

KANSAS PARISH NURSE MINISTRY FAITH COMMUNITY NURSING

Quarterly Newsletter Fall 2026

"Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you." Psalm 86:4

From the Desk of your District Representative

Dear Servants of our Lord,
Fall, or autumn, is a special time of year. The leaves turn vibrant shades of orange, the days become shorter, and the evenings grow cooler. It is also a time to prepare for the winter months ahead. Children have returned to school, and we look forward to celebrating Reformation Day, All Saints Day, and Thanksgiving.

Through worship, fellowship, and service, fall becomes a meaningful season of spiritual growth and gratitude.

I enjoy reading about and sharing the events taking place in your church. Please prayerfully consider writing an article of 200 words or more describing your activities and events so they may be shared with others.

Recently, I shared information about the *Scope and Standards of Practice for Parish Nursing*. These standards serve as guidelines that help us practice our profession safely and professionally. If you do not have a copy of this resource, it may be obtained through Amazon or eBay.

Mary Hume, KS District Parish Nurse Representative
Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you. Romans 15:7

News in the Kansas District

Congratulations to Marlene Bender: Marlene has completed the Parish Nurse course and has her certificate. She is a member of Faith Lutheran Church in Ottawa. The members of Faith are blessed to have a parish nurse team to provide for their minds, bodies and spirits.

Trinity, Atchison news: It has been a blessing and a joy to serve the congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church in Atchison for the past eight plus years. Together we have lived through many ups and downs including the Covid era and the death of our senior Pastor who had served our church for over fifty years; to the joy of being able to worship together again and finding a wonderful new senior Pastor to shepherd us.

Some of my favorite memories are of helping and supporting both of the talented ladies who have directed the church's summer VBS programs. I have enjoyed being a small part of making the experience safe and joyful for the congregation's and community's children. I absolutely love the sound of their enthusiastic voices singing and participating in all the activities.

As a new parish nurse, I looked forward to visiting members of my congregation who were homebound or in care facilities. I hoped to brighten their day with my visits and feel that I did. What I did not realize at the time, was how much the people I visited would at times brighten my day with their entertaining reminiscing or how much the evidence of their continued strong faith in God in times of adversity, would also strengthen my faith. I fondly remember ones who are now with the Lord.

I am stepping down as the congregation's parish nurse, but I plan to continue to be a volunteer in some of the many outreach programs at Trinity for as long as I am able to.

Blessings to all who endeavor to serve the Lord,
Marcene Selberg

Activities at Holy Cross, Wichita: Lyn Pitman is excited that she and her health ministry team are actively involved with both the congregation and the school. They have assisted with developing a Cardiac

Response Plan and participated in a Fourth of July outreach event titled "Let Freedom Sing."

The team is also planning fall activities for St. Luke's Day on Sunday, October 18, to recognize the Apostle Luke, a physician and messenger of mercy. What better way to acknowledge the work of the health ministry? During the service, they plan to share a short video highlighting their health ministry and its impact.

With Advent beginning in November, they are also planning an Advent dinner and will introduce healthy food options as part of the meal they serve.

Does this give you some ideas for ways to introduce or support a health ministry in your congregation? Blessings on your ministry at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

Submitted by: Lyn Pitman, Parish Nurse, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Wichita KS.

Along the Way:

A guide to Prayer Walking

Walking is an easy, low-cost form of exercise that also offers spiritual benefits. With just a good pair of walking shoes, a walking partner for encouragement, and a planned route, congregation members can combine physical activity with prayer.

Encourage members of your congregation to improve both their health and their spiritual well-being by praying as they walk.

The LCMS website offers a helpful brochure, ***Along the Way: A Guide to Prayer Walking***, which can serve as a simple introduction to this healthy and meaningful practice.

A brochure to share with your members is available on the **LCMS.org** site and search for "**Along the Way: A Guide to Prayer Walking.**"

Come and Hear the Story of Ethiopia

Rev. Tilahun Mendedo will lead worship at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Topeka on Saturday, September 5, at 5:00 p.m., and Sunday, September 6, at 10:00 a.m. He will also lead the Bible study on Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

During his visit, Rev. Mendedo will share about Master Builder Center, an organization committed to sharing the love of Jesus while bringing compassionate healthcare and practical assistance

to the people of Ethiopia. He will help us understand both the needs of his homeland and the ways Christians can respond with faith and compassion.

The people of Ethiopia face significant challenges. Reports indicate that residents in parts of northern Ethiopia are experiencing violence, including attacks on communities and the destruction of homes. Families seeking safety often encounter difficult and dangerous obstacles along the way.

Beyond these immediate concerns, many communities are in need of better healthcare, medical supplies, clean water, and other basic resources that many of us may take for granted. These needs remind us of our calling as Christians to care for our neighbors and to serve others in Christ's name.

Please join us at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 3625 SW Wanamaker Rd., Topeka, on September 5 or 6. Come hear Rev. Mendedo share God's Word and tell us what is happening in Ethiopia, his home country.

Together, we can mobilize resources with integrity, faith, and excellence so that compassionate healthcare reaches those who need it most.

Pray for the people of Ethiopia and for those who are suffering. Pray especially for peace, protection, healing, hope, and strength for families affected by violence and hardship. Pray also for the leaders and those serving communities in need.

For more information about Master Builders Center, visit MBCnow.org.

Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Renewal Time

October 15 – December 7

Each year, Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to review their health and drug coverage for the next year during the Open Enrollment Period October 15 through December 7. SHICK counselors are available to answer questions and assist beneficiaries with their shopping and enrollment.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Finder provides a way to make specific plan comparisons. It is available electronically at www.medicare.gov or by calling a customer service representative at 1-800-633-4227. The Drug Plan Finder allows you to

personalize your search for a drug plan that most closely fits your needs. Do not assume that last year's plan is good for you in the coming year.

For additional information, call the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK) at **800-860-5260** or your local Area Agency on Aging.

Flu Season

Flu season is here. The recommended timing for flu vaccination has not changed. For most people, September and October are the best months to receive a flu vaccine.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is an excellent source of current information about influenza. Learn about the symptoms, prevention strategies, and other important facts, and share this information with your members.

Printable posters are available from the CDC. Visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and search for information on influenza. Consider placing posters in restrooms, fellowship halls, and other common areas to help educate members about the virus and ways to prevent its spread.

Protecting Older Adults from Financial Scams

Every Year, thousands of older adults become victims of financial exploitation, jeopardizing their financial independence. Financial exploitation is the illegal or improper use of another person's money or property for personal profit or gain. Scammers will try to contact a person by phone, the internet or in the mail and one is encouraged not to interact with them. There are many types of scams including sweepstakes or lottery, romance or government impersonation. Protect yourself by resisting pressure to act quickly to make a decision, never give personal information, and avoid any arrangements to pay upfront. Do not answer the phone if you do not recognize the number, let it go to voice mail.

It is important to protect our seniors who are trusting. In Kansas, one can report scams by calling the Attorney General's office (785)296-2215.

Saints Alive After 55 (SAA55) Conference

The 2026 Saints Alive After 55 (SAA55) Conference will be held September 20-21, 2026, at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Salina (*111 W. Magnolia Rd. Salina, KS 67401*).

The theme for this year's conference is "Fruit Bearing Christians." The keynote speakers are Rev. David Beauchamp from Church Ambassador Network of Kansas (CAN-KS) and Brittany Jones, President of Kansas Family Voice. The SAA55 Conference Bible Study leader is Rev. CJ Luttinen, lead pastor of Risen Savior Lutheran Church in Wichita. Interest session speakers are representatives from LCMS Foundation and Good Shepherd Hospice. Jamie Spikes will have a Parish Nurse display table. She will answer questions as to why a health ministry is advantageous to a congregation and how to initiate the ministry.

LPNI Study Tour 2026

Pray for the mission trip to Panama City. The Lutheran Parish Nurses International Study Tour for 2026 will happen **September 16–23** and a group of 15 will travel to **Panama**, a rich and engaging destination filled with opportunities for learning, fellowship, and faith-filled reflection.

The Power of Health Ministry: Informing and Uplifting Your Congregation

As a parish nurse, keeping your congregation informed about relevant health topics is a vital way to promote wellness, encourage prevention, and support overall well-being. Whether you share information through monthly newsletter articles, bulletin boards, or quick-read postings in common areas and restrooms, intentional communication can truly transform your faith community.

Creative Ways to Share Health Content

- **Monthly Newsletters:** Write short, engaging feature articles based on a specific theme.
- **Interactive Bulletin Boards:** Use visuals, infographics, and take-home flyers in high-traffic areas.
- **"Stall Stories" or Common Area Postings:** Put up simple, quick-to-read health tips in restrooms or near the fellowship hall.

Best Practices for Content Delivery

- **Keep it Relevant & Timely:** Align your topics with national health awareness months or seasonal needs within your community.
- **Use Trustworthy Sources:** Always pull your facts from reliable organizations. Excellent starting points include [cdc.gov/health-topics](https://www.cdc.gov/health-topics), the Mayo Clinic, and your local health department website.
- **Simplify the Language:** Translate complex medical jargon into easy-to-understand, practical advice for your audience, and always cite your sources.

A Holistic Mission: Remember, your goal is both to inform and to uplift. Remind your members that caring for their physical bodies is a meaningful way to honor God's gift of life.

Through compassionate, clear, and faith-centered communication, you can help guide your congregation toward a stronger body, mind, and spirit.

- **September** – National Suicide prevention; Baby Safety; Healthy Aging
- **October** – Breast Cancer Awareness; Domestic Violence Awareness; National Dental Hygiene
- **November** – National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness; Lung Cancer Awareness; Great American Smokeout is Nov 21

Parish Nursing Education

Concordia University Wisconsin Offers an on-line course taught by Schools of Nursing and Theology. Courses are offered twice a year. Contact Carol Lueders Bolwerk for more information at carol.lueders.bolwerk@cuw.edu.

LCMS Parish Nurse Council offers a 17-module course for RNs wishing to become a parish nurse. The schedule is flexible and encourages completing the course within six months. Clergy and parish nurses developed the course. For additional information, contact Dr. Marcy Schnorr (marcyschnorr2009@gmail.com) or at 815-562-2744 (mornings).

If you have taken a Parish Nurse course from a non-LCMS setting, contact Marcy Schnorr to learn how you can add the theology and culture of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod to your practice.

10-Vital Conversations for Supporting Church Workers

Another opportunity to learn and work with the minister is to review the 10 Vital Conversations for

Supporting Church Workers. As Parish Nurses, it is important that we continue to grow spiritually, and to grow in our relationship with Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament. We share the love of Jesus through our relationship with members and meeting their needs.

Other topics and conversations to have include Spiritual Care and Teamwork Ministry. To learn more, [go to www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy/church-worker-wellness](http://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy/church-worker-wellness)

Mark Your Calendars

September 20-21, 2026 – Saints Alive After 55 Conference at Christ the King, Salina

September 16-23, 2026 - LPNI Study Tour to Panama. Information about our Study Tour will be in the Winter issue of the Parish Nurse Newsletter. Please pray for this group on this endeavor.

October 5-6, 2026 – Pastor's Conference

May 12-13, 2027 - Annual Parish Nurse Conference

Worker's Together

"Worker's Together" is a monthly newsletter by the Kansas District LCMS (kslcms.org/communication), sharing the activities in and around the Kansas District. There is a monthly health article contributed by the Parish Nurse Ministry. The Calls and Vacancies in the Kansas District are listed.

Kansas District-LCMS

Parish Nurse Representative

As your representative, I am available to assist you with information such as the newsletter, printed materials about the parish nursing ministry and much more. Please keep me informed of changes in your life, such as address changes, email address changes, status of the ministry in your congregation, etc.

If you know of others who would like the newsletter and other information, please let me know.

For those receiving the newsletter by mail, it can be received electronically by informing Mary Hume at maryhume29@cox.net.

Past issues of the *Kansas Parish Nurse Newsletter* are available on www.kslcms.org/caring-ministry/parish-nurse

Contact information:

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- ◇ Dr. Jamie Spikes is a member of the LCMS Parish Nurse Council and a Parish Nurse at St. Luke's Lutheran in Manhattan. Jamie's contact information is: jamiespikes@gmail.com (C) 785-313-1587.