.

## BOARD REPORTS

### Board of Missions

Marvin Schulteis, Co-Chair and Mark Wolters, Co-Chair

**Quarterly Mission Grant Reports.** The Board of Missions reviewed the past quarter's mission grant reports. A summary of the reports included Immanuel Community Outreach Association (ICOA) held two women's retreats in the fall and hosted the Kansas City metro pastors in October; the Washburn Lutheran Bods will no longer be continuing, due to low student attendance. Those students involved will still continue to meet as a college group at Christ; new and experienced LCMS U at KSU leaders continue to engage college students in weekly Bible study and fellowship, and monthly fun activities. Weekly attendance in the fall averaged 20-22 students; Fairmount Ministries in Wichita continues to reach out to international students through hospitality, providing home goods, coats, and cooking materials at no cost, Bible studies, hosting international students in homes, hosting monthly free meals, and many other ways; Risen Savior, Wichita have distributed Bibles and devotions during Bible studies and given to staff. A homeless shelter was opened two blocks away from CrossOver Recovery Center, and Risen Savior has provided food twice a month for a year; Lord of Life, Leawood is in the process of putting together proposals to upgrade online engagement, including upgrading worship equipment and software. There were well over 75 individuals or households who visited Lord of Life for the first time in 2025; Hope,

Shawnee will participate in a Jesus Door-2-Door event on January 24; Christ, Topeka held the Breakfast in Bethlehem event, and although attendance was very similar to the past couple of years there were also some new people who attended; Rev. Jim Woelmer, pastor of Christ, Manhattan, stopped at 23 homes and visited several prospects inviting them to attend Christmas services. There were 23 new members at Christ in 2025, four being KSU students. Average attendance has increased from 38 in 2024 to 50 in 2025; KansaSEED hosted a Santa Bowl activity, which was a great success. There was also an adopt-a-family with a deaf child.

**Church Planting / Revitalization.** Rev. Daniel Grams provided updates from around the District. Zion Lutheran in Concordia was officially chartered with the LCMS on January 4, 2026; Rev. Jim Bender, pastor of Our Saviour in Kansas City, Kan., is meeting regularly with Rev. Daniel Jordan; Rev. Jim Woelmer, pastor of Christ Lutheran in Manhattan, is actively evangelizing in the Manhattan community and bringing more members to Christ Lutheran; Rev. Grams led an information meeting for the Spring Hill church plant; over 20 people attended and around 40 names have been collected of those interested in being involved. The Spring Hill church plant has a new website: <https://lutheranspringhill.church>.

**West Africa Mission / Tanzania.** Rev. Michael Hageman and DCE Shanna Hageman will be LCMS missionaries in Tanzania. The Board of Missions had some discussion of what support from the Kansas District could look like for the Hagemans, while still continuing support to West Africa. Rev. Grams referenced a *Lutherans Engage* article with Rev. Shauen Trump, LCMS Regional Director for Africa: [https://engage.lcms.org/q-a-shauen-trump-winter-2026/?\\_gl=1\\*1hlg9b4\\*\\_ga\\*MTI3NzY3NDA1OC4xNjU0NTM3MTgz\\*\\_ga\\_20184DBP2L\\*czE3Njg0MDY1MzUkbzEwNDAkZzEkdDE3Njg0MDE3ODUkajQ2JGwwJGgw](https://engage.lcms.org/q-a-shauen-trump-winter-2026/?_gl=1*1hlg9b4*_ga*MTI3NzY3NDA1OC4xNjU0NTM3MTgz*_ga_20184DBP2L*czE3Njg0MDY1MzUkbzEwNDAkZzEkdDE3Njg0MDE3ODUkajQ2JGwwJGgw)

**New Business.** Retreat Center Proceeds – The Board of Missions reviewed and had some discussion over the Retreat Center proceeds allocation proposal from President Panzer.

### Board of Education & Youth

Dr. Bruce Schultz, Chair

**Reports.** Rev. Daniel Grams presented his written report to the board. Some highlights included that Christ, Manhattan and Ascension, Wichita look to be on track with fundraising for opening this fall. There has been some progress on compliance issues for accreditation. There will be conversations with the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPA) and if they are able to be recognized by the state, NLSA will also be recognized.

**New Business.** Retreat Center Proceeds – Rev. Grams shared a document that President Panzer would like to discuss at the next Board of Directors meeting. A short discussion was held.

### Board of Caring Ministry

Curtis Engelbrecht, Chair

**Rev. Caleb Stoeber (Kansas District Life Coordinator) and Rev. Ian Kinney.** Rev. Kinney presented an overview of his service for the past two years. He and Rev. Panzer put together a small rite/rubric for congregations that have a sidewalk presence outside of abortion clinics. He visited some congregations on behalf of the Life Ministry. He has been working with the Kansas City, KS, Archdiocese of the Roman Catholic Church, which has been trying to work together on a pregnancy resource center in the northeast. He's done preliminary work with their representative; the district has not received any details because nothing is finalized. He is working with Rev. Stoeber on the 2026 Life Conference. Rev. Kinney thinks one of the best things a Life Coordinator can do is to visit congregations to see what they're doing with their life team (life ministry), making sure the life team is working in tandem with him.

**Reports.** Reports included District Disaster Response, Parish Nurse Ministry, Church Worker Care, Older Adult Ministry, Pastors' Wives Retreat, Life Coordinator, and *Faith at Work*. The Saints Alive After 55 Conference will be held Sept. 20-21 to avoid the summer/high travel months. The Pastors' Wives Retreat will be held April 10-11 at Christ Lutheran Church in Manhattan.

**New Business.** Retreat Center Proceeds – The Board of Caring Ministry had discussion and voted unanimously to pass the resolution on to the full Board of Directors.

### Board of Administration & Board of Stewardship

David Bruns, Chair

It was moved, seconded, and approved to acknowledge gifts received by the District during the fourth quarter, from October 16, 2025 to January 15, 2026.

**Resolution 26A-01-01 Acknowledgement of Quarterly Gifts**

Resolved, that the Kansas District Board of Directors acknowledge the gifts received from October 16, 2025 to January 15, 2026 with the designation as follows:

Undesignated/Unrestricted	\$582.90
KansaSEED Deaf Ministry	\$1000.00
LERT/Disaster	\$600.00
Reformation	\$2,400.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,582.90</b>

**Reports.** Jeffrey Maltz reported that the LCEF Kansas District has total loan amounts around \$23 million, with 3,190 investors, and a total amount invested over \$67 million. There were no loans approved or paid off this quarter. Heather Williams reported on the replacement of the AC units is projected to be completed by March 2026. The retreat center sales transaction is final, and the total proceeds were \$455,053 after the realtor commission.

Congregational giving came in beyond commitments at 107.9% of annual budget, and expenses are reported at 101.1% of budget. KLSSF has signed a contract with Adams Brown CPAs in Overland Park for year-end auditing for the scholarship foundation, because KLSSF is separate from the District in operations and finance. Synod Convention assessments continue to come in; 76 have been received so far.

Heather reviewed financial compensation for 11 call documents and also assisted a number of new congregational treasurers with W-2s for pastors. She reported on Stewardship, Education Loan Repayments, Estates, the Financial Dashboard, balance sheets, the statement of activities, and the budget-to-actual tables.

The following resolution was moved, seconded, and approved to go to the Board of Directors:

**Resolution 26A-01-02 – Planned Giving Agreement with LCMS Foundation**

Whereas, Convention Resolution 18-01-06 encouraged the Kansas District to explore planned giving options for the Kansas District; and

Whereas, Convention Resolution 25-01-03 encouraged Kansas District congregations to utilize opportunities for gift planning presentations; and

Whereas, the five-year planned giving contract utilizing trained planned giving advocates expired December 31, 2025; and

Whereas, the LCMS Foundation has proposed a three-year contract placing a half-time planned giving counselor in the Kansas District for a cost of \$30,000 per year; and

Whereas, the Kansas District has received the fruits of faithful and generous planned giving through funds including the Doris Meyer estate; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Planned Giving Agreement with the LCMS Foundation be approved; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Planned Giving Agreement be funded for up to three years with a total of up to \$90,000 from the Doris Meyer Estate fund.