

LUTHERAN LIFE

*The Newsmagazine of the
Florida-Georgia District
of The Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod*

2014 | Volume 4

YOUR
LIFE
IS GOD'S
GIFT TO YOU

WHAT YOU DO

WITH IT
IS YOUR
GIFT

BACK
TO

GOD





The Mission of the Florida-Georgia District is to serve, assist, and encourage congregations in the ministry of Jesus Christ. People of the Florida-Georgia District are equipped, empowered, engaged... connecting people to Jesus. *Lutheran LIFE* is the official newsmagazine of the Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. *Lutheran LIFE* is designed to inform LCMS church and school members of the activities, the personalities and resources offered by the Synod and the District. *Lutheran LIFE* may also provide a forum for Lutherans to express their views and ideas on a wide range of topics. We welcome and encourage your letters and editorials emphasizing that the views and opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by Synod or District personnel or by the editors, churchworkers or personnel of the Synod's or District's congregations or schools. *Lutheran LIFE* is published bimonthly. Editorials, news items and photos are encouraged. Please send scanned photos of approximately 300 DPI as a .jpg attachment rather than embedded in your emails. Or mail your photo print in a good quality resolution to our address below. Advertising is welcome and encouraged; rates and information are available from *Lutheran LIFE's* office. Changes of address including e-mail changes, additions or deletions should be directed to our office.

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Campus Missionaries Extend Ministry Reach

There are some new faces at the campus ministry of Florida State University, and they're not freshmen.

Katie Boltwood and Mary Rowley have been installed to serve as campus missionaries in conjunction with University Lutheran Church and Student Center in Tallahassee. They will each spend a year doing outreach and helping expand the impact of the campus ministry location in Tallahassee working with Pastor Jay Winters.

Both campus missionaries are originally from outside of the Florida-Georgia District. Rowley comes from Iowa and just completed her undergraduate degree at Concordia University Wisconsin. Boltwood hails from Virginia, where she completed her undergraduate work at Roanoke College.

"They're well on their way to adjusting to the heat and humidity of Tallahassee in the summer," Winters reported.

The campus missionaries are a part of the Lutheran Campus

Initiative program developed by Winters, who heads the campus ministry at Florida State University, and Rev. Daniel Prugh, formerly of the campus ministry at the University of Florida.

"This missionary program brings together people from diverse backgrounds who want to give a year of their lives to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ on college campuses," Winters explained.

"During the course of the year



Shown with Rev. Jay Winters (center) after being installed as Campus Missionaries are Mary Rowley (left) and Katie Boltwood (right).

they will be trained in campus ministry techniques and strategies which they will use to connect with those who are not connected to a church in college."

Lutheran Campus Initiative is already taking applications for those who would be interested in serving during the 2015-2016 school year.

"Please ask any young adult that you might have a connection with to consider giving a year of their lives for this important work," Winters concluded.

To learn more about the Lutheran Campus Initiative, visit www.LCInitiative.org. ■

DISTRICT CAPSULES

by Greg Walton District President

Calling Congregations

Grace/Atlanta, GA..... Sole Pastor
First Lutheran/Gainesville, FL Sr Pastor
Good Shepherd/Gainesville, GA.. Sole Pastor
Holy Cross/Jacksonville, FL Sole Pastor
Lake Oconee/Lake Oconee, GA ... Sole Pastor
Beautiful Savior/LeHigh Acres, FL Sole Pastor
Faith/New Port Richey, FL Sole Pastor
Trinity/Orlando, FL..... Youth Pastor
Good Shepherd/Sarasota, FL Sole Pastor
Faith/Sebring, FL Sole Pastor
Our Savior/St Petersburg, FL..... Assist Pastor
Our Savior/Zephyrhills, FL..... Sole Pastor

Calls Issued

Grace/Atlanta, GA
Rev. Michael Zeigler as Sole Pastor

First/Gainesville, FL
Rev. John Glover as Senior Pastor

Holy Trinity/Lutz, FL
Rev. Ed Harkey as Sole Pastor

St Paul/Peachtree City, GA
Rev. Paul Stark as Sole Pastor

Messiah/Tampa, FL
Rev. Dr. John Mackowiak
as Intentional Interim Pastor

St Mark/Tucker, GA
Rev. Martin Springer as Sole Pastor

Calls Accepted

Zion/Fort Myers, FL
Rev. Curtis Deterding as Senior Pastor

Grace/Jacksonville, FL
Rev. Jeffrey Skopak as Sole Pastor
Holy Trinity/Lutz, FL
Rev. Ed Harkey as Sole Pastor

Martin Luther Chapel/Marathon, FL
Rev. Anthony Mandile as Sole Pastor

St Paul/Peachtree City, GA
Rev. Paul Stark as Sole Pastor

St Mark/Tucker, GA
Rev. Martin Springer as Sole Pastor

Calls Declined

Grace/Atlanta, GA
Rev. Michael Zeigler as Sole Pastor

Good Shepherd/Gainesville, GA
Rev. Peter Weeks as Sole Pastor

Trinity/Orlando, FL
Rev. Luke Jacob as Associate Pastor

Good Shepherd/Sarasota, FL
Rev. David Constien as Sole Pastor

Messiah/Tampa, FL
Rev. Dr. John Mackowiak
as Intentional Interim Pastor

St Mark/Tucker, GA
Rev. Enwood Nevis as Sole Pastor

Transferred to Other Districts

James Zickfield Missouri (C)
Margaret Sankey Michigan (C)
Rebecca Dupont Pacific Southwest (C)
Peter J. Weeks Central Illinois (O)
James Tino Michigan (O)
Caledonia Middle Gerth Missouri (C)
Mark Wood Missouri (O)
Karla Rae Kemerling Indiana (C)
Audrey Stoneburner Texas (C)
Gordon Stoneburner Texas (C)
Nathan Peregoy Rocky Mountain (O)
Noel Johnson Northwest (C)
Levana Lee James Southern (C)
John E Mackowiak Michigan (O)

Transferred from Other Districts

David W. Hilgert Missouri (O)
Richard Wertz Rocky Mountain (O)
Laurie J. Wahner Pacific Southwest (C)
James D. Weist Ohio (O)
Diane L. Swartz Pacific Southwest (C)
Gary J. Faith Southern (O)

Ordained/Commissioned Minister Initial Assignments

Daniel A. DeHoyos
Concordia Austin, DCE
St. Paul/Peachtree City, GA (C)

Rev. Stephen Reynolds
Concordia Seminary St. Louis, Pastor
Shepherd of the Coast/Ft Lauderdale, FL (O)

Rev. Joshua Pettit
Concordia Seminary St. Louis, Pastor
Our Redeemer/Ocala, FL (O)

Ordained/Commissioned Minister Installations

Rev. James D. Weist, Pastor
Epiphany/Lake Worth, FL (O)

Change of Status within the District

Rev. Philip M. Vangen
from Active to Emeritus (O)
Rev. Edwin J. Nicklas
from Active to Emeritus (O)
Rev. James Guelzow
from Active to Emeritus (O)
Rev. James Bollhagen
from Active to Emeritus (O)
Linda Stoeckel
from Active to Emeritus (C)
Rev. David E. Nabinger
from Active to Emeritus (O)
Dennis M. Meunier
from Active to Emeritus (C)
David L. Weidner
from Active to Emeritus (C)
Cynthia A Lincoln
from Candidate to Emeritus (C)

Removed from the Roster

Jon C. Skilton, Resigned (C)

* Note: In district data above,
C = Commissioned Minister;
O = Ordained Minister

Connect with us on

LCMS Florida-Georgia District

Have you visited our website?

flgadistrict.org

UPDATES, NEWS OF EVENTS, SCHOOL NEWS,
CONGREGATION NEWS, PEOPLE, PASTORS,
TEACHERS, STUDENTS, YOUTH

www.flgadistrict.org

LIFELINES

In Matthew 14 we read, “After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone...”

It’s good to take time to get away, to rest and refresh body and soul. Jesus gave us a great example as He deliberately found time to be alone with His Father, communed with Him and was refreshed as the Father prepared Him for the days ahead.

God has given me such a great opportunity in my sabbatical. Much of my time has been with Edith at my side, and God has blessed us immensely. He’s also been at work in me personally in incredible ways.

But it certainly hasn’t been without struggle.

I grew up with a strong work ethic instilled in me by my parents. From the time I was able to work I did, and eagerly, beginning at age 13 sweeping trash up in the local mall. I really can’t remember a time when I wasn’t working. I worked through high school, college and seminary. I’ve had time off over the years, mostly just a week or two at a time.

I never suspected the impact a sabbatical would have on me. It took about two weeks before I didn’t feel like I should be at work. Jesus says of the devil, “When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” The devil uses our insecurities against us. It was difficult not to be working! Relaxing, at least for me, is hard work! My mind kept hearing these lies about my worth. I felt guilty about missing installations and special services.

Perhaps you can relate. Satan wants to destroy what God wants to sanctify. My patient wife and faithful staff made it easier to take this time for physical, mental and spiritual refreshment.

What can you learn from a sabbatical?

I suppose it’s different for every individual. For me it has been a great time of renewal of my

One of the interesting things about visiting the vineyard was learning how important pruning is to the overall growth and health of a branch. Pruning, while seemingly severe at the time, brings about healthy growth in time. What I’ve learned is that God isn’t finished with me yet as He takes me through this process of pruning. Perhaps one of the important lessons I’ve learned is to trust others. I believe God is teaching

Mountaintop Sabbatical Experience Refreshes, Renews, Re-energizes for Connecting People to Jesus

relationship with Edith. I planned a trip to the West Coast for our 30th Anniversary. Edith had never been west of Colorado, so I wanted her to see the Pacific Ocean. By God’s grace, and the help of a number of friends, we were able to go to Hawaii.

God really used that time to renew us with rest and fill us with amazement at the beauty of that place. Then we spent time driving up the Pacific Coast from LA to San Francisco, where we saw the magnificence of God’s creation. The mountains and the sea, the rock formations and the prairies were all beautiful sights. We visited Central California’s “new Napa” wine country and spent some time in a vineyard.

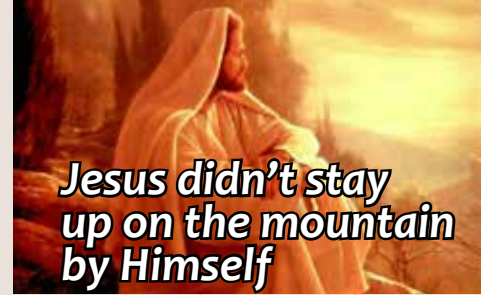
Along the way we met some wonderful people. We even ran into a “son” of our District and his wife, celebrating their 5th Anniversary in Maui. It was a great opportunity to show Florida-Georgia hospitality on the other side of the Nation! It was also an opportunity to get a perspective on a congregational leadership study I’m doing while on sabbatical. I’ll have more on that in the future once the study is complete!

me to humble myself and rely on others to serve in my place. That is more difficult than it seems, but what a joy to empower others.

More importantly I’ve seen — time and again — that there’s work to be done. There are opportunities all around us to share the love and grace of Jesus. I’ve come across people who have a passion to share the love of Jesus and a desire to see His Church grow. I’ve seen God do some amazing things in my life and in the lives of those around me. Edith and I have experienced God’s providence and care in our travels, seen some marvelous places, and we give Him thanks and abundant praise.

My hope and prayer is that I can bring back a renewed strength in attitude and energy to continue to serve as I was called to do. I’m convinced more than ever that we have been called to equip, empower and engage, connecting people to Jesus. There are people all around us who are longing to hear, learn and grow.

Sabbatical (from Latin sabbaticus, from Greek sabbatikos, from Hebrew shabbat, i.e., Sabbath, literally a “ceasing”) is a rest from work, or a break, often lasting from two months to a year. The concept of sabbatical is described several places in the Bible (Leviticus 25, for example, where there is a commandment to desist from working the fields in the seventh year). In the strict sense — therefore — a sabbatical traditionally lasts a year.



Jesus didn't stay up on the mountain by Himself

As much as He may have desired to do that, He knew that there was still ministry to do and that it couldn’t be done in isolation. The chorus of an Amy Grant song entitled, “I’d Love to Live on A Mountaintop” says, “And I’d love to live on a mountain top fellowshiping with the Lord, I’d love to stand on a mountain top ‘cause I love to feel my spirit soar. But I’ve got to come down from that mountain top to the people in the valley below or they’ll never know that they can go to the mountain of the Lord.”

This is what I’ve learned. It’s great to go to the mountain top, to be alone with Jesus, but it always has a purpose. Several conversations I’ve had recently indicate that many see the church on the mountaintop fellowshiping with Jesus, while people in the valleys below are crying out for help. Years ago, when I was a young pastor in Toccoa, GA, a pastor from Atlanta did a seminar for my congregation. His basic message was this: the role of the church is to “bring them in to build them up to send them out.”

As we look to the future, God is calling us to engage our culture with the love and grace of Jesus. From East to West, the needs are evident. Sin is still trapping people — all people — both those who are religious and those who have turned their back on God. Our role, our calling, is to be Jesus to them in tangible ways so that some might know and see Him living in us and believe.

In Exodus 31 God commanded that the Israelites observe a Sabbath forever. We’re often tempted to make that one day, but I believe it has more to do with quality than quantity. What I’m

learning is that a sabbatical is really about increasing the quality of time with Jesus rather than quantity. As I’ve become rested, the quality of time with Jesus has been wonderful: lessons to take back into the work world at the end of the sabbatical, with a renewed passion to connect people to Jesus.

As we find opportunities for sabbatical, may we be renewed to serve our Lord Jesus wherever He places us, as far as the East is from the West!



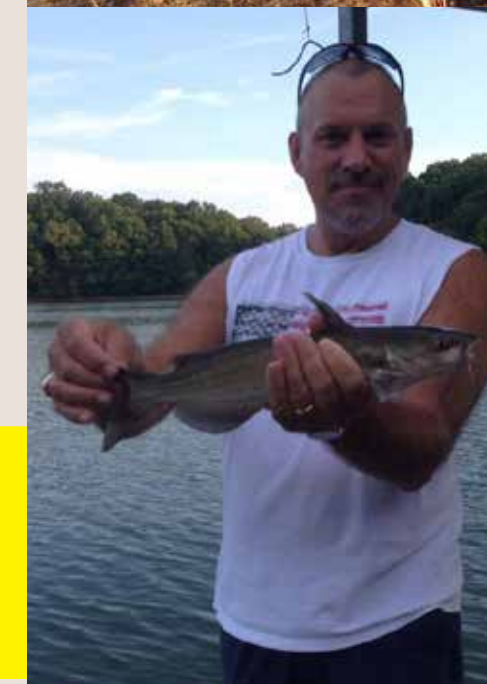
Seal watching in 57 degree temperatures at Carmel, California City Beach

A beautiful evening — following an impressive jeep tour — at this focal point of the Steinbeck Family winery in Paso Robles, California.



On top of the world — photo on left page taken by Edith Walton at the Haleakala National Park Summit, Kula, Hawaii

With you on this amazing journey as we continue to connect people to Jesus!
GREG



District Headquarters Recognized as a “Best Place to Work” by Business Journal

The Florida-Georgia District was included on the *Orlando Business Journal*'s list of the Best Places to Work in 2014.

According to the profile, the top two reasons that the District is a great place to work are the team work and the shared vision for the mission of the organization.

Other reasons cited for the distinction included: Most recently added perk/change: *Move into brand-new, modern offices in July 2013 that provides workers with a safe and secure workplace and easy access near the airport for customers.*

Perks planned to add next year: *More intentional employee social events, service opportunities and outings.*

Song that best illustrates company culture: *You've Got a Friend in Me* from *Toy Story*
The atmosphere in office: *Professional, but always friendly, warm, willing to share a laugh, and to help.*
How we bring out the best in workers: *Teamwork, recognition, consistent efforts to provide salaries and benefits that demonstrate our commitment to care for our employees.*



Mark Brink, Florida-Georgia Executive Director for School Ministries

The visibility in the business publication offered an opportunity to promote the mission and focus of the District as well:

Mantra that best describes our culture: *Equip, Empower and Engage – Connecting People to Jesus*

How we prevent complacency: *We meet daily for Bible study, prayers and sharing. We have recently developed a staff covenant.*

Little-known fact about the company: *We are part of a larger organization – The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod – which is a Christian denomination established in this country more than 150 years ago.*

Asked what he liked best about working at the District, Mark Brink, Florida-

Georgia Executive Director for School Ministries for the past 21 years, said, *“Sometimes you walk into a place and it just feels like a good, healthy place to be. Our office is that way. We are a team of individuals who work together in pursuit of our mission, ‘To serve, assist and encourage...’ I don’t ever recall feeling like I didn’t want to go to work, except for maybe that day when I had a kidney stone.”* ■



WILDFIRE is the theme for the November 7-9 District Middle School Youth Gathering, set for Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center in Leesburg, FL.

Based on Deuteronomy 4:24 – For the Lord your God is a consuming fire – the weekend event will feature popular national youth speaker Bill Yonker, pastor of Immanuel Lutheran/East Dundee, IL. Gathering

band Living Stones will provide music throughout the weekend. The registration fee is \$140. Updates are available on the Florida-Georgia District website — www.flgadistrict.org. ■

LERT Training Continues

In cooperation and coordination with The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Office of Disaster Response, the Florida-Georgia District will sponsor its next Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) Training session from 9am-4pm on August 23 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 20735 Leonard Rd., Lutz, FL.

The only cost for participants is travel to and from the event. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

“Responding to a disaster allows a congregation to confess Christ to their community, region and world in ways they may have

never considered before,” said District Business Manager John Elliott.

The central premise of the LCMS Disaster Response ministry’s training is rooted in 1 John 4:19: “We love because He first loved us.”

“Our Triune God first showed His love to us through the death and resurrection of Christ,” Elliott continued. “We see this love as we are washed in Baptism, fed in the Lord’s Supper and continually nourished through the Word. These ways in which God has



shown His mercy and love to us are now turned outwards to our community.”

Online registration is open on the District website — flgadistrict.org. For more information or registration assistance, please contact John Elliott at 877-457-5556, x7 or via email at jelliott@flgadistrict.org. ■

District Stewardship Advisory Council Offering Great Resources to Congregations

Just 40% of the congregations within the Florida Georgia District did any kind of Stewardship training for their congregations in 2013.

Outstanding resources are available from the District office to help congregations in this process. The recommendation is that it probably should not coincide with budget planning for the church.

The Bible speaks of the need for God’s people to give — not to give to a budget but to give because of what God has done for us. Not out of obligation but out of thanksgiving. The new term being used to describe for taking care of what God has given us to manage is *Generosity*.

One way the District offers assistance is through a program called *Consecrated Stewards*,

formerly called Consecration Sunday. A few years ago the Lutheran Church Extension Fund



(with the permission of author Herb Miller) rewrote the program, and the churches that have used it have been blessed.

While the program is not about raising money but rather opening and encouraging individuals to be proportionate givers, churches have seen the giving of members go up from 18% to more than 35%! This has

most certainly been a blessing to these ministries and it has advanced doing things for the Lord that they had never experienced before.

The emphasis is on all members being involved and all working together as the Body of Christ.

The Florida-Georgia Stewardship Advisory Council is headed by Rev. Dennis Bartels of Holy Cross/North Miami, FL.

The goal is to help all congregations

no matter the size or location. On the Council are trained individuals from every region of the District who are able to provide leadership and direction.

Contact Debbie Talbot at the District Office — dtalbot@flgadistrict.org or Dennis Bartels — dbartels@holycrossministries.com for additional information. ■

LHM Partnership Designed to Help

Launched with a series of regional workshops in fall of 2013, the Outreach Initiative is a partnership between the Florida-Georgia District and Lutheran Hour

Ministries. The Outreach Initiative seeks to create a culture of outreach so congregations connect to the lost in their communities, sharing the Gospel with them and

helping them grow to be followers of Christ.

The second OI phase — Community Connections workshops — began in January of this year. A mass media

campaign is scheduled to launch in the first half of 2015.

The Outreach Initiative concept and the pilot partnership with the District began



He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psalm 126:6)

**LWML Florida-Georgia District
2014 CONVENTION
Wyndham Jacksonville Riverwalk
September 26-28**

**Registration Closes August 30
No Registrations Will Be Accepted
After That Date!**

Registration form is available in the 2014 Spring Evangel and on the District website: www.flgalwml.com. Registration includes Saturday's lunch and banquet; all other meals are at participant's expense. Mail completed form and check, payable to LWML FL-GA District, to Convention Registration Chair Sharlene Miers, 4870 Gopher Circle, Middleburg, FL 32068.

Questions regarding registration may be emailed to: joyfulnoiselwml@gmail.com



On June 17, LWML Florida-Georgia District Vice President of Mission Grants Carol Alberts (center) presented a check to representatives of the Body and Soul Ministry Food Pantry of Forest Oaks Lutheran/Spring Hill, FL, for the remaining \$5,000 of their Mission Grant. "It was Food Pantry day, and what a busy well organized weekly effort," Alberts said.



The \$10,000 Mission Grant for Gospel Outreach to At-risk Children was fully funded on February 9 when VP of Mission Grants Carol Alberts (left) presented a check to Cynthia Tillman, director of the Early Learning Center of Peace/Naples, FL. Chris Paganes (right) was also at the presentation. The money will establish a Scholarship Fund to help offset the tuition cost for needy families.

Congregations Connect People to Jesus

with research in statistics for the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Statistics can find trends, and at the right time help to create a sense of urgency and responsible action when those trends are

as the 1990s. However, since 1998 the LCMS has experienced significant losses every year.

The chart below depicts the change in LCMS baptized membership by year for

theological Word of Law and Gospel. People were attracted to church-going. Churches were growing, schools were flourishing, church planting was happening — almost automatically, like being on auto-pilot.

Then, something happened in 1998 through 2010. LCMS baptized membership drastically took a hit, year after year. The indicators present some very challenging days ahead for churches

that take a passive role in evangelism, outreach, and church planting.

The Outreach Initiative is an opportunity for congregations and their evangelism leaders to kindle a passion and an urgency for outreach, to nurture people and teams of people to develop a "missionary-like" behavior in their service to their Lord.

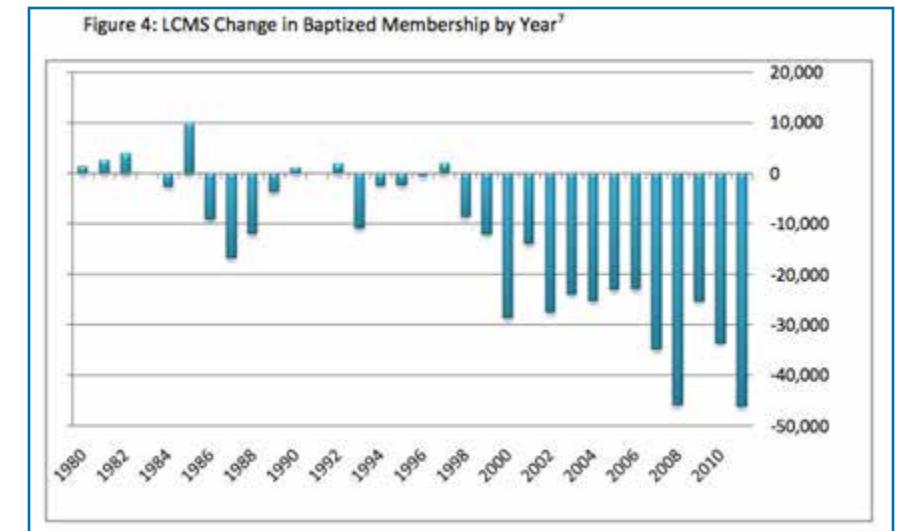
For more information and resources, visit <http://www.lhm.org/flgaoi/>



indicating a negative direction. The LCMS is trending right now in terms of decline of membership as a whole, according to LHM representatives.

The LCMS has been experiencing declines in membership over the last couple of decades. While there were plateaus and slight declines since the late 1970s, there were actually instances of year-to-year growth as late

the last reported decade: Coming out of the 1950s and 1960s the United States was a highly churched culture. LCMS preaching boomed a solid



LWML District Mission Grants Funded

At their last biennial District Convention, Florida-Georgia LWML members approved \$84,472.92 in Mission Grants in addition to \$30,000 in pastoral and church worker scholarships.

Those grant recipients included:

Trinity/HOPE: \$5,000.00
Rebecca's Garden of Hope After School Program: \$10,000.00
Concordia Seminary/St. Louis Food Bank: \$10,000.00
Food and Clothing Co-op, Concordia Theological Seminary/Fort. Wayne:

\$10,000.00
Helping Blind People See Jesus (Audio Bible Study): \$4,000.00
Carpenter's Hands: \$10,000.00
Body and Soul Ministry Food Bank: \$10,000.00
The Heartbeat of Miami: \$10,000.00
Gospel Outreach to At-risk

Children: \$10,000.00
Training Future Pastors in Uganda: \$5,472.92
As of July 1, almost \$70,000 in grant funds had been awarded.
Approving new Mission Grant recipients and amounts will be on the business agenda at this September's Convention.

President's Convocation Focus on Renewal Geared to Professional, Volunteer Workers

Held once every three years, the Florida-Georgia President's Convocation is designed to inspire and equip everyone associated with District churches and schools — called or contracted workers as well as church/school/ministry volunteers.

The next President's Convocation will be held September 29 through October 1 at the Buena Vista Palace Hotel in Lake Buena Vista under the theme "Renewal from the Inside Out."

Four nationally known speakers will delve into aspects of that theme in mega workshops as well as other presentations.

Wellbeing, Flowing From the Font



John D. Eckrich, M.D., President and CEO, Grace Place Lutheran Wellness Ministries

Wellbeing in the Christian's personal life

and ministry service flows from the Baptismal font into all aspects of Baptismal living.

The Lutheran Wellness Wheel is a particularly effective model to use to reflect on wellbeing, restore in His Word and re-invigorate for vibrant and joy-filled ministry, through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. We'll examine the Wellness Wheel and closely look at

Christ's invitations to Be Well, and Serve Well.

God's New Creation: You



Rev. Gerald P. Coleman, Director of Music, Christ Lutheran Church/Washington

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. This means you.

In Christ, God has already made you a new creation. The theme "God's New Creation: You" grows out of the conference main theme from Romans 12. We will engage both of these great biblical texts in our short time together.

Living Sacrifices... Or Burnt Offerings?!



Dina Vendetti, Ed.D., St. John Lutheran School/Dover, DE

Lutheran Schools are amazing places for finding new

life in various ways and above all, in Christ. The seed planting, fertilizing and tender care needed for this new life to happen is provided by the strong corps of men and women who serve in our schools as teachers, administrators, volunteers, board members and the list goes on.

How can we assure that our dedicated workers can experience that new life as well? And how can we keep their passion, their "fire," alive and well without turning them into burnt offerings? These and other questions will be explored as we

share stories of renewal and ideas for new growth.

Three Values That Make For



Effective Sacramental Entrepreneurs
Rev. William R. Woolsey, CrossPoint Community Church/Katy, TX

Woolsey's passion for reaching the lost has resulted in two ministries, one a multi-site church reaching almost 1,500 people weekly and the other a "how-to" network for sacramental church workers who want to more effectively reach God's lost people.

Principles from these ministries will be discussed at the President's Convocation. For more information and to register for the President's Convocation, visit the District's website at www.flgadistrict.org



DISTRICT PRESIDENT'S CONVOCATION

September 29- October 1
MONDAY — WEDNESDAY

**Buena Vista
Palace Hotel**

**Lake Buena Vista
FLORIDA**

Thrivent Members Go To Washington

Earlier this year Thrivent members from around the country descended on Washington DC — in the halls of Congress and the Senate. The March 11-13 trip was all about telling the Thrivent story and helping Congressmen/women and Senators understand the organization's impact as a Fraternal Benefit Society.

Thrivent members from Georgia included John Setzer, Thrivent Coweta Chapter President; Rev. Victor Belton, pastor of Peace Lutheran-Decatur; and Jim Carella, Community Engagement Leader.

"We told the Thrivent Story in Georgia for the 20,000 Thrivent

Members in DC," Carella reported.

"Our Georgia members hosted 755 chapter activities resulting in nearly 150,000 volunteer hours and \$1,310,000 raised. As an organization we have helped change thousands of people's lives."

Social impact and social capital were also reported to Congress and the Senate, "and Thrivent's contributions in both these areas are staggering," Carella continued. "Chapter events led by Thrivent members across the US generated \$1.8 billion in charitable contributions. That is what Thrivent and our members do!" ■



Thrivent Boosts Royal Family Kids Camp

The Fayette County Thrivent Chapter and Financial Representative Lisa Hartel recently supported the Royal Family Kids Camp (RFKC) fundraiser through the Care Abounds in Communities program.

The Fayette Chapter provided assistance to the not-for-profit organization to raise funds to support a week-long summer camp for south-side Atlanta foster children.

RFKC is a nationwide organization that helps abused and neglected children. The camp experience gives hope to foster children ages six to twelve and provides them with a safe environment in which to make positive memories. Last year 69 children from the South Metro Atlanta area were able to attend camp.

The Thrivent fundraiser began with an online auction April 13-25 and concluded with a live

auction April 26 at the Lovejoy Family Church.

Events like these model the Thrivent Way and show others how Thrivent members make an impact in their communities! ■






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For additional information, please contact the Florida & Georgia Region at 407-942-1332

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Thrivent Partners with Lutheran Services Florida



Thrivent Financial Consultant Richard Ackerman (right) presents a \$10,000 check to LSF Chief Operating Officer Chris Card

On February 16, Thrivent Financial presented a \$10,000 grant to Lutheran Services Florida to support capacity building for ministries and to raise awareness.

Thrivent Financial and LSF have been building a partnership for many years, and this grant is a part of the ongoing relationship.

The Thrivent/LSF partnership has produced awareness for both organizations. Many Thrivent members have also worked with their Thrivent representatives to plan giving and endowments to benefit and support LSF.

Following last year's Good Samaritan dinner where supporters of LSF learned about Thrivent Financial and the organization's goal to help individuals be wise with money and live generously, five people became Thrivent members and continue to support LSF and Thrivent by promoting both organizations within their community. ■

Concordia-Portland Students Serve Those in Need with LSG

One recent May afternoon, 11 students from Concordia University Portland gathered at Lutheran Services of Georgia to listen to refugee stories, assist with English as a Second Language lessons and help refugees prepare resumes. These students traveled from Portland to the Deep South to spend a week volunteering with LSG.

Each year, LSG partners with colleges and universities to provide service opportunities for students during Alternative Break Trips (ABT). Concordia began offering ABTs in 2008 and this year became the first Lutheran university to visit LSG for an ABT.

The CU students assisted with cultural orientation classes, set up an apartment for a refugee family, visited refugees in their homes and tutored and played with refugee children at the

Clarkston Community Center.

Students discovered tangible ways to serve others through their academic fields. As Sarah Prom, an Elementary Education major, said of her work with refugee children, "Helping with homework and playing with these children helped me realize that as a teacher I cannot control what student will walk into my classroom. I need to provide an accepting environment."

Throughout the trip, students tied their service to faith. During morning reflections, Professor in Exercise and Sports Science Joel Schuldheisz – a lifelong Lutheran – helped students make connections between Lutheranism, service and their faith in Jesus Christ. Many students cited their faith as their primary motivation for service.

Students found the trip to be eye-opening and



transformative. One student, Tito Vasquez, decided to return for a summer internship with LSG's Refugee and Immigration Services.

"LSG appreciated the enthusiasm and hard work students brought to refugees and looks forward to serving with Concordia in the future," summarized Abi Koning Communications Coordinator. ■

Above — Concordia students visit LSG's Extended Cultural Orientation class at Clarkston apartment. Home to refugees and immigrants from all over the world, Clarkston is known colloquially as the most diverse square mile in America.

Left — Concordia student Sarah Prom assists a refugee with his resume.



Congregation's Donations Help PEPPI Head Start Child Development Center

Members of Faith Lutheran Church-Eustis recently collected items for Belle Glade children enrolled in Lutheran Services Florida's PEPPI Head Start program.

In conjunction with another parish, they gathered more than \$6,000 worth of socks, underwear, toiletries, clothes and other items for children ages 3-5.

One of the poorest communities in Florida, Belle Glade has a high crime rate and difficult living conditions. The goal of the PEPPI Head Start Child Development Center is to improve the quality of life for at-risk preschool children by providing comprehensive services to struggling Belle Glade families.

Every parent is required to play an active role in the program including: participating in school activities, volunteering in classrooms, serving as chaperones on school field trips, and maintaining the school building and property.

This past year LSF opened a charter school for grades K-3 just

down the street from PEPPI. The Sellow Belle Glade Excel Charter School is expanding to include grades 4 and 5 this fall. ■

Below — Nadine Dessaint (left) and Edith Pino sort items donated to PEPPI Head Start by Gloria Dei and Faith Lutheran congregations



LutherHostel Events Planned on LCMS Seminary Campuses

LutherHostel – an opportunity for adults age 55 and older to growth in biblical knowledge and understanding, fun, fellowship and gain helpful insights for daily living – will be held October 4-7 at Concordia Seminary/St. Louis and October 29-31 at Concordia Theological Seminary/Fort Wayne.

The theme for the St. Louis event is “Inviting Community” and what that means to the church at large. Participants will gather together as their own “inviting community” to talk with Seminary Professors David Schmitt, Jeff Kola, Jeff Ostwald and Tim Salsa on the deeper issues of what it means to follow Christ and be the church together.

Scheduled activities include a reception and dinner with Seminary President and Mrs. Dale A. Meyer, presentations, class visitation, an Oktoberfest dinner, student-led devotions, informal interaction with faculty, a private demonstration of the organ in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus and a tour of St. Louis area LCMS sites.

The registration fee of \$375 per person includes all meals (Saturday

supper through Tuesday lunch), refreshments, the Oktoberfest dinner and a candlelit banquet. Lodging is extra; second-floor, double-occupancy, dormitory-style rooms are available on campus in limited number in Lobber Hall. There are also special rates at area hotels.



Luther Hostel: Continuing To Grow In Christ

The registration deadline is September 13, 2014.

For more information about LutherHostel, or to register for the event, contact the Seminary’s office of continuing education at 314-505-7286 or ce@csl.edu. Registration and information are available online at <http://www.csl.edu/resources/continuinged/1h14/>.

The theme for the Fort Wayne LutherHostel is “Godliness and Contentment Is Great Gain: Living Peacefully and Patiently in the Last Days.” Participants will hear presentations by CTS faculty, including President Lawrence Rast, Dr. Arthur Just and Dr. David Scaer.

Other highlights will include

attending classes with current students, visiting Fort Wayne attractions and a special Reformation Service with music by the CTS Kantorei.

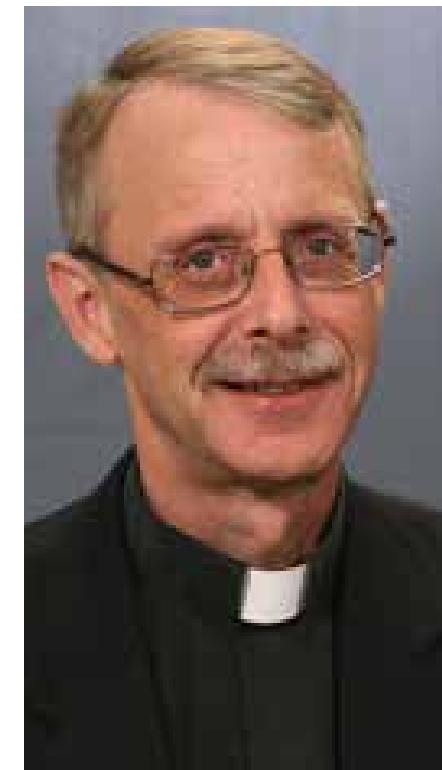
For more information and to register online go to www.ctsfw.edu/Luther-hostel, or email Retreats@ctsfw.edu or phone 260-452-2204. ■

Concordia Chicago Welcomes New President

Rev. Dr. Daniel Lee Gard will be installed as the 11th president of Concordia University Chicago at the Opening Service on August 24. He succeeds Rev. Dr. John F. Johnson, who retired in August 2013.

Gard comes to the University from Concordia Theological Seminary/Fort Wayne, where he was Professor of Exegetical Theology and Dean of the Military Chaplaincy Programs. Gard serves as Rear Admiral (Lower Half) and only months ago was nominated for and appointed to the position of Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters in the U.S.

Since his 1984 ordination, Gard has served in a range of areas, from ministering to civilian and military personnel to teaching Hebrew to future LCMS pastors, and from



comforting grieving families on 9/11 to providing spiritual guidance to his parishioners.

In addition to his various military honors, Gard received the St. Martin of Tours Award in 2008 from the former LCMS Board for Mission Services for his exceptionally meritorious service.

A graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Gard earned both his M.A. in Hebrew Bible and Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible/Judaica with minors in New Testament and Liturgics from the University of Notre Dame.

He and his wife Annette Kay Scheumann Gard have three children: Caleb, Rachel and Hannah, a Concordia-Chicago student. ■

LUTHERAN NATIONAL NEWS Scholarships

New Scholarship Opportunity for Sem Students

Concordia Seminary/St. Louis is offering a new scholarship opportunity for incoming students who graduated from Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod colleges and universities. The new Presidential Scholarship is designed to assist graduates from the Seminary’s partner undergraduate institutions as they continue their formation for service in the church.

These scholarships are available to eligible graduates of Concordia University System schools who have applied to a program in Ministerial Formation at Concordia Seminary, including students enrolling in the

Master of Divinity or Master of Arts in Deaconess Studies programs.

All concluding CUS students are eligible for a \$500 scholarship.

Concordia Seminary is also offering larger scholarships to the most outstanding students from each school. The top three applicants from each institution will be awarded scholarships of \$2000, \$1500, or \$1000.

This scholarship is above and beyond any other financial aid the students will receive; receipt of this award will not affect, or be affected by, the amount of financial aid they receive from other organizations or

programs.

Once the student applies to the Seminary, he or she will automatically be considered for the awards.

All information for scholarship consideration will come from the student’s applicant file; no separate application is required. Applicants must submit their application to Concordia Seminary before the November 1, 2014 deadline.

Additional Information is available from Rev. Bill Wrede, Director of Admissions at 800.822.9545 or admissions@csl.edu. ■

Thrivent Days at the Ballpark

Thrivent Day with the Rays
Contact Tom Reagin
at tom.reagin@thrivent.com
Tampa Rays vs. NY Yankees
Saturday, 8/16/14 • 4:05pm
Group (10 or more) tickets:
\$25 (a \$50 value)
Individual/Groups under 10:
\$35 online
Seating: Baseline Box Section



Thrivent Night with the Braves
Contact Jim Carella
at james.carella@thrivent.com
Atlanta Braves vs. Phillies
Saturday, 9/20/14 • 7:10pm
Tickets/Seating:
\$18 Upper Level/\$26 Outfield

For ticket and game information, please go to our regional website at www.lutheransonline.com/rfo190



Spotlight on Services: CAPITAL FUNDING SERVICES

Ministry In Motion: The Calling of Capital Funding Services of LCEF

Stuck? Stalled? Stymied?

Perhaps you're asking, two questions. "Where am I to go from here?" and "How do I get there?" CFS is designed to first ask – then help you answer those questions. One day workshops called, "Vision Path" ask large questions and shape the Body to answer them.

How do I fund the vision once discovered?

CFS capital campaigns are less about fund raising, more about people raising. Our theologically rich Biblical process is based on Ephesians 3.20

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all that we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen."



Using the inspiration from this Scripture we help people move through the four phases of a capital stewardship campaign.

1. **Imagine** leads people move from "I wish to I see"
2. **Inform** leads people to grow from "I see to I agree"
3. **Inspire** turns hearts from "I agree to I'm in"
4. **Immeasurably More** helps people realize God's grace provides "Immeasurably More"

Our goal is more than raising the dollars needed for the congregation's dream but to raise the level of people's relationship with the Lord and the use of the blessings he has given them to manage. I have seen it again and again where people would never consider returning to their former thinking about how to use the gifts with which the Lord has blessed them.

Contact me or Dan Reichard if you'd like to know more about the process that moves from stuck, stalled or stymied to ministry in motion!

Rev. Dr. Karl Galik
Regional Vice-President, CFS-East
Karl.Galik@lcef.org
951.251.Karl

Sharing the LCEF Story With District Congregations

Lutheran Church Extension Fund District Vice President Daniel J. Reichard and his team look forward to the opportunity to share the LCEF story with Florida-Georgia congregations during personal visits.

As he explains, "I will do this in a manner which works and fits best with the Congregation:

announcements, Bible Class, in-home get-togethers, coffee hour chats and so on."

Oak Road Lutheran/Lilburn, GA, and Pastor Scott Holder hosted on LCEF Sunday on May 18. On June 8, Reichard was at Lake Oconee Lutheran/Eatonton, GA, with Pastor James Stoltenberg. Capping the month was an LCEF Sunday at

Ascension Lutheran/Casselberry, FL, with Pastor Tom Eggebrecht and LCEF Congregation Advocate Vicky Piller.

For more information about scheduling an LCEF Sunday in your congregation – or information on Congregation Advocates – please contact Dan Reichard or Debbie Talbot at (877) 457-5556 ext. 4 ■



LCEF District Vice President Dan Reichard with Lake Oconee Lutheran Pastor James Stoltenberg.



Dan Reichard and Debbie Talbot, LCEF Administrative Assistant, with the LCEF Sunday information table.



Ascension/Casselberry LCEF Congregation Advocate Vicky Piller with Dan Reichard



YOUNG INVESTORS — Just \$25 opens an LCEF Young Investors (Y.I.) Club Account for youth from the ages of birth through 18 years. While the young investors save for the future, they learn valuable stewardship concepts while empowering ministry through LCEF. One of the newest members of the Y.I. Club is Zane, the grandson of LCEF District Administrative Assistant Debbie Talbot. He's shown here with the little lamb he received from LCEF.

Something for Everyone

For all the unique characteristics of each generation, there are also areas of common interest. For example, check out who's on Facebook these days!

When it comes to your financial needs, Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) offers investments for everyone from babies to grandparents.

No matter your age, you'll have this in common: helping to share the Gospel, saving for the future, and using your blessings wisely through your LCEF investments.

Invest today! Visit lcef.org or call 800-843-5233 to get started.



Percentage of Facebook Users in the United States*

- Ages 18-29: 84% among adults that are online
- Ages 30-49: 79%
- Ages 50-64: 60%

*Pew Research Center, Dec. 30, 2013.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> Florida-Georgia district

Daniel J. Reichard
District Vice President
Florida-Georgia District
877-457-5556
dreichard@flga-lcms.org

Join the LCEF experience.



LCEF StewardAccount access features provided through UMB Bank, n.a. LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell LCEF 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. StewardAccount access services are offered through UMB Bank n.a. StewardAccount is not available to investors living in South Carolina. The Family Emergency StewardAccount is known as the Family StewardAccount in the State of Ohio.

FLORIDA GEORGIA

REGIONAL NEWS

Peace/Decatur's PAHL Garden Highly Successful

GEORGIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE Karla Drenner (right) toured the Community Gardens sponsored by Peace/Decatur in early July with



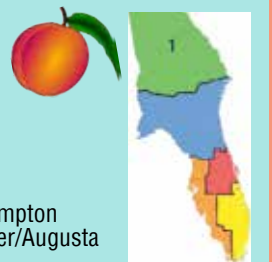
Rev. Victor Belton, pastor of the congregation. Peace has hosted the garden on its campus for several years, offering members and community residents the opportunity to farm a plot for just \$20 a year. The project is under the auspices of Partners in Action for Healthy Living (PAHL), which was established to improve the quality of life in South DeKalb County Georgia and surrounding communities by promoting community building, healthy eating and active living. Belton is chairman of the organization's board of directors. ■



Children in the PAHL garden at Peace/Decatur's campus getting ready to check the bees.

REGION 1 CONNECTIONS

Vice President: Rev. David Brighton | Mount Calvary/Warner Robins
Liaity Board Member: Mr. William Gaik | Trinity/Toccoa
Liaity Board Member: Mr. Jay Wendland | Living Faith/Cumming
NE Georgia Circuit Visitor: Rev. David Wesche | All Saints/Blairsville
Atlanta N Circuit Visitor: Rev. Ray Borchelt | St. Mark/Tucker
Atlanta S Circuit Visitor: Rev. Larry Townsend | Christ Our Savior/Hampton
E Central Georgia Circuit Visitor: Rev. Roger Schwartz | Our Redeemer/Augusta



Our Redeemer Welcomes New Music Director

Paul Roberts is joining the ministry team of Our Redeemer/Augusta as Music Director and Organist.

Roberts and his wife Bonnie have lived in Augusta since their 1977 move from New York. They have four grown children, three of whom live in other southern cities.



Roberts' music studies began in grade school and continued with high school at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Those studies continued with undergraduate work at Boston University; graduate work at the Manhattan School of Music; and post-graduate work at the Juilliard School. He has been active as a director, organist/pianist, and composer/arranger in church, concert, and theater music.

Roberts also provides music for various community events with his private band. ■



CELEBRATING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE – Members of St. Paul Church & School/ Peachtree City were in patriotic garb for the City's Fourth of July parade. They handed out candy and goodies and spread the word about St. Paul's ministries.



MEMBERS OF TIMOTHY LUTHERAN/Woodstock celebrated the 25th anniversary of Pastor Stephen Constien's pastor ministry on June 22. There was just one worship service that day, at 10am, and Sunday School did not meet. After the worship service members gathered for a Ballpark Lunch, during which Constien was honored for his ministry. The fun continued with a baseball game on the church campus. Constien (below with cake) graduated from Concordia Seminary/St. Louis in 1989.

Fundraiser Helps Local Outreach Programs

Members of Grace Lutheran/ Clarksville-Demorest hosted a yard sale on May 10 to raise funds for two local charities: Clarksville Sharing & Caring and Clarksville Soup Kitchen.

The proceeds were supplemented by a Care Abound in Communities Grant from Thrivent Financial.

On June 12, representatives of Grace presented checks for \$400 to both charities.

Grace, the daughter mission church of Trinity Lutheran-Toccoa, is shepherded by Rev. David H. Kehret.

At right — Margie McCollum (center) of Clarksville Caring & Sharing receives a \$400 check from Grace/Clarksville-Demorest representatives (l-r) Chris Egeland; Jan Egeland, Chairperson of Fellowship; Bill Gaik, Vice President; and Pastor David Kehret ■



CHRIST LUTHERAN/PERRY has accepted the Florida-Georgia District's Flood Bucket Challenge! As detailed on the back page of this issue, the District office on June 1 challenged each Florida-Georgia congregation to assemble ten LCMS Disaster Response Flood Buckets. Christ members met that challenge ... and showcased the results at the front of the sanctuary. ■

SCRAPPY QUILTERS — Trinity/Summerfield recently honored members who served in the United States' military during World War II with the presentation of a special quilt in patriotic colors. Presented with quilts were Nate Arnold, Ralph Feeman, Bob Ferrara, James Gigstead, Ralph Green, Bud Hagenbuch, Gene Hankins, Richard Oster, Stuart Reitz, Vince Simonetti, Lyle Staudacher, Jack Williford and Karl Ziegler. ■



REGION 2 CONNECTIONS



Vice President: Rev. Frank Marshall | St Paul/Jacksonville
 Board Secretary: Rev. Jay Winters | University Church & Student Center/Tallahassee
 Laity Board Member: Mr. Donald Kaufman | St. John/Ocala
 Laity Board Member: Ms. Lois Schaefer | Amazing Grace/Oxford
 Tallahassee Circuit Visitor: Rev. Mark Schultz | Epiphany/Tallahassee
 First Coast Circuit Visitor: Rev. Dana Brones | Bethlehem/Jacksonville
 N Central Florida Circuit Visitor: Rev. James Rockey | Amazing Grace/Oxford

Our Redeemer Welcomes Associate Pastor

Rev. Joshua Pettit was installed as Associate Pastor of Our Redeemer / Ocala at a special worship service in June.

Preaching was Rev. Doug Kallesen, Executive Director Mission and Outreach for the Florida-Georgia District. Rev. James Rockey, Circuit Visitor for North Central Florida, officiated. Rev. Joe Adams, Our Redeemer's Senior Pastor, was the liturgist.

A combined choir that included

voices from Our Redeemer and St. John Lutheran/Ocala presented special music.

A 2014 graduate of Concordia Seminary/St. Louis, Pettit was ordained into the ministry at his home congregation in California. He and his wife Elizabeth have an infant daughter, Katherine.

A celebration dinner coordinated by Our Redeemer's Christian Life Committee followed the installation service.

Shown at the installation service are Pastors (front, l-r) Terry McKee, Peace/Dunnellon; James Rockey, Amazing Grace/Oxford; Joshua Pettit, Joe Adams, Our Redeemer/Ocala; Ken Schamens, Ocala; Roy Zerbe, The Villages; (back, l-r) Mark Jurkowski, St. John/Ocala; Doug Kallesen, Florida-Georgia District; Alan Struckmeyer, Abiding Savior/Gainesville; Joshua Krepel of Albany NY, a friend of the newly installed pastor. ■



St. John Chapter Honored as Year's Outstanding Anchor Club



Anchor International has awarded St. John High School's chapter the distinction as Outstanding Anchor Club of the Year for 41 or more members.

The selection was announced at the Anchor

Pilots provide financial and hands-on support for numerous national and local initiatives in keeping with its ABCs: Anchor - Youth Development and Leadership; Brain Safety and Fitness; and Caring

There are more than 8,000 Anchors worldwide with new clubs and members being added monthly. Through professionally developed curriculum and strategic partnerships with

students from PK3 through 12th grade.

It is the only LCMS high school program in the Florida-Georgia District. ■



and Pilot International Convention in Chicago during July.

St. John Anchor Club is a part of Anchor International, the Youth Division of Pilot International, a community-based volunteer service organization founded in 1921 on the guiding principles of friendship and service. In 1952, Pilot began to recruit youth volunteers through the establishment of Anchor Clubs, a volunteer service organization.

for Families in Times of Need.

St. John started an Anchor Club on November 5, 1982. Under the direction of sponsor Jennifer Fontaine, the St. John Anchor Club focuses serving the needy and shining the Light of Christ in this dark world.

Florida District Anchor Chaplain Elizabeth Rockey, the daughter of Pastor James and Martha Rockey of Abiding Savior/Oxford, was a 2013 Anchor Leadership Summit participant.

national organizations such as DoSomething.org, Pilot encourages and provides opportunities for youth development and leadership around the globe.

St. John Lutheran School-Ocala serves

At left — Members of the St. John Anchor Club, honored as 2014's Outstanding Anchor Club for 41 or more members.

Above — Elizabeth Rockey, Florida District Anchor Chaplain during the 2013-2014

Attention Congregations!

Is your congregation's mailing list up-to-date for Lutheran Life? You can e-mail your mailing list to us to ensure each member receives their personal copy of Lutheran Life: LutheranLife@aol.com



Greater Orlando area Early Childhood Directors met at Prince of Peace/Orlando on June 24 for lunch and sharing. The group also toured the Prince of Peace Early Childhood Center. Attending were Yahismix Culver, Barbara Clark, Laurie Lingsch, Julianne Wiegand, Cynthia Tillman, Debbie Armas and Ileana Barbari. Mark Brink, Florida-Georgia District Executive Director for School Ministries, was also at the session. ■

REGION 3 CONNECTIONS

Vice President: Rev. Dr. Brian Kneiser | Woodlands/Montverde
 Board Treasurer: Ms. Renee Varga | Woodlands/Montverde
 Laity Board Member: Mr. Jon Brazee | Christ/Cape Canaveral
 Laity Board Member: Ms. Sonia Tellez | Prince of Peace/Orlando
 Commissioned Minister Board Member: Lois Ford | Faith/Eustis
 Commissioned Minister Board Member: Nick Moss | St. Paul /Lakeland
 Space Coast Circuit Visitor: Rev. Gary Held | Risen Savior/Palm Bay
 Orlando East Circuit Visitor: Rev. Jeffery Moore | Trinity/Orlando
 Orlando West Circuit Visitor: Rev. Dr. Milan Weerts | Emeritus/Clermont
 Winter Haven Circuit Visitor: Rev. Dean Pfeffer | Hope/Plant City



Below — Members of the St. Paul /Lakeland 8th grade class visited Florida-Georgia President Greg Walton and the District office before their flight out of Orlando International Airport to Charlotte, NC. From Charlotte they drove to Newland to spend five days at camp Lutherock. During their stay at the camp they worked two days with Habitat For Humanity, overcame the high ropes course, went crawling in a cave and spent time hanging out as a class for the last time before graduation. ■



Wheat Ridge Convenes Young Adult Leaders

In early June, Wheat Ridge hosted its Young Adult Leaders Convening which brought together 12 young adult leaders from Lutheran-affiliated organizations around the world to learn, share and be encouraged in their leadership and faith journeys.

Two of those leaders hail from the Florida-Georgia District: Rev. Billy Brath of Downtown Trinity/Orlando and Megan Miessler of Lutheran Counseling Services/Winter Park.

The young adults, all between the ages of 20 and 35, are Wheat Ridge grant recipients leading health and human care ministries. During the three-day event, they received teaching and coaching from experienced leaders, shared and learned from their peers and grew spiritually during devotional times together.

The teaching and sharing sessions addressed topics such as community partnerships, fundraising, maintaining a healthy work/ life balance, and measuring and reporting the impact of programs. Sessions were led by

Beth Chase, Executive Director, Bright Stars of Bethlehem; Anya Knodt, Assistant Director for Ministry Programs at Wheat Ridge; Bob Sitze, former denominational executive, author and congregational leader; and John Kretzmann, Co-Founder & Co-Director of the Asset Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University. Diane Marten, Director of Education and Formation at the Lutheran Deaconess Association, served as spiritual leader for the weekend.

Brath was awarded a grant for The Wellness Challenge, a three-month program he developed for Florida-Georgia Church Worker Family Care Commission. The goal is to provide a practical and relational wellness resource for all congregation church workers that engages them in improving holistic health along with their co-workers. The program is scheduled for a full launch in the Fall of 2014.

A Wheat Ridge Burst Grant is enabling Lutheran Counseling Services to provide Miessler's services as a School Social Worker.



The Private School Counseling Program is designed to provide a school social worker on a weekly basis to private schools in the Orlando area to meet with students who are struggling with emotional needs, consult with teachers for classroom interventions and assist families in accessing additional resources. This program is supported by the staff at Lutheran Counseling Services. ■

Above — Pastor Billy Brath and Megan Miessler at the Wheat Ridge Young Adult Leaders Convening.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH programs at Good Shepherd/ Titusville include a food pantry for those in need throughout Brevard County, with a focus on the northern end of that region. The food pantry is open the second and last Tuesday of each month from 9:30 am until noon. Donations and food drives help keep the pantry shelves stocked. Another Good Shepherd outreach program is its Garden Street Rebecca's Garden of Hope Tutoring and Mentoring program. Good Shepherd is served by Pastor Bruce Alberts. ■

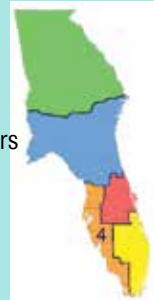


AMIGOS EN CRISTO MUSIC MINISTRY – The Hispanic ministry at Hope/Bonita Springs has begun a music ministry designed to enhance the worship experience during Sunday afternoon services. Church member and lead guitarist Reynaldo Bernal directs Roberto Velazquez (key board), Carlos García (drummer), Cesar García (bass guitar), Ebert Enriquez (percussionist) and Orleisy Lima (lead singer). Orleisy and Ebert played professionally in Cuba before immigrating to the United States. ■



MEMORIAL ARTWORK – The campus of Marco Lutheran/Marco Island was recently enhanced by the installation of a beautiful glass art piece donated by Earl & Muriel Vogt’s daughter and son-in-law, Karin & Julian Mesa, in memory of Peter Vogt, son, brother and brother-in-law. Members of the congregation’s Property Board Larry Carlen, Larry Davis, Loren Drews, Don Leshner, Jack Mahr, Donnie Rooksberry and Jack Slotke implemented the installation of the artwork. ■

REGION 4 CONNECTIONS



Vice President: Rev. James Guelzow | Messiah/Tampa
 Laity Board Member: Mr. Jeff Richards | Hope/Brandenton
 Commissioned Minister Board Member: Mr. Robert Ziegler | St. Michael/Fort Myers
 Suncoast Circuit Visitor: Rev. David Brockhoff | Holy Trinity/Masaryktown
 St. Petersburg Circuit Visitor: Rev. Arnold Piering | Emeritus/New Port Richey
 Tampa Circuit Visitor: Rev. Kevin Yoakum | Christ the King/Riverview
 Sarasota Circuit Visitor: Rev. Rossetter Leavitt | Beautiful Savior/Sarasota
 SW Circuit Visitor: Rev. Jon Zehnder | St. Michael/Fort Myers



2014 GRADUATES of Grace Preschool/Naples pose with Grace Pastor Keith Lingsch, Director Julie Crews (second from left) and teachers Ms. Nicole and Ms. Kelly at their commencement. The program serves children from the ages of 18 months through 4 years. ■

Innovative Mission Effort Reaps Results

An innovative intergenerational approach to family ministry at Zion Lutheran/Fort Myers produced – among other mission projects – enough food to serve 80 families in Immokalee.

This intergenerational approach provides opportunity for families to come together for worship, fellowship and mission

service. During a recent weekend event entire families gathered and assembled food bags for Amigos en Cristo, flood buckets and also sorted nails for Habitat for Humanity.

Family Life Ministry DCE Rebecca Duport innovated the concept and organized the weekend event to replace the

traditional children’s Vacation Bible School model. According to Zion’s Assistant Pastor Peter Weeks, “This intergenerational approach is a unique tool that embodies the partnership between the church and the home to reach out to the community.”

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans partnered with Zion Lutheran to match funds through their “Care Abounds in Communities” matching grant program.

At the end of June, Zion members bid farewell to Duport and Weeks at a service and dinner. After serving the congregation since the mid 2000s, they are heading to new ministry opportunities: Duport as a professor at Concordia University Irvine and Weeks as a pastor in Bloomington, IL. ■

Rebecca Duport with some of the food gathered that served 80 families in Immokalee.



FIRST LUTHERAN/ Clearwater was the site of this summer’s “School Mission Project/School Renewal” co-sponsored with Bethel/Clearwater and Christ the King/Largo. Also participating was Our Savior/St. Petersburg. This hands-on effort brought volunteers together to help with the renewal of the facilities at First Lutheran. On the day Mark Brink, Florida-Georgia Executive Director for School Ministries, visited, he joined Bethel Pastor Eric Eichinger, First Principal Elaine Popp and members of the First Lutheran youth group in cleaning up the facility. Brink is shown here with some of the youth volunteers. ■



Jim Guelzow Retires After 40 Years — Entire Ministry in Florida-Georgia District



Rev. Jim Guelzow with wife Lynn. Guelzow estimated his 31 years at Messiah encompassed 2,300 services, 1,600 sermons, 553 baptisms, 701 confirmations, 127 wedding ceremonies and 120 funerals.

Rev. James Guelzow led worship and preached for the final time as pastor of Messiah Lutheran/Tampa on May 18 — the day he officially retired from full-time parish ministry after four decades of service.

Both morning worship services were well attended, as was the luncheon and program that followed.

Presentations from congregational leaders, the Boy Scouts, staff and choir included tributes and gifts to Guelzow and his wife, Lynn. District President Greg Walton delivered the Farewell and Godspeed order of service.

Among the special guests were the Guelzows' children Rev. Nate Guelzow with son Josiah (wife Erin and second son James were at a family confirmation); and Heidi Jerry with husband Scott. The younger Pastor Guelzow is part of the mission at Sanctuary 1010 Lutheran Church affiliated with Immanuel/Downers Grove, IL. Heidi Jerry is principal at Christ Lutheran/Little Rock, AR.

Jim Guelzow's 40-year ministry has been served in Florida-Georgia, beginning with nine years at Peace/Okeechobee. He accepted the call to Messiah/Tampa in June of 1983 while the congregation was still a mission. Under his leadership it has grown to a strong congregation with a preschool and active community outreach ministries.

Guelzow earned a bachelor's degree in social psychology at Concordia Senior College/Fort Wayne before graduating from Concordia Seminary/St. Louis in 1974.

Throughout his ministry Guelzow has been actively involved in District activities — including long-time service as Vice President and Chairman of the Board of Directors. ■



LIVING LOVE – Led by the congregation's youth, volunteers from Our Savior-St. Petersburg are hitting the city's streets on a weekly basis this summer on a mission to rebuilt, repair and restore the community. The Street Teams are deployed into the community at homeless shelters, nursing homes, even backyards as they engage people through service, relationships and the message of Christ. Shown here during the June 23 deployment are Street Team members (l-r) Molly Niska, Kristen Fritz and Morgan Barnes. ■

Epiphany Welcomes Jim Weist as Pastor

Rev. Jim Weist was installed as the Senior Pastor of Epiphany Lutheran/Lake Worth during a special afternoon service on June 22.

Weist first came to the Florida-Georgia District in 1995 as a vicar with Gloria Dei/Davie. His vicarage was sponsored by the LCMS Mission Department and done in conjunction with Jews For Jesus. After graduating from Concordia Seminary/St. Louis in 1997, Weist returned to Gloria Dei as Assistant and then Associate Pastor.

Weist next served in an LCMS mission position in Jamaica before accepting the call to a congregation in Michigan. His most recent call was to a church in suburban Cleveland.

Three pastors were involved in the Epiphany installation service: Rev. Darrell Stuehrenberg of Bethlehem/Fort Myers, who was Weist's vicarage supervisor from 1995-1996 and then on the same pastoral staff from 1997-1999; Rev. Kevin Ogle of Miramar Lutheran/Miramar, who was a lay leader at Gloria Dei during Weist's time there; and Rev. Dennis Bartels of Holy Cross/North Miami, who has been

friends with Weist since his early days in the ministry.



Officiating at the installation was Rev. Steve Wiperman, pastor of Our Savior/Lake Worth and Region 4 District Vice President.

A celebration dinner followed the installation service.

Shown at the installation service are (front, l-r) Rev. Bill Miller, chaplain of Lee Memorial Hospital/Fort Myers; Rev. Steve Wiperman, Our Savior/Lake Worth; Rev. Jim Weist, Epiphany/Lake Worth; Rev. Kevin Ogle, Miramar/Miramar; Matt Hardy, president of Miramar/Miramar; (middle, l-r) Rev. Tony Durante, Trinity/Delray Beach; Rev. Dan McPherson, Redeemer/West Palm Beach; Rev. Ken Fuehler, Faith/North Palm Beach; Rev. Scott Gress, Transforming Congregations Network

Director for the District; (back, l-r) Rev. Vince Putnam, Trinity/Delray Beach; Rev. Dennis Bartels, Holy Cross/North Miami; Rev. Darrell Stuehrenberg, Bethlehem/Fort Myers. ■

REGION 5 CONNECTIONS

Vice President: Rev. Steve Wiperman | Our Savior/Lake Worth
Laitly Board Member: Ms. Karen Smith | Peace/Okeechobee
Laitly Board Member: Ms. Nancy Volz/Our Savior-Plantation
Heartland Circuit Visitor: Rev. Richard Norris | Faith/Sebring
Treasure Coast Circuit Visitor: Rev. Kenneth Larson | Emeritus/Lake Worth
S Palm Beach Circuit Visitor: Rev. J. R. Jones | St. Paul/Boca Raton
Gold Coast Circuit Visitor: Rev. Walter Volz | Emeritus/Plantation
Monroe-Miami-Dade Circuit Visitor: Rev. Alan Sielk | St. Paul/Miami



MOUNTAIN TOP EXPERIENCE — Senior high school youth from St. Paul/Boca Raton traveled to Colorado for a week in early July on a mission trip to help rebuild a Lutheran camp damaged by fire several years ago.

Under the direction of DCE Jeremiah Bauer, the youth worked with other volunteers as they built community and strengthened friendships. One of the highlights of the trip was whitewater rafting on the Colorado River. ■

Jeff Carlson Joins Trinity Ministry Team

Vicar Jeff Carlson has joined the ministry team of Trinity/Fort Lauderdale. This internship is a convertible vicarage, with the plan that Carlson will be called as Trinity's pastor after the vicarage is complete.

Carlson was installed as vicar on June 15 by Trinity Pastor Tom Hackett. Special music was presented by the church's choir.

Carlson and his wife, Dawn, are living in Davie with their 14-year-old twins Nick and Casey.



Jeff Carlson caught up with good friend Rev. Ben Haupt in July while Haupt and his family were vacationing in Southeast Florida. Haupt (right), is professor and Director of Library Services at Concordia Seminary/St. Louis. Carlson was one of his students at the Seminary.

Before taking the call to the seminary, Haupt was pastor of Good Shepherd/Gainesville, GA and served his vicarage and was Associate Pastor at St. Paul/Boca Raton. ■

Stephen Reynolds Installed at Fort Lauderdale's Shepherd of the Coast

Rev. Stephen Reynolds was installed at Shepherd of the Coast/Fort Lauderdale in an Independence Day weekend service.

Preaching was Rev. Dr. John Roth, the Mission Developer for Thrive Campus Ministry at Florida Gulf Coast University and Thrive Mission/Estero. Roth had served as Reynolds's Vicarage Supervisor when both of them were at First Lutheran/Gainesville. A number of First Lutheran members made the trip to attend the installation.

Officiating the Installation was Rev. Timothy Hartner, pastor of St. Paul/Weston and Gold Coast Circuit Visitor. Assisting in the service was Rev. Dr. Dennis Glick, who served as the Interim Pastor at Shepherd of the Coast for the past year.

Among the many other pastors participating in the service was Rev. Brian Albrecht of Spokane, WA. He is the father of Shepherd of the Coast's new Music Director and Teacher, Beth Albrecht, who was installed on July 13.

Traditional and contemporary music was blended by Shepherd of the Coast's music staff and choirs. A dinner and reception followed in the family life center.

A 2014 graduate of Concordia Seminary/St. Louis, Reynolds is



engaged to marry Rachel Aspeslet, the former Youth Director at Holy Cross/North Miami.

Shown after the installation service are (front, l-r) Rev. Dr. John Roth, Thrive/Estero; Rev. Stephen Reynolds, Shepherd of the Coast/Fort Lauderdale; Rachel Aspeslet;

Rev. Dr. Dennis Glick, outgoing Interim Pastor at Shepherd of the Coast; Rev. Timothy Hartner, St. Paul/Weston; Rev. Bernard Julmiste, Grace Tabernacle/Fort Lauderdale; (middle, l-r) Rev. Darrell Stuehrenberg, Bethlehem/Fort

Myers; Rev. Kenneth Fuehler, Faith/North Palm Beach; Rev. George Poulos, Gloria Dei/Davie; Rev. Russel Johnson, (Redeemer/Vero Beach; Vicar Jeffrey Carlson, Trinity, Fort Lauderdale; Rev. James Tino, Director of Global Lutheran Outreach; Rev. Oslet Macenat, Montgaricizm Evangelical/Fort Lauderdale; Rev. Josue Vilsaint (Trinity Haitian/Fort Lauderdale; (back, l-r) Rev. Tony Masinelli, Gloria Dei/Davie;

Rev. Louis Abel, Good Shepherd/Chiefland; Rev. Alan Sielk, St. Paul/Miami; Rev. Brian Albrecht, St. Johns/Spokane, WA; Rev. Kevin Ogle, Miramar/Miramar; Rev. James Weist, Epiphany/Lake Worth; Rev. Dennis Bartels, Holy Cross/North Miami; Rev. Enwood Nevis/Gainesville. ■



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The BACKPAGE

Flood Bucket Challenge is On!

On June 1, the District office challenged each Florida-Georgia congregations to assemble ten LCMS Disaster Response Flood Buckets. The District anticipates this District-wide challenge will exceed 1000 Flood Buckets.

On June 25, members of the District Office staff, joined by Florida-Georgia Second Vice President Jim Guelzow, put together 10 Flood Buckets for the Florida-

Georgia District Flood Bucket Challenge. These buckets will join others throughout the District and be placed in storage until needed by a congregation in the Florida-Georgia District, by the LCMS Disaster Response office or a fellow LCMS District suffering a flooding disaster.

The LCMS Disaster Response Flood Bucket program on its website advertised that the flood buckets

should cost around \$25 - \$30 each to put together. The District office managed to put 10 buckets together for \$221, making the cost \$22 apiece.

Funds for the District Office assembled flood buckets and their contents were donated by the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), or as Florida-Georgia District LCEF VP Dan Reichard is fond of saying, "your ministry partner!"

For more information visit www.lcms.org/disaster. ■

Working on the Flood Bucket assembly line are (l-r) Cindy Hammerstrom, Administrative Assistant Missions-Outreach;

Rev. Jim Guelzow, District Second Vice President; Kathy Keene, Administrative Assistant for the President; Rev. Doug Kallesen, District

Director Missions-Outreach; Debbie Talbott, Administrative Assistant LCEF; Lynda Voss, Administrative Assistant School Ministries. ■

