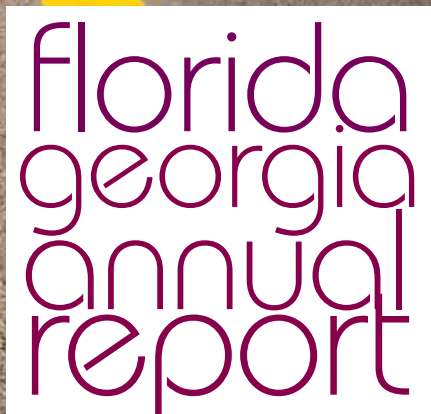
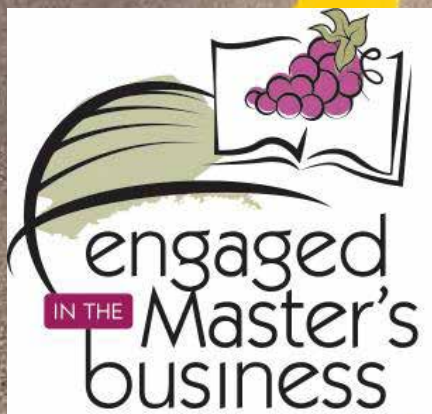


LUTHERAN LIFE

2016 | Volume 4
The Newsmagazine of the
Florida-Georgia District
of The Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod

A voice of one is calling out . . .
"Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness;
Make straight and smooth in the desert a highway for our God."
– Isaiah 40:3



MISSION ✨ MONEY ✨ MOMENTUM



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 in the Master's business ... 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, 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. Lutheran LIFE is published bimonthly. News items and photos are encouraged. Please send scanned photos 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 — if possible via e-mail: LutheranLife@aol.com

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LCMS President Emeritus Ralph Bohlmann Enters Eternal Rest

Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann, president emeritus at Concordia Seminary/St. Louis and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, entered eternal rest in Christ Jesus on July 24, 2016. He was 84 years old.

"President Ralph Bohlmann was a gentleman, a learned theologian and a kindly churchman," said Seminary President Dr. Dale A. Meyer. "His love for Holy Scripture was seen through his pastoral and winsome Lutheran confessionalism, a legacy that abides to this day in our church and seminaries. President Bohlmann will be forever remembered and honored as a brother and father in faith who helped lead us to Jesus."

Bohlmann served as the seventh president of Concordia Seminary, from 1975-81, directly following the confessional crisis regarding the authority of Scripture that resulted in a faculty walkout. At the time of the walkout, Bohlmann was a member of the faculty, and he was one of five professors who remained.

As Seminary president, Bohlmann immediately set about the task of resolving differences, healing wounds and maintaining doctrinal integrity while rebuilding the institution. Under his leadership, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) restored full accreditation to the Seminary, after placing it under probationary status during the crisis. By the end of his tenure, student population had surpassed pre-crisis days.

Bohlmann authored "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles," at the request of then-Synod President Dr. J.A.O. Preus. The statement served as a guide for the Concordia Seminary Board of Regents to evaluate the teaching of the professors prior to the walkout.



It eventually was adopted by the LCMS in convention and remains a definitive doctrinal statement of the Synod affirming the Lutheran teaching on the Scriptures.

Bohlmann was elected to the LCMS Office of President in 1981, where he served until 1992.

Before coming to the Seminary, he served as pastor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church/Des Moines, IA (1958-60) and as assistant pastor at Grace Lutheran Church/ Pagedale, MO (1961-71). He also taught at Concordia College, Milwaukee, (1957-58). He served as an assistant professor of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary in 1960. He became a professor in 1974, and was installed as president in 1975.

Bohlmann received his Master of Divinity and Master of Sacred Theology from Concordia Seminary (1956, 1966). He was ordained June 29, 1958, in Des Moines by his father, Rev. Arthur E. Bohlmann. He held a Ph.D. from Yale University (1968) and an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary/Fort Wayne (1982).

He was a member of several boards, serving on the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations from 1965-81, and was executive secretary from 1971-74. From 1969-81, he served on the ALC-LCMS Commission on Fellowship. He also worked for the Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A.

Preceding him in death was his wife, Pat, who died Sept. 14, 2012. They were married 53 years and were faithful members of Concordia Lutheran Church, Kirkwood, Mo. The couple is survived by two children and two grandchildren. ■

Coming in the next issue of LUTHERAN LIFE

Our next issue will include a followup on the 2016 LCMS National Youth Gathering, focusing on Florida-Georgia teens participating in the triennial event. We will also be showcasing District VBS programs from this summer.

Please send your photos to
LutheranLife@aol.com



- District Stewardship Summit**
August 19-20, 2016
St. Paul Church & School/Boca Raton, FL
- Florida-Georgia District Pastors Conference**
September 19-21, 2016
Rosen Plaza Hotel/Orlando, FL
- Saturday Night LiveUCF**
September 24, 2016
Prince of Peace/Orlando, FL
- Florida-Georgia District Educators Conference**
September 28-30, 2016
Wyndham Orlando Resort/Orlando, FL
- Florida-Georgia LWML District Convention**
September 30 - October 2, 2016
PGA National Resort and Spa/Palm Beach Gardens, FL
- 499th Anniversary of the Reformation**
October 31, 2016
- Middle School Youth Gathering**
November 4-6, 2016
Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center/Leesburg, FL

Calling Congregations

Faith/Dunedin, FL..... Sole Pastor
St. Paul/Lakeland, FL..... Associate Pastor
Trinity/Orlando, FL..... Senior Pastor
LC of the Cross/Port Charlotte, FL Associate Pastor
Grace/Port St. Lucie, FL Sole Pastor
Redeemer/Stuart, FL Associate Pastor
Trinity/Toccoa, GA..... Sole Pastor
Lakeside/Venice, FL..... Associate Pastor

Calls Issued

St. Paul/Lakeland, FL
Rev. Andrew Ritchie as Associate Pastor

Calls Accepted

Hope/Plant City, FL
Rev. Shea Pennington as Associate Pastor

Grace/Saint Cloud, FL
Rev. Joshua Obermann as Sole Pastor

Grace/Winter Haven, FL
Rev. Mark Harris as Associate Pastor

Faith/N Palm Beach, FL
Rev. Mark Stillman as Sole Pastor

St. John/Ocala, FL
Rev. Jeffery Shanks as Senior Pastor

Trinity/Summerfield, FL
Rev. John Blair Clark as Associate Pastor

Calls Declined

Faith/Dunedin, FL
Rev. Jerrell Simmerman as Sole Pastor

Faith/N Palm Beach, FL
Rev. Paul Ferguson as Sole Pastor

Faith/Parrish, FL
Rev. Donald Haselhuhn as Sole Pastor

Transferred to Other Districts

Rev. Michael G. Duchon to Michigan (O)
Rev. Bruce C. Alkire to Southeastern (O)
Rev. Douglas E. Fountain to SELC (O)
Ms. Lisa Roberts to South Wisconsin (C)
Rev. Justin Pahl to Southeastern (O)
Rev. Daniel G. Jones to Northwest (O)
Rev. Craig R. Boehlke to Southern (O)

Transferred from Other Districts

Rev. Mark Adrian from Northwest (O)
Ms. Lisa Lovitsch from Northern Illinois (C)
Rev. Lawrence J. Zimmermann from Southeastern (O)
Ms. Heidi Blank from Nebraska (C)

Church Changes

Iglesia Lutheran Sublime Gracia/St. Cloud, FL Closed

Ordained/Commissioned Minister Initial Assignments

Mrs. Jennifer Ashby Kard, Concordia Nebraska
Teacher, Grace/St. Petersburg, FL (C)
Rev. Joshua P. Obermann, Concordia Seminary
St. Louis/Pastor, Grace/St. Cloud, FL (O)
Rev. Shea Pennington, Concordia Seminary
St. Louis/Pastor, Hope/Plant City, FL (O)
Rev. Mark Harris, Concordia Seminary
St. Louis/Pastor, Grace/Winter Haven, FL (O)

DISTRICT CAPSULES

by Greg Walton District President

Ms. Nicole D. Hemmann, Concordia Nebraska/
Teacher, Holy Trinity/Tampa, FL

Ordained/Commissioned Minister Installations
Rev. Frank X. Kinast
Pastor, Messiah/Valdosta, GA (O)

Emeritus

Rev. Lance A. Netland (O)
Rev. Kenneth Garazin (O)
Rev. Larry Townsend (O)
Mr. Karl Floetke (C)
Rev. James Balke (O)

Called to Glory

Ms. Margarete L. Schultz (C)

Change of Status within the District

Mrs. Janice L. Peterson
from Candidate to Non-Candidate (C)
Ms. Juanita Hill-Bell
from Candidate to Non-Candidate (C)
Rev. Robert S. Davis
from Candidate to Non-Candidate (O)
Rev. Paul M. Stark
from Active to Candidate (O)
Rev. Kenyatta Cobb
from Active to Candidate (O)

LIFELINES

The summer is too quickly gone. So says the poet, and I agree.

It seems like just a few weeks ago school was wrapping up and people were planning vacations, and here we are, at the precipice of the fall schedule. Time never stands still. Perhaps that's one of the greatest revelations that



come from being a grandparent. You recognize how quickly your grandchildren change and grow up. One minute you're holding them in your arms, the next you're walking them into school. Before you know it, you're watching their life unfold before you as they graduate college. I think Steve Miller had it right — "Time keeps on slipping into the future..." That's why we need to enjoy each day!

The summer of 2016 will be remembered for many things, among them a Synodical Convention and a National Youth Gathering. It's always amazing when the Synod

meets in convention. There are certainly a variety of viewpoints expressed. For me one of the highlights of a convention is getting reacquainted with old friends, some whom you only see in this kind of gathering. Someone has said that a convention of any denomination is the church at its best and the church at its worst. With a convention behind us, we celebrated with more than 22,200 youth at the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. In it all our focus was on Jesus. In fact, our focus must always remain on Jesus.

The theme verse of the Synod Convention was from Matthew 16:16, where Peter confesses in response to Jesus asking the disciples who they say He is, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." That is my confession, too. Jesus is God's anointed One, who covers over all of my sin with His blood shed on the Cross. What an amazing and powerful act of unmerited grace. What's even better is that this gift is for each of you.

God's Word reminds us, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16 ESV) In other words, this gift is for all who will believe. None of us go to heaven because of what we do, but only because of what Jesus has done for us. My voice or your voice sharing this good news might just be the one

that God uses to communicate His grace to a fellow sinner.

The convention theme fit quite nicely with the focus of the Youth Gathering, which was "In Christ Alone!" He is our joy, our hope and our peace! There is nothing quite like hearing chanting voices of our youth in the New Orleans Super Dome praising Jesus Christ with a desire to grow in their faith in Him. It's inspiring and motivational. All these youth were gathered in New Orleans proclaiming their faith in Jesus. I pray we left that city with a powerful and bold witness of the love and grace of Jesus! It's always all about Jesus!

One of my favorite verses of Scripture is from Hebrews 12, verse 2. There we read, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb 12:2 NIV) It serves as a reminder to me that this is where our focus needs to be. All our decisions, personally and as His people, are opportunities to keep Jesus central. That's why my heart's desire is to see people connected to Jesus. None of us has the capacity to do this on our own. We look to God's Spirit, who does this important work in us and through us as we willingly avail ourselves to Him.

Going back to our Synod Convention theme, Jesus tells Peter at

this great confession, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then He strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ. (Matthew 16:17-20 ESV). Jesus says three things here.

First, the revelation and ability to make a confession is not of human will. As Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 12, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." As clever as we sometimes can be, our bold confession isn't of our making, but rather through the Holy Spirit working in us.

Second, Jesus builds His church on the rock of this confession, and He is the very foundation of our faith. That's why we can fix our eyes on Him. Standing on this confession of Jesus the gates of hell shall not and cannot prevail. The victory is already won at the Cross. However, often we have viewed this statement, to put it in football terms, from a defensive position as if we are holding the gates closed against the forces of hell. Just the opposite is true: Jesus has empowered us to play offense, breaking down the gates of hell and reclaiming what the devil has stolen. We need not cower in fear. Jesus has saved us and called us His own with great purpose. Luther, who at one time feared the devil, learned the sweetness of God's grace in Jesus and found that the devil's threats were powerless in the face of the Gospel. We bear the light of His grace to the world! Do not fear!

Third, Jesus, who created the church, empowers this church with the keys of the kingdom. We are charged to bind and loose, to open and shut the doors to heaven as His servants. We aren't called to do this as judge and jury, but rather always pointing people back to the word. God alone is judge. Jesus said, "If anyone hears My words

and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day." (Jn 12:47-48 ESV) This is a great reason for us to always refocus on God's Word. His Word tells us how to get the log out of our own eye.

In fact, Paul also reminds us to take care of becoming too quick to judge another. He writes, "Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things." (Romans 2:1 ESV) The truth is, we are all sinners in desperate need of God's grace in Jesus, which He has freely given. As we have freely received His forgiveness, we should freely give.

The power of God's forgiveness in Jesus, the keys, is really what connects people to Jesus. We tend to focus our energy in so many directions, trying to build attendance, meet the budget, run this program or that. We need to fix our eyes back on Jesus. The world around us has found all kinds of ways to distract from the realities of sin and death. Even then, we have something amazing to offer. It is the forgiveness of Jesus! Make good use of these keys!

Another of my favorite verses comes from John 15:16, where Jesus says to each of us, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you to bear fruit, fruit that will last..." What a powerful reminder that we were chosen, in love, by Jesus, to bear fruit for Him. We do that by sharing His love and forgiveness with the world. In the Lord's Prayer we often absent mindedly speak these words, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us..." Have you ever considered what we are really saying? Aren't we actually saying, Forgive us our sins in the same way we forgive the sins of others? What if God really did that? All that is to say that we need to be mindful of how we operate with the gifts God has so freely entrusted to us,

and while we still have time. What a tremendous gift Jesus has given us to share with the hurting world! Now is the time!

As I look around at our world, I am not surprised by Satan's grip on it. The gates of hell continue to be unleashed in new and perverse ways. Just take a stroll down Bourbon Street in New Orleans... What I am often amazed at is the brokenness that exists in the church, where often we talk about forgiveness yet neglect to practice it. We can change that, can't we? We can determine, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to forgive others and unlock the door. In June our son and his wife came to stay at our home while we were away. I gave him a key because I love him and I trust him. Jesus has given you the keys because He loves you and trusts you. How can we better use those keys to bring glory and honor to Jesus?

Summer is almost over, but fall brings with it new and ample occasions to use those keys and exercise the grace and love of Jesus. The world is watching us, just as the city of New Orleans saw the witness of love among our youth. Let's strive to be His church at its best, standing on our confession of Jesus and engage in the Master's business as we connect people to Him! That's our calling, and that's our true joy! ■



In His Peace! GREG





Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We in the District Office thank God for you and your wonderful support and prayers. It is with thanksgiving for your partnership in the Gospel that I offer the following summary of The Florida-Georgia District Financials for FYE January 31, 2016.

Congregation Support decreased from \$2.76M to \$2.03M year over year. While that decrease seems large, we note that \$665,708 of the support last year came from the closing of Redeemer Lutheran in Miami, Florida. If we remove that portion of funding from last year's overall number, congregation support from active congregations actually decreased by \$70,059 year over year. The District continues to operate with no real debt and all restricted net assets are fully funded. Overall I am pleased to report that expenses are being kept in check and we have one month of operating expenses in reserve.

Statement of Activities

Unrestricted support from congregations totaled \$2,028,996. Net assets released from restriction increased by \$581,907 year over year. These assets released from restriction fund specific projects or needs and are not utilized to fund ongoing operations or ministries. Their usage is determined by project need or donor restriction. Accordingly, as we see this year, their usage can vary greatly from year to year. This year's variance was due to the distribution of the Soli Deo Gloria fund to Bethesda Lutheran Communities in the amount of \$645,847.

Total expenses for FYE 2016 were \$3,707,385 versus \$3,258,444 for FYE 2015, or an increase of \$448,941. This change is reflected mainly in the Congregational Services line item and is due to the distribution of the Soli Deo Gloria fund as noted above. For the FYE 2016 we increased our overall tithe to Synod (\$331,576) from 15% to 16% of unrestricted revenue. The increase in the Preparing Church Workers line item, is due, much like last year, to the District Emergent Leader program and the new Stewardship Summits.

The total change in Net Assets for the past fiscal year was a decrease of \$723,890, which again is largely due to the distribution of the Soli Deo Gloria fund. We continually strive to model good stewardship with the funds you have entrusted to us and use them in a manner that meaningfully benefits and supports ongoing ministry.

2016 Work Program

The highlights of the 2016 work program are as follows:

- Congregation support continues to be budgeted at \$2,100,000.
 - Fan Into Flame revenue was removed from the budget due to the ending of this program.
 - Through unanimous support of the Board of Directors, Synod support was increased to 17% of congregational support. The District continues to set aside an additional 3% of unrestricted support to help fund both TCN and District Revitalization efforts.
 - Missions Support remains at \$600,000 and supports twelve (12) approved missions throughout the District. The Missions Advisory Council continues to volunteer their talent, time and effort to assist the District staff in evaluating the various missions that are supported. The Missions budget also includes support for seven (7) other Lutheran organizations (e.g., Lutheran Services Florida and Mission Haiti).
- We believe that this work program is fiscally responsible, within our current funding forecast and continues to enable the District to continue its mission to serve, assist and encourage congregations in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The Board of Directors and District Staff continue to monitor expenses and will make necessary adjustments as required.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please feel free to contact me in the District office. May God continue to bless our work together as we reach out to connect people to Jesus!

Respectfully Submitted,

John Elliott
Business Manager

Statement of Financial Position Audited Results

	January 31, 2016	January 31, 2015
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,408,075	\$ 2,530,058
Accounts Receivable	56,624	33,468
Prepaid Expense	86,858	129,429
Contributions Receivable		
From Split-Interest Agreements	169,087	670,620
Loans Receivable	240,000	255,000
Installment Sale Notes Receivable, net	233,354	241,440
Property and Equipment, net	677,179	686,398
Advance Sites	485,286	478,088
Long-Term Investments	1,957,539	1,973,246
Other Assets	796,942	869,559
Total	\$ 7,110,944	\$ 7,867,306
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts Payable	\$ 291,068	\$ 247,626
Grants Payable	-	21,500
Notes Payable	253,200	275,400
Other Liabilities	256,089	288,299
Total Liabilities	800,356	832,825
Undesignated	1,380,779	1,500,870
Net Investment in Land, Buildings and Equipment	677,179	686,398
Board Designated	1,410,859	1,331,942
Temporarily Restricted	1,208,341	1,793,224
Permanently Restricted	1,633,429	1,722,047
Total Net Assets	6,310,588	7,034,481
Total	\$ 7,110,944	\$ 7,867,306

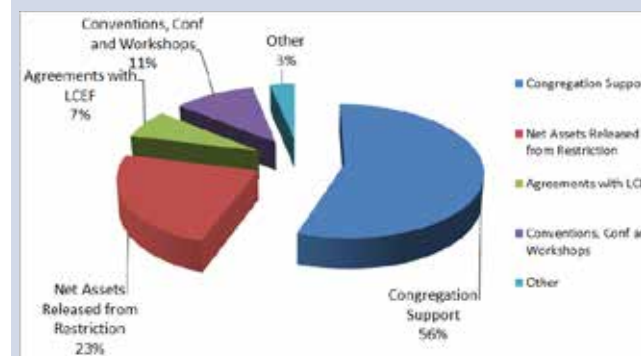
Statement of Activities Audited Results

	For The Years Ended January 31, 2016	2015
UNRESTRICTED REVENUES		
Congregation Support *	\$ 2,028,996	\$ 2,764,763
Net Assets Released from Restriction**	854,749	272,842
Agreements with LCEF	255,681	251,375
Convention, Conferences and Workshops	397,399	339,574
Other	120,226	213,078
Total revenues	3,657,051	3,841,632
EXPENSES		
Synod	331,576	463,402
Congregational Services ***	1,357,450	828,349
Preparing Church Workers	102,107	90,323
Missions	635,705	781,279
Ministry Support	941,647	748,236
Ecclesiastical Administration	338,900	346,855
Total expenses	3,707,385	3,258,444
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	(50,393)	583,188
Temporarily restricted	(584,883)	(74,791)
Permanently restricted	(68,618)	22,139
Total change in net assets	(723,893)	530,536
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	7,034,481	6,503,945
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 6,310,588	\$ 7,034,481

* Includes Congregation Support Over and Above Pledge
** Includes Soli Deo Gloria Distribution
*** Includes School Ministries, Conferences, Convocation, Conventions, Human Care, Church Worker Family Care, Soli Deo Gloria

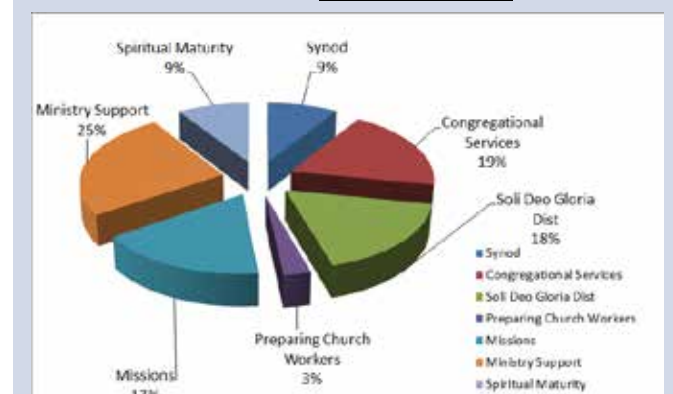
Unrestricted Revenues for Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2016

Congregation Support	\$ 2,028,996
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ 854,749
Agreements with LCEF	\$ 255,681
Conventions, Conf and Workshops	\$ 397,399
Other	\$ 120,226
Total	\$ 3,657,051



Expenses by Critical Target for Fiscal Year Ending January 31, 2016

Synod	\$ 331,576	9%
Congregational Services	711,603	19%
Soli Deo Gloria Dist	645,847	17%
Preparing Church Workers	102,107	3%
Missions	635,705	17%
Ministry Support	941,647	25%
Spiritual Maturity	338,900	9%
Total	\$ 3,707,385	





District Budget For Year Ended January 31, 2017

REVENUES

Congregation Support	\$ 2,100,000
Fan Into Flame	-
Installment Loan Repayments	35,000
Net Assets Released from Restriction	514,200
Other	50,000
Total Revenues	2,699,200

EXPENSES

Synodical Pledge	357,000
TCN National Support	5,250
District Congregational Revitalization	57,750
World & National Missions	882,000
School Ministries	235,000
Congregational Services	218,200
Mission & Ministry Support	567,000
Ecclesiastical Administration	377,000
Total Expenses	2,699,200

Change in Net Assets	\$ -
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The Annual Report of our District included in this issue is simply our way of staying transparent with Florida-Georgia congregations. Over the years, pastors have asked if we publish congregational giving in Lutheran LIFE to embarrass congregations. Quite the opposite; we want to validate to all of our ministries and members that we are wisely using the assets that God has supplied through our ministries in the most efficient and effective ways as good stewards of His gifts.

You may be surprised at how often I've heard from pastors or congregational leaders who had been totally unaware of how their congregation supports the mission of the Florida-Georgia District. Our goal is not to belittle, but to inform and show how God has blessed our District through our partnership with congregations.

We are blessed in so many ways, and we continue to seek ways to be good stewards of congregational gifts. I am happy to report that currently the District is debt-free and all of our restricted accounts are fully funded. This has enabled us to more freely engage in the Master's business to connect people to Jesus. We closely monitor our expenses, and, working with our Stewardship Advisory Council, we are helping to provide educational opportunities for congregations that wish to grow in their stewardship knowledge and ability. In fact, our third Stewardship Summit, a best-practices style conference, will be held August 19-20 at St. Paul/ Boca Raton, FL. I hope you'll plan to join us, especially if you've never attended one. There is a lot of practical information on stewardship available!

The Board of Directors of the District has committed themselves to tithing 20% of the funds we receive. Of that, 17% goes to Synod to support the work of mission and ministry nationally. The remaining 3% is used in the District for revitalization efforts in congregations. All of these funds come from you, and you have entrusted them to us to employ in ministry. This is a trust we take very seriously. We want to be a model of good stewardship.

At the same time, congregational giving is down, and we believe that it is due to several factors. While there may be others, we do know that some congregations are going through financial struggles of their own, especially when there is a decline in membership. We pray that God would revitalize these congregations with a new passion and vision for ministry in their community. There are other congregations who simply have chosen to keep more at "home" or choose not support the work of the District because they see little value. This can be dangerous as we walk together as Synod in this place to carry out the work of our Lord Jesus both here and across the Synod. This is a partnership we all agreed to as members of the LCMS. Still, there are some congregations that fail to realize the benefit of healthy stewardship and how healthy stewardship modeled motivates members to greater stewardship. Many of our congregations joyfully, sacrificially and regularly support the work of the District, for which we are so grateful.

Let me share a few thoughts on why it is important that we strengthen our partnership. Last spring, when I was at the seminaries for placement, several students from our District approached me, thanking me for our District support of their seminary education. These students went on to tell me that the Florida-Georgia District is very generous in how we support our students. That's true not only for seminarians, but also for other professional church workers.

Together we make that happen. Together we plant new missions and call workers to serve. Together we provide resources and encouragement to congregational ministries and schools in the District. Together we support social service agencies that are touching thousands of lives every day. Together we make ministry happen well beyond our own congregation and community into the world around us. For that we say thank you! We want to do our best to represent you, as part of the LCMS, well. More than that, we want to connect people to Jesus. And we do — because of our shared partnership. So thank you, and may God continue to bless our work together as we equip, empower and engage in the Master's business, to connect people to Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Greg Walton
President

District Support by Congregation for FYE January 31, 2016

City/State	Congregation	Financial Support*	Confirmed Members**	Support/Member
01 — Northeast Georgia				
Athens, GA	Christus Victor	12,724	67	189.91
Athens, GA	Trinity	12,000	259	46.33
Blairsville, GA	All Saints	23,890	188	127.07
Clarksville, GA	Grace Mission	600	1	—
Gainesville, GA	Good Shepherd	20,375	247	82.49
Lilburn, GA	Oak Road	33,511	304	110.23
Toccoa, GA	Trinity	1,200	143	8.39
Circuit Totals/Average		104,300	1,209	86.27
02 — Atlanta North				
Atlanta, GA	Grace	6,000	72	83.33
Atlanta, GA	Rivercliff	45,833	366	125.23
Atlanta, GA	Living Faith Korean	2,400	35	68.57
Atlanta, GA	St. Mark Eritrean	0	1	—
Cartersville, GA	Savior of All	10,167	314	32.38
Cumming, GA	Living Faith	29,681	166	178.80
Dahlonega, GA	St. Peter	4,125	1	—
Jasper, GA	King of Kings	2,500	33	75.76
Kennesaw, GA	Living Hope	25,442	306	83.14
Marietta, GA	Faith	13,200	315	41.90
Rome, GA	Holy Trinity	2,700	106	25.47
Tucker, GA	St. Mark	8,623	102	84.54
Woodstock, GA	Timothy	24,000	403	59.55
Circuit Totals/Average		174,671	2,220	78.68
03 — Atlanta South				
Columbus, GA	Bethlehem	6,000	70	85.71
Columbus, GA	Redeemer	4,586	186	24.66
Decatur, GA	Peace	1,948	87	22.39
Douglasville, GA	Prince of Peace	0	68	—
East Point, GA	Christ	920	50	18.40
Hampton, GA	Christ Our Savior	7,018	63	111.40
Peachtree City, GA	St. Paul	29,091	348	83.59
Stockbridge, GA	Holy Cross	0	91	—
Stockbridge, GA	Lord of Life	4,750	95	50.00
Tucker, GA	Incarnate Word	0	39	—
Circuit Totals/Average		54,313	1,097	49.51
04 — East Central Georgia				
Augusta, GA	Our Redeemer	43,808	414	105.82
Eatonton, GA	Lake Oconee	24,977	168	148.67
Macon, GA	Holy Trinity	0	33	—
Milledgeville, GA	Hope	900	20	45.00
Perry, GA	Christ	3,600	126	28.57
Savannah, GA	Trinity	37,400	368	101.63
Statesboro, GA	St. Paul's	2,582	66	39.12
Warner Robins, GA	Mount Calvary	69,834	678	103.00
Circuit Totals/Average		183,101	1,873	97.76
05 — Tallahassee				
Albany, GA	Trinity	2,200	71	30.99
Crawfordville, FL	Trinity	600	51	11.76
Lake City, FL	Our Redeemer	3,100	168	18.45
Tallahassee, FL	Epiphany	21,728	362	60.02
Tallahassee, FL	University	5,000	71	70.42
Tifton, GA	Peace	7,193	50	143.86
Valdosta, GA	Messiah	4,336	157	27.62
Circuit Totals/Average		44,157	930	47.48
06 — First Coast				
Jacksonville, FL	Grace	0	660	—
Jacksonville, FL	Holy Cross	0	87	—
Jacksonville, FL	Hope Mission	3,000	46	53.57
Jacksonville, FL	Our Redeemer	84	157	0.54
Jacksonville, FL	St. Paul	7,083	197	35.95
Jax'ville Beach, FL	Bethlehem	20,000	557	35.91

City/State	Congregation	Financial Support*	Confirmed Members**	Support/Member
Kingsland, FL	Messiah Mission	0	17	—
Kingsland, GA	Holy Trinity	2,902	106	27.38
Middleburg, FL	St. Peter's	10,375	260	39.90
St. Augustine, FL	Christ Our Savior	1,200	51	23.53
Starke, FL	Good Shepherd	0	39	—
Circuit Totals/Average		44,644	2,177	20.51
07 — North Central Florida				
Chiefland, FL	Good Shepherd	500	57	8.77
Dunnellon, FL	Peace	2,000	66	30.30
Gainesville, FL	Abiding Savior	21,000	225	93.33
Gainesville, FL	First	35,812	528	67.83
Inverness, FL	First	150	309	0.49
Lecanto, FL	Faith	13,500	247	54.66
Ocala, FL	Our Redeemer	7,200	411	17.52
Ocala, FL	St. John	14,350	493	29.11
Oxford, FL	Amazing Grace	29,665	125	237.32
Silver Springs, FL	Forest	3,652	45	81.16
Summerfield, FL	Trinity	36,000	867	41.52
Circuit Totals/Average		163,829	3,373	48.57
08 — Space Coast				
Cape Canaveral, FL	Christ	6,000	80	75.00
Holly Hill, FL	Trinity	160	310	0.52
Melbourne, FL	Redeemer	8,039	141	57.01
Palm Bay, FL	Zion Haitian	0	150	—
Merritt Island, FL	Faith	6,000	565	10.62
Merritt Island, FL	Grace	2,000	105	19.05
Palm Bay, FL	Risen Savior	0	60	—
Rockledge, FL	Trinity	0	115	—
South Daytona, FL	Holy Cross	0	345	—
Titusville, FL	Good Shepherd	6,591	288	22.89
Circuit Totals/Average		28,790	2,159	13.33
09 — Orlando East				
Casselberry, FL	Ascension	24,400	519	47.01
Deltona, FL	LC of Providence	600	80	7.50
Orlando, FL	Esperanza Viva Lutheran	120	46	2.61
Orlando, FL	Hope	14,704	241	61.01
Orlando, FL	Sublime Gracia	0	1	—
Orlando, FL	Journey of Life	8,134	75	108.45
Orlando, FL	Prince of Peace	2,200	683	3.22
Orlando, FL	Trinity	46,412	960	48.35
Sanford, FL	Redeemer	3,500	115	30.43
St. Cloud, FL	Grace	550	108	5.09
Circuit Totals/Average		100,620	2,828	35.58
10 — Orlando West				
Apopka, FL	St. Paul	0	99	—
Eustis, FL	Faith	124,921	633	197.35
Winter Garden, FL	Zion New Life	1,600	115	13.91
Leesburg, FL	Bethany	11,684	185	63.16
Montverde, FL	Woodlands	24,400	617	39.55
Orlando, FL	Christ the King	12,000	378	31.75
Orlando, FL	Our Savior	1,000	101	9.90
Circuit Totals/Average		175,605	2,128	82.52
11 — Winter Haven				
Bartow, FL	Redeemer	0	50	—
Lake Wales, FL	Lake Wales	501	187	2.68
Lakeland, FL	Christ	24,200	240	100.83
Lakeland, FL	St. Paul	8,000	1173	6.82
Plant City, FL	Hope	34,310	367	93.49
Winter Haven, FL	Grace	20,000	1135	17.62
Zephyrhills, FL	Our Savior	7,482	198	37.79
Circuit Totals/Average		94,493	3,350	28.21

District Support by Congregation for FYE January 31, 2016

City/State	Congregation	Financial Support*	Confirmed Members**	Support/Member
12 — Heartland				
Arcadia, FL	Grace	2,400	25	96.00
Avon Park, FL	Christ	7,568	30	252.27
Belle Glade, FL	St. Peter'	600	40	15.00
Clewiston, FL	Faith	3,300	29	113.79
Lake Placid, FL	Trinity	4,045	193	20.96
Okeechobee, FL	Peace	4,800	254	18.90
Sebring, FL	Faith	17,167	130	132.05
Wauchula, FL	Peace Valley	4,000	32	125.00
Circuit Totals/Average		43,880	733	59.86
13 — Suncoast				
Brooksville, FL	Christ	2,408	237	10.16
Hudson, FL	Hope	11,457	213	53.79
Lutz, FL	Holy Trinity	10,694	123	86.94
Masaryktown, FL	Holy Trinity	16,550	165	100.30
New Port Richey, FL	Faith	10,000	269	37.17
Spring Hill, FL	Forest Oaks	5,000	277	18.05
Trinity, FL	Trinity	3,600	86	41.86
Circuit Totals/Average		59,709	1,370	43.58
14 — St. Petersburg				
Clearwater, FL	Bethel	0	766	—
Clearwater, FL	First	2,194	408	5.38
Dunedin, FL	Faith	6,391	121	52.82
Largo, FL	Christ the King	958	897	1.07
St. Petersburg, FL	Grace	10,057	693	14.51
St. Petersburg, FL	Our Savior	67,631	814	3.08
Circuit Totals/Average		87,231	3,699	23.58
15 — Tampa				
Brandon, FL	Immanuel	0	455	—
Lithia, FL	Lamb of God	125	141	0.89
Riverview, FL	Christ the King	0	118	—
Tampa, FL	Holy Trinity	4,934	149	33.11
Tampa, FL	Messiah	54,167	682	79.42
Tampa, FL	Messiah Hispanic	1,375	28	49.11
Tampa, FL	Zion	2,000	31	64.52
Circuit Totals/Average		62,601	1,604	39.03
16 — Sarasota				
Bradenton, FL	Hope	0	401	—
Englewood, FL	Redeemer	0	221	—
Parrish, FL	Faith	13,750	257	53.50
Port Charlotte, FL	LC of the Cross	0	251	—
Punta Gorda, FL	Faith	0	221	—
Sarasota, FL	Beautiful Savior	53,520	461	116.10
Sarasota, FL	Concordia	20,833	196	106.29
Sarasota, FL	Good Shepherd	1,500	237	6.33
Venice, FL	Lakeside	19,503	709	27.51
Circuit Totals/Average		109,106	2,954	36.94
17 — Southwest				
Bonita Springs, FL	Amigos en Cristo	542	1	—
Bonita Springs, FL	Hope	8,000	435	18.39
Cape Coral, FL	Trinity	11,275	228	49.45
Esteros, FL	Thrive	5,000	1	—
Fort Myers, FL	Bethlehem	1,200	93	12.90
Fort Myers, FL	St. Michael	43,000	769	55.92
Fort Myers, FL	Zion	33,000	784	42.09
Immokalee, FL	Immokalee	1,058	6	—
LaBelle, FL	Christ the King	1,000	29	34.48
Lehigh Acres, FL	Beautiful Savior	1,215	50	24.30
Marco Island, FL	Marco	59,412	401	148.16
Naples, FL	Grace	36,000	395	91.14
Naples, FL	Hope Esperanza	250	6	41.67
Naples, FL	Peace	13,300	168	79.17
N Fort Myers, FL	Good Shepherd	2,503	115	21.77
Circuit Totals/Average		216,755	3,481	62.27

City/State	Congregation	Financial Support*	Confirmed Members**	Support/Member
18 — Treasure Coast				
Fort Pierce, FL	Trinity	0	316	—
Hobe Sound, FL	Bethel	0	44	—
Lake Worth, FL	New Alliance	0	9	—
N Palm Beach, FL	Faith	28,092	293	95.88
Port St. Lucie, FL	Grace	11,002	168	65.49
Stuart, FL	Redeemer	54,940	509	7.94
Vero Beach, FL	Redeemer	7,113	120	59.28
W Palm Beach, FL	Redeemer	0	111	—
Circuit Totals/Average		101,147	1,570	64.42
19 — South Palm Beach				
Boca Raton, FL	St. Paul	20,000	1559	12.83
Boynton Beach, FL	Son Life	16,738	361	46.37
Delray Beach, FL	Emmanuel Haitian	500	225	2.22
Delray Beach, FL	Trinity	0	603	—
Lake Worth, FL	Epiphany	0	141	—
Lake Worth, FL	Our Savior	12,568	310	40.54
Lake Worth, FL	Salem Haitian	0	125	—
Circuit Totals/Average		49,806	3,324	14.98
20 — Gold Coast				
Davie, FL	Gloria Dei	430	292	1.47
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Faith	1,200	46	26.09
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Good Shepherd	0	50	—
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Shepherd of the Coast	5,595	227	24.65
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Trinity Haitian	200	1	—
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Trinity	2,600	140	18.57
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Tabernacle	0	75	—
Hollywood, FL	Prince of Peace	3,600	46	78.26
Lauderdale Lakes, FL	Tabernacle	0	150	—
Miramar, FL	Miramar	0	30	—
Plantation, FL	Our Savior	6,170	413	14.94
Weston, FL	St. Paul	57,243	941	60.83
Circuit Totals/Average		77,038	2	

Timing can be everything!



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Thrivent Members Support Orlando

When tragic events occur such as happened in Orlando this summer, Thrivent members often want to know how they can make a difference. In addition to continuing to hold those affected by this tragedy in our prayers, Thrivent is providing other opportunities to allow members support the victims, their families and their community during this difficult time. Here are a few way Thrivent members and individuals can help support the efforts of eligible organizations working diligently to support the victims and their families.

Direct Choice Dollars®

One way eligible Thrivent members can help support efforts is to direct Choice Dollars to one of the following organizations working diligently to support the victims and their families:

- Trinity Lutheran Church/Orlando, FL
- Prince Of Peace Lutheran Church/Orlando, FL

Thrivent matched all Choice Dollar directions made to eligible churches on Thrivent.com through July 31, 2016. As of June 29, Thrivent members directed more than \$70,000 in Thrivent Choice donations to eligible congregations.

If you are interested in designating Choice Dollars, visit Thrivent.com to find a list of organizations.

Personal Donations

Thrivent members can help further by making a personal donation to the churches listed below. As of June 29, 2016, individuals have given personal donations of more than \$6,000.

All personal donations made through Thrivent.com to these churches were matched by Thrivent through July 31, 2016.

Local support

Thrivent members can help support those affected in Orlando by forming a Thrivent Action Team. For more information, visit Thrivent.com/actionteam.

Thrivent continues to hold in thought and prayer those affected by this tragedy. ■



District LWML Preparing for Convention

The time is getting closer. Everyone is working hard to get ready. Hotel has been visited. Rooms for sessions assigned. Registrations are coming in. Decisions are being made. Convention manual is being put together. Speakers are being contacted. Entertainment is ready to go.

What are all of these things for? Why are we working so hard?

Our LWML Florida-Georgia District Convention begins September 30, 2016. We have to have things in place and ready to go when all of you wonderful LWMLers arrive! We have warned the hotel that the L.I.P.S. are coming. LADIES IN PURPLE SHIRTS will overwhelm everyone there!



FUTURE & HOPE

by Joan Koch
LWML District Vice President
for Communications

Have YOU registered? Pastors, have you registered? You know that we put on a great convention, and you can't beat the hotel we are at for the event. Call the PGA National Resort to make your hotel reservations. An online link is on our website to connect to the hotel – www.flgalwml.com. Easiest way to make a hotel reservation.



We have lots of business to take care of at this convention. We will elect new officers, pick new mission grants, have a great time at our Lunch and Learn Sessions, have a blast at our

banquet. Please join us. We always have fun.

Haven't sent in your registration form yet? You can register online as well. Or you can still send in your registration via snail mail! We accept any form of registration! You may register for the convention until August 30th. There will be no cancellations accepted that that date. However, you may only reserve a room until August 26th. So please register and reserve a room now. Time is getting short.

See you in September! ■



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Leading Volunteers and Growing People

A number of years ago I was talking with my dad, whose career was in sales promotion with Pontiac Motor Division. Through his job we had moved many times (and many Lutheran Churches) and had numerous dinner table conversations about sales, marketing and his work. So it was fascinating to hear him reflect, years later, that what he was really doing in his job was "growing people."



The
**COACHING
LEADER**
by Rev. Scott Gress
Lutheran Counseling Services
Leadership Coach

she can live on their own. So a good parent will help them to grow in responsibility and independence. Rather than do everything for a child and create dependency, the wise parent will systematically help them gain experience in cooking, cleaning, taking care of the house and car, banking and financial paperwork and so on. From the time the umbilical cord is cut the child takes small steps in being independent from their parents and responsible not only for themselves but one day for their own family and even for others. Yet in the church, those in positions of responsibility

leaders lament that they can't find leaders or volunteers. They beg and plead for someone to "take over" the Sunday school, VBS, or even just the morning coffee hour. But they come up empty.

What's going on? Potentially many things. But the first small steps are to invite and involve people to take small bite sized pieces of responsibility for small pieces of ministry. Every activity becomes an opportunity to let people "try something on for size" or "taste test" what is going on. We can invite people to take those bite sized pieces by asking them:

- "Would you be interested in hosting a meeting at your house?"
- "Would you bring some snacks?"
- "Can you help with transportation?"
- "Would you be interested in stopping by to watch and just encourage others?"
- "Could you come and see what we are doing and give us some feedback so this ministry can do a better job?"

Small steps. Demonstrate you value them. Help people to "get their feet wet" and invite them to get curious and explore how God might want to use them to make a difference. Invent starting places in existing and new activities. If you do, you will begin moving in the right direction. People will get hungry to grow not only in service but also in faith through God's Word. ■

Rev. Scott Gress is called by Lutheran Counseling Services as an independent contractor in the areas of leadership training, consulting and coaching. Contact Scott through LCS (407-644-4692) or through email scottgress@me.com or his blog page scottgress.com

sometimes do the opposite. Sometimes, unwittingly, we church leaders keep the ministry to ourselves and frustrate those who desire to get

Now isn't that what a good pastor, good lay leaders and good Christians should say in reflecting on their ministry and life in the church? Jesus leaves us with the great commission to "go and make disciples." Isn't that about "growing people" just in a different way?

Sure, but how do we do that? Perhaps the first reaction is to think about evangelism programs and invitations to church. But the "coaching leader" thinks in a different way. Consider this:

when a young person grows and matures, what is really happening? They are growing in responsibility and independence. A child isn't considered "grown up" until he or

involved. We are less than intentional at helping people find the first steps to grow in independence and responsibility. At the same time it is not uncommon to hear ministry



Outreach Initiative – "Me a Witness!"

Google tells about a lot of things, it gives us maps and apps, even curbside and aerial pictures of our homes; but what does Google tell us about evangelism in the United States? According to Thom Rainer there are seven things (see his blog at ThomRainer.com):

- 1 — We are steadily losing interest in evangelism over time.
- 2 — Church members are losing interest in evangelism.



**MISSION
POSSIBLE**
by Rev. Doug Kallesen
District Executive
for Mission & Outreach

- 3 — Pastors and staff are losing interest in evangelism.
- 4 — American churches are among the worst in evangelism.
- 5 — Churches not doing evangelism will decline in health.
- 6 — Church members are much more likely to criticize than evangelize.
- 7 — The evangelism problem begins with me.

Ouch! These observations are alarming and paint a very dire future for the church in the U.S. Stop and ask yourself, "Is this true and if so, why?"

Of all seven observations I believe the most alarming is #7 — *I am the root evangelism problem; it begins with me.* If the evangelism problem begins with me then I can also put an end to it! The apostle Peter tells us "to ALWAYS be prepared or ready to give an account of the hope that is in us." Jesus calls us His "witnesses" sent on a holy mission to make disciples. Paul tags us with the title of "ambassadors of reconciliation." YES we have good news and we should share it, but are we?

I am thankful for our District's involvement in iNeighborhood and I hope you will be too. I am re-committed to intentionally sharing my faith where I live, work and play. I am a Christ-sent missionary to my neighbors. My wife, Desiree, has joined me for this journey. We look for opportunities in our day where we can be a witness. I call it a tithe of time for the Lord's work of "going" and of "making disciples" as I go about my daily routines. It has been fantastic and fun!

As we packed up for a trip to Iowa earlier this summer we prayed for opportunities to share our faith. God opened up the door on two Southwest flights. The first was with a sleepy young woman who awoke mid-flight and began talking with Desiree about a book that Desiree was reading. That conversation unfolded over the remaining hour of



the flight including our sharing in a high-altitude prayer praising God for answers to prayer in each of our lives.

On our next flight we had opportunity to speak with a former Lutheran who now believed in "biology." Meaning when you die, you are dead. This life is it! As we listened to his life and his story it was apparent that he was searching, not for a church but for a relationship – a relationship

with God. I challenged him to begin reading the Bible again for at least a month, that by doing so, God would meet him and reveal Himself. I offered to talk with him to discuss what he'd read. When he got off the plane he thanked me and said, "I am going to give my wife the same challenge; it's got to be better than the tarot cards."

We landed in Des Moines and began to eat our way across Iowa heading toward Nebraska. At each location, Desiree, my Mom and I would meet with our relatives.

God provided an abundance of opportunities — open doors and windows, for me, for us to share our faith. One day after going from table to table in a space reserved for us at a pizza restaurant, I heard of lives ravaged in this trying and troubled world. One of my aunts said: "Doug would you lead us in a prayer, here, now?" She was right. I had heard from relative after relative their life stories and knew that we needed the Lord's help. It was sobering as a family, in a gathering of nearly three dozen people, that we could and did pause to pray to Jesus for His intervention, blessing and help in our lives at the Pizza Ranch in Atlantic, Iowa!

Whatever plans you may have for the final days of summer, pray that the Lord will open doors for you to share your faith and be a witness for Him.

Two weeks later we found out that my Mom had colon cancer and would need emergency surgery. The surgery was successful (praise God) but I am thankful also for the prayers and witness we shared of God and His love for us across Iowa. It helped prepare us for her day of surgery and for what lies ahead!

If you would like to talk about sharing your faith I would love to hear from you – but it really begins with a prayer: "Lord, give me an opportunity to share my faith today!" ■

Rev. Doug Kallesen: 407.857.5556 x6
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For more information about VisionPath, please contact Daniel J. Reichard, FL-GA District Vice President at (877) 457-5556 ext 4 or dreichard@flgadistrict.org



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*The cost of each VisionPath module is \$1,900, which includes all expenses for one-on-one consultation sessions, the onsite impact event, and ministry support services. Each module is designed to take no longer than four months.

FLORIDAGEORGIA

REGIONAL NEWS

Out and About in the Florida-Georgia District



TIMOTHY LUTHERAN/WOODSTOCK participated in the annual Woodstock July 4th parade. Some 26 Timothy members decorated and walked with the "Stand Up for Religious Freedom" float based on the 1st amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Walkers handed out Christian themed bracelets to children along the two-mile route. Timothy has participated in this community parade for four years. ♦



Vice President:

David Brighton
Mount Calvary/Warner Robbins

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Jay Wendland | Living Faith/Cumming
Robert Chambers | Grace/Atlanta

Commissioned Minister Board Member:

Lamar Stewart | Our Redeemer/Augusta

NE Georgia Circuit Visitor:

David Wesche | All Saints/Blairsville

Atlanta N Circuit Visitor:

Jeffrey Jordan | Rivercliff/Atlanta

Atlanta S Circuit Visitor:

Larry Townsend | Christ Our Savior/Hampton

E Central Georgia Circuit Visitor:

Roger Schwartz | Our Redeemer/Augusta



GRADUATION CELEBRATION — Shown above are the five members of the 2016 kindergarten class of Faith Church & School/Marietta after commencement exercises. Faith, which has been serving the Marietta area for more than 45 years, offers classes for students from the early childhood through eighth-grade levels. ♦

VBS Offers Opportunity for Witness, Mercy, Life Together

Peace/Decatur celebrated its yearly Vacation Bible School with an important new twist. In March of 2016, Rev. Joseph Song of Stepping Stone Mission welcomed some college aged Korean students to Atlanta to assist with a retreat for the homeless men served by Mission. The students also wanted to assist a congregation with its VBS and made an offer to Peace, "which was earnestly and gratefully accepted," said Pastor Victor Belton.

Accompanied by their Pastor Joseph Park, 22 young people from Korean Central Presbyterian Church (KCPC) came to Atlanta to participate in both programs.

"They were are blessing to us

and truly showed how the LCMS mission emphasis of Witness, Mercy and Life Together is a mandate of the Kingdom of God and well states how Christians can work together in ways that honor differences and receive one another in a way that is pleasing to our Lord Christ but without compromise," Belton said.

"The youth from KCPC came prepared to engage our young people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in song, activities and words of scripture. They taught Bible verses that our young people continue to quote and conducted activities that were Christ and cross centered. Not only did the young people from KCPC come prepared to sacrifice full days

of VBS for the young people in our neighborhood, they also purchased and cooked the food and purchased all necessary supplies for crafts as well. This proved to be a great gift of grace and mercy from our Lord Jesus for our congregation and neighborhood."

Debra Gildersleeve, one of the volunteers from Peace remarked, "This is the best VBS we have had in years, and the gifts the KCPC sent to us have been abundant. They sent young people with resources, with program and with food. This is a true gift from God, and we have to tell this story in gratitude to God for the kindness of His people." ♦



Record Results Posted for LSG Hunger Walk/Run 2016



Lutheran Services of Georgia's church and community partner teams participating in Hunger Walk/Run 2016 raised a record \$88,459.10 for LSG and the Atlanta Community Food Bank.

This amount surpassed LSG's 2015 Hunger Walk total by more than \$10,000 and earned LSG the honor of top fundraiser out of Hunger Walk's five benefiting partner agencies.

LSG had 41 teams participate with 550 walkers and runners. The team from Rivercliff Lutheran/Roswell was number five in the top ten fundraising LSG teams with \$5,611.

This year's Hunger Walk/Run raised \$925,015 total to support food programs in Atlanta. ♦

Mark & Brittany Harris Join Grace/Winter Haven Ministry Team

Rev. Mark Harris was ordained and installed at Grace/Winter Haven during an evening service on June 25. The officiant was Rev. Dr. Brian Kneser, pastor of Woodlands/Montverde and Third Vice President

of the Florida-Georgia District. Guest preacher was Rev. Steve Fick of Redeeming Grace/Austin, TX. The congregation's new associate pastor is a 2016 graduate of Concordia Seminary/St. Louis. Harris

joins Senior Pastor Charles Reich ministry to Grace Church and School. Harris and his wife Brittany and son Ezra were welcomed during a reception following the service. ♦



Rev. Mark and Brittany Harris with son Ezra



REGION 3

Vice President:
Brian Kneser | Woodlands/Montverde

Board Treasurer:
Renee Varga | Woodlands/Montverde

Laity Board Members:
Tom Reagin | Hope/Plant City
Katie Abercrombie | Prince of Peace/Orlando

Commissioned Minister Board Member:
Lois Ford | Faith/Eustis

Space Coast Circuit Visitor:
Gary Held | Risen Savior/Palm Bay

Orlando East Circuit Visitor:
Ken Green | Prince of Peace/Orlando

Orlando West Circuit Visitor:
Milan Weerts | Emeritus/Clermont

Winter Haven Circuit Visitor:
Dean Pfeffer | Hope/Plant City

CLASS TRIP DETOUR
— St. Paul/Lakeland eighth grade class students visited the Florida-Georgia District office before leaving on a class trip at the end of the last school year. "The kids were excited to hear about LCEF Y.I. Club and a few of them were excited to tell us that they were LCEF Y.I. Club investors," said LCEF Florida-Georgia District Vice President Dan Reichard, pictured with Michael Flores, Lane McRae and Tyler Walsh. ♦



REGIONAL CHAMPS -- On May 11, the Grace/Jacksonville Golf Team won the Central Florida Lutheran Athletic Association Tournament for the first time. The victors shared their thanks to coaches, parents, and families for their support. ♦



ON THEIR WAY – Youth of Amazing Grace/Oxford were sent on their way to the LCMS National Youth Gathering with a special commissioning at July 10 worship. More than 22,200 participants were anticipated for the July 16-20 event in New Orleans. ♦



REGION 2

Vice President:
Frank Marshall
St Paul/Jacksonville

Board Secretary:
Jay Winters, University Church
Student Center/Tallahassee

Laity Board Members:
Donald Kaufman | St. John/Ocala
Lois Schaefer | Amazing Grace/Oxford

Tallahassee Circuit Visitor:
Mark Schultz | Epiphany/Tallahassee

First Coast Circuit Visitor:
Dana Brones | Bethlehem/Jacksonville

N Central Florida Circuit Visitor:
James Rockey | Amazing Grace/Oxford

A Month of Celebration at Hope/Plant City

Special events were celebrated during June at Hope/Plant City.

On June 12, congregation members recognized 2016 graduates and presented them with a gift. Honored were Plant City High School graduates Ian Matthews and Sara Donadelli and Jason Pfeffer, who graduated from the University of South Florida with a Master's in Educational Leadership.

A week later on Sunday, June 19, the Hope members paid tribute to Senior Pastor Dean Pfeffer as he marked his 20th anniversary at the church. The event, coordinated by Hope's staff, Elders and Board of Directors, honored Pfeffer and his family for their years of ministry at the congregation with recognition during the worship and a brunch following services.

Special greetings were shared from District President Greg Walton and a number of Pfeffer's friends. Congregation members were given special thank you notes ahead of the service to complete with special memories of their time with the Pfeffers. ♦



Graduates (l-r) Ian Matthews, Sara Donadelli and Jason Pfeffer



The Pfeffer family (back, l-r) Pastor Dean Pfeffer holding grandson Alex; Eddie Attalla; Daniel Pfeffer, Jason Pfeffer (front, l-r) Kristin Attalla; Liz Pfeffer; Jesilynn Pfeffer; Yunmi Furr.

Grace/St. Cloud Welcomes Joshua & Hannah Obermann

Rev. Joshua Obermann was ordained and installed at Grace/St. Cloud during a special afternoon service on June 12.

A recent graduate of Concordia Seminary/St. Louis, Obermann completed his vicarage at Bethlehem/Jacksonville.

Obermann earned his bachelor's degree at Concordia Seward, where he met his wife Hannah. They did volunteer missionary work in Biloxi, MS, repairing homes in 2006-2008. Pastor and Mrs. Obermann were married in 2009 and have two children: Rhett, 4, and Poppy, 1. ♦

Rev. Joshua and Hannah Obermann with their children Poppy and Rhett.



Providence Food Pantry Expands to Meet Community Need

When Lutheran Church of Providence/Deltona started its Food Pantry in March of 2015, the service benefitted four families. As that number increased, the food supply began to run short.

"We applied to Second Harvest Food Bank for help," reported Food Pantry volunteer Grace Friedrich. "They supply us with canned goods and meat for a price. The produce is free. One of our grocery stores donates bread."

Over a short period of time, the number of families helped by Providence's Food Pantry has increased to more than 50.

"The need is great here in Deltona," Friedrich said. "We are one

of the few churches that help with produce and meat."

Food is given to the families twice a month, which averages 546 people plus children. The donation bags of food consist of at least four full meals plus something for breakfast, fruit and dessert.

At Thanksgiving, the congregation makes 70 baskets which include a turkey for each family.

During the school year, the Food Pantry volunteers assemble "goody bags" for an area elementary school to help over weekends.

"These were for homeless children," Friedrich noted. "This past school year we supplied them with 30 bags a week."

She continued, "We do get some financial help from our church members toward the canned goods and meat. Some help with additional food. Our church is blessed with a great group of volunteers who weekly pick up food from Second Harvest, pick up bread, assemble the food on the shelves, pack up the bags and boxes of food and distribute food to the recipients."

"We give thanks to our Lord for helping us to continue with this outreach." ♦

Above photo — Food Pantry volunteers (l-r) Myrtle Wells, Vanessa Wardlow, Carol Huebner, Kathi Grages, Grace Friedrich, Mary Kohli, Bob Kohli, Diana Armstrong. Not pictured are Roy Armstrong and Doris Underwood.



GUEST PERFORMERS – On June 3, the Sunrise Singers of Bethany Lutheran/Austin, TX, visited Beautiful Savior/Sarasota as part of their annual summer musical tour. A chorus of high school students who sing for worship, the Sunrise Singers each spring prepare a musical production to take on tour in early summer. Past tours have taken them across the United States, Canada and the Bahamas. ♦



ESTHER ENGWALL — a member of Grace/St. Petersburg — was one of the participants in the recent Phoebe Academy High School at Concordia Theological Seminary/ Fort Wayne. This event is held each summer for young women who are interested in learning more about the Church and the vocation of deaconess. Additional information can be found at www.ctsfw.edu/PAHS. ♦

St. Paul/Boca Raton Students Generate Headlines

Sarah Moss was a seventh-grade student at St. Paul School/ Boca Raton when she entered the National Student Poetry Contest sponsored by the America Library of Poetry. The contest receives thousands of submissions, but only a few hundred are chosen.



school's two second-grade classes. These students collected more than \$500 to donate a "Buddy Bench" to Joshua's Corner, St. Paul's playground.

"A buddy bench is a place for a student to sit if s/he needs a friend. Other children

Moss learned in eighth grade that her poem would be included in the organization's book of poems.

Other St. Paul students whose actions generated notice were the

see the need and come invite the child to play," explained Michele Barbieri, Early Childhood Director. "We have already seen it working!" ♦



Michele Barbieri, St. Paul Early Childhood Director, leads the dedication ceremony of a Buddy Bench.

CAPPING THE YEAR – Holy Cross School/North Miami had a packed house for the end-of-year awards ceremony. "It was a blessing to recognize the accomplishments and effort of our students and show appreciation to our parents," said Holy Cross Pastor Dennis Bartels.



REGION 4



Vice President:

Jon Zehnder | St. Michael/Fort Myers

Laity Board Members:

Jeff Richards | Hope/Brandenton
Evita Gonzalez | Beautiful Savior /Lehigh Acres

Commissioned Minister Board Member:
Jesse Crosmer | Our Savior/St. Petersburg

Suncoast Circuit Visitor:

David Brockhoff | Holy Trinity/Masaryktown

St. Petersburg Circuit Visitor:

Arnold Piering | Emeritus/New Port Richey

Tampa Circuit Visitor:

Kevin Yoakum | Christ the King/Riverview

Sarasota Circuit Visitor:

Rosseter Leavitt | Beautiful Savior/Sarasota

SW Circuit Visitor:

Richard Browning | Hope/Bonita Springs



TWO DECADES OF MINISTRY SERVICE — Grace/Naples Pastor Rev. Keith Lingsch was honored for his 20th anniversary of pastoral ministry on June 22. He joined the US Air Force after high school and while serving on active duty, was led by the Lord to study for the ministry. He was accepted into a program that separated him from active duty and placed him in the Air National Guard. While serving in the Air National Guard, Lingsch graduated from Concordia College Bronxville and Concordia Theological Seminary/Fort Wayne. Lingsch served congregations in Idaho and Ohio before accepting the call from the Ministry to the Armed Forces at the National Guard Bureau in Washington, DC, to serve as Chaplain in Readiness. He retired from military service in January 2012 with 22 years of service. Lingsch and his wife Lori Lynn have three children: Andrew, Jeremiah and Rachel. He was installed as Pastor of Grace/Naples on March 15, 2009. ♦



REGION 5



Vice President:

Steve Wipperman | Our Savior/Lake Worth

Laity Board Members:

Karen Smith | Peace/Okeechobee
Samuel Ludington/Holy Cross-North Miami

Heartland Circuit Visitor:

Richard Norris | Trinity/Lake Placid

Treasure Coast Circuit Visitor:

Craig Bode | Trinity/Fort Pierce

S Palm Beach Circuit Visitor:

James Weist | Epiphany/Lake Worth

Gold Coast Circuit Visitor:

Timothy Hartner | St. Paul/Weston

Monroe-Miami-Dade Circuit Visitor:

Alan Sielk | St. Paul/Miami

District Ministries Respond to Orlando Tragedy with Compassion, Comfort

In the hours and days following the June 12 mass shooting at an Orlando nightclub, Florida-Georgia ministries and members reached out to the community with care and compassion through blood drives, food donations, prayers, funding and other assistance.

Trinity/Downtown Orlando hosted a prayer vigil on June 15, just days after the weekend tragedy. Trinity Interim Pastor Jim Martin worked with Florida-Georgia District President

Greg Walton, Prince of Peace/Orlando Pastor Ken Green and Live UCF Pastor Billy Brath to coordinate the vigil.

Preceding the prayer vigil was a presentation titled "For Such a Time as This: Christian Critical Incident Stress Management." Resources were available on site.

Trinity/Orlando served as home base for the Lutheran Church Charities comfort dogs and their ministry of unconditional love. The canine caregivers and their handlers arrived

in Orlando from across the USA and visited sites throughout Greater Orlando offering their particular brand of comfort. ■

Below 1) — The Lutheran Church Charities and Concordia University Wisconsin Comfort Dogs during a visit to Ascension/Casselberry. 2) LiveUCF Pastor Billy Brath and Orlando City Commissioner Patty Sheehan with the comfort dogs during a visit to City Hall. 3) Prince of Peace Pastor Ken Green with one of the visiting comfort dogs. 4) Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton and the LCC comfort dogs at Trinity/Orlando.



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Free District Stewardship Summit Offers Insights, Encouragement

Set for August 19-20 at St. Paul/Boca Raton, the next in a series of free Florida-Georgia District Stewardship Summits will provide a packed schedule with 36 breakout sessions on a wide range of topics, including Hispanic sessions; keynote presentations by national leaders; social time; and a wrapup panel discussion.

The Summit opens on Friday at 11:30am and concludes at noon on Saturday. Participants will have their choice of topics in four breakout sessions led by volunteers who have successfully increased awareness, implemented successful programs and built teams that honor God's call.

Speakers will include Rev. Max Biesenthal, Senior Vice President-Ministry Support for Lutheran Church Extension Fund; Rev. Dr. John Denninger, President of the LCMS Southeastern District; Prof. Marcos Kempff of the Concordia Seminary/St. Louis Center for Hispanic Studies; Richard Robertson, President & CEO of Lutheran Church Extension Fund; and Florida-Georgia District President Gregory Walton.

The Summit is free to members of Florida-Georgia congregations, with all meals, materials and sessions offered at no cost.

"As an incentive we are offering participating congregations a gift," said Rev.



New Concept for Educators Conference

The latest addition to the Florida-Georgia District Educators Conference offers participants the opportunity to personally share ideas with peers through "Poster Presentations."

"These presentations will be viewed by the participants on Wednesday afternoon prior to the opening evening banquet," said Mark Brink, Florida-Georgia District Executive Director for School Ministries.

"This activity will be similar to a 'Science Fair' with educators sharing a teaching concept that has worked well in their own classrooms.

"Eventually these presentations will be available on a website following the conference."

A link on the District website (fgadistrict.org) under the Educators Conference header offers access to a Google form to make a request to be a poster

presenter at the 2016 event.

Dennis Bartels, who chairs the District Stewardship Advisory Council. "If your average attendance on a Sunday morning is less than 100 and you have four attending from your church — your church will receive a \$100 gift card to be used for ministry.

"If your average attendance on a Sunday morning is more than 100 and if you have six attending from your congregation, your church will receive a \$100 gift card. Bring as many as you want — the more the merrier."

St. Paul Church & School is located at 701 W. Palmetto Park Road in Boca Raton, just east of I-95 and minutes from the Florida Turnpike. Registration information is available at the District website: fgadistrict.org. Congregations are asked to register by August 8 to ensure all Summit materials and meals are ready. ■



LCMS Convention Action Charts Future Direction

The 2016 Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod Convention met July 9-14 at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee under the theme “Upon This Rock.” Among the 1,500 convention participants were some 1,125 clergy and lay voting delegates.

Worship, business and fellowship were key components of the convention agenda. LCMS President Matthew Harrison was returned to office for his third term prior to the start of the convention, with other leaders elected in Milwaukee.

Delegates considered and ratified resolutions presented by various floor committees including those listed below.

National Witness

- To expand evangelism throughout the Synod.
- To encourage planting new churches.
- To charge the Office of National Mission to continue developing the re:Vitality program to provide resources for congregations declining in worship attendance.
- To work through the Districts to locate at least 12 locations over the next triennium to send national missionaries where there is a significant immigrant and refugee

population.

- To provide a renewed emphasis for LCMS Districts and congregations in ongoing and new outreach among Hispanic people.
- To commend and support development of the proposed Rosa J. Young International Academies as a model for reaching a new generation. Dr. Rosa J. Young was influential in the founding of Alabama Lutheran Academy and College of Selma, now Concordia College Alabama.

International Witness

- To thank God for the faithful service of LCMS missionaries.
- To thank God for the increase in the number of LCMS career missionaries.
- To commend and support the Synod’s international schools.
- To reaffirm LCMS military chaplains’ right for free exercise of religion in face of LGBT inclusion in Armed Forces.

Mercy

- To commend the work of LCMS Disaster Response and LCMS National Housing Support Corporation.
- To encourage LCMS Disaster Response production of training and resources.
- To give thanks for and encourage

support of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lutheran Services in America and Lutheran World Relief.

- To assemble a task force to study issues on fertility, procreation and care of the unborn.
- To encourage the LCMS to become better informed about the worldwide persecution of Christians.
- To support and expand the work of LCMS World Relief and Human Care in the Offices of National and International Mission.

Seminaries

- To uphold the scriptural and confessional qualifications for the Office of the Holy Ministry.

Church & Culture

- To commend the work of the “Free to be Faithful” initiative, crafted to educate congregations and members on taking informed action toward religious freedom.
- To direct the LCMS to use and design resources to address the “seeming conflict” between faith and the sciences.
- To encourage outreach to Muslim neighbors.
- To affirm the sanctity of marriage of one man and one woman as an estate which cannot be altered.

Structure & Administration

- To approve a bylaw change to remove attendance at the District convention as a prerequisite for those voting for Synod president. [A resolution to switch LCMS national and District conventions from a three- to a four-year cycle failed in a split 470-597 vote.]

Concordia University System

- To adopt the Lutheran Identity Statement for CUS Institutions prepared by CUS presidents.
- To endorse roster status for graduates of classical liberal studies and other teacher education programs.

- To celebrate the 125th anniversary of Concordia University/St. Paul.
- To preserve Concordia Colleges and Universities as institutions of the Church.
- To amend Concordia University System Bylaws to update and clarify wording related to CUS faculty policies and dispute resolution.
- To amend Synod bylaws making the approval process for CUS theology faculty the same as that for seminary faculty.

Ecclesiastical Supervision & Dispute Resolution

- To ask the Offices of National and International Mission to share with District Presidents the names of all missionaries and military chaplains returning to the U.S. after overseas service so that congregations may be encouraged to issue calls to them.
- To change LCMS bylaws allowing lay members of dispute resolution, hearing and final hearing panels to request materials and assistance from the executive director of the Synod’s

Commission on Theology and Church Relations.

- To change LCMS bylaws by expediting the dispute resolution and suspension/expulsion process.
- To change LCMS bylaws by establishing a procedure for removing Synod or District personnel (other than a president) when they are unable or unwilling to fulfill their duties or are convicted of a felony.

Routes to Ministry

- To provide three options for deacons publicly preaching and administering the sacraments to choose to pursue by July 1, 2018: apply to LCMS seminary alternate-route program; a Specific Ministry Pastor program; a regional colloquy committee for admission to the SMP roster, unless granted a waiver by the applicant’s District President, the plenary of the Council of Presidents and the appropriate regional colloquy committee.
- To establish a task force to address future church leadership needs in light of current and future challenges.
- To raise \$2 million in CUS scholarships

– “The Mustache Resolution.” During the Convention the assembly “voted” on whether President Harrison or LCMS Montana District President Rev. Terry Forke had the best mustache. This resolution proposed that LCMS members vote by donating a minimum of one dollar per vote by December 31, 2016. *NOTE: Credit card donations of at least \$15 may be made by contacting the LCMS Church Information Center at 888-THE-LCMS (843-5267).*

Family, Youth, Young Adults

- To commend the work of the Office of National Mission’s Lutheran Family initiative and to add “Strengthen and support the Lutheran family in living out God’s design” as a mission priority.
- To celebrate the ministry of long-time Youth Ministry leader Rev. Dr. Terry K. Dittmer, who retired after the 2016 LCMS Youth Gathering.
- To encourage men “to fulfill their God-given role as the spiritual head of their households” and create ministries providing care and support to fathers.

Vic Belton Termed Out, Recognized for Service

Rev. Dr. Victor Belton, pastor of Peace/Decatur, GA, was recognized for his service on the LCMS Board of Directors at the summer convention. As the Board’s special representative to Concordia College Alabama’s Board of Regents, Belton during the Convention expressed thanks for past and ongoing support of CCA. Term limits prevented Belton from being elected to another term on the LCMS Board.



President Matthew Harrison Returned to Office for Third Term

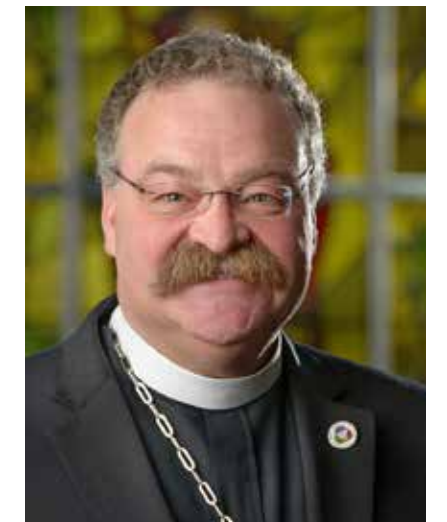
Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, the 13th man to serve as president of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod since its founding in 1847, was elected to his third term of office this summer. The three nominees for LCMS president were Harrison, Rev. Dr. David P.E. Maier and Rev. Dr. Dale A. Meyer.

Voters in the president’s election were the Synod’s congregations’ delegates in attendance at the 2015 district conventions. Balloting was conducted June 11-14. Harrison was voted president with 56.96% of the votes.

Harrison earned a Master of

Divinity in 1989 and a Master of Sacred Theology in 1991, both from Concordia Theological Seminary/ Fort Wayne. In 2011, he received two honorary doctorates: a Doctor of Laws from Concordia University/Ann Arbor and a Doctor of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary.

He served as a parish pastor from 1991 – 2001, when he became executive director of the LCMS’ former World Relief and Human Care ministry. Before being elected president, Harrison served on numerous boards for church and community organizations. ■



Florida-Georgia District LCMS Convention Participants



[continued from previous page]

- To provide resources to young adults, campus ministries and congregations “to meet the spiritual needs of young adults” and increase the number of service opportunities.
- To increase efforts to retain college-age youth through campus ministries and LCMS U.
- To encourage the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations and the Synod’s Scouting Task Force to “move quickly” to provide guidance regarding involvement with scouting organizations.

Worker Wellness

- To commend the work of Concordia Plan Services.

- To task the Board for National Mission to develop policies for assessing worker wellness and make recommendations for worker care.
- To address the indebtedness of church work professionals, asking CUS institutions to look into alternative funding sources and congregations and Districts to financially support church leaders in training.
- To encourage congregations, ministries and church workers to develop an intentional wellness care plan.
- To encourage District Presidents, Circuit Visitors and congregations to utilize resources for ministerial wellness.

Life Together

- To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary

- League and the 100th anniversary of the International Lutheran Laymen’s League.
- To reaffirm Witness, Mercy, Life Together as the Synod’s mission-and-ministry emphasis for the next three years.
- To approve convening a task force to “review” the Synod’s Recognized Service Organization program and bylaws.
- To appeal to LCMS congregations, workers and institutions “within Christian freedom and for love’s sake to retain a common order of service for the Lord’s Supper.”
- To encourage continuation and expansion of the Koinonia Project.
- To celebrate and commemorate the 75th anniversary of The Lutheran Hymnal. ■



Representing Lutheran Haven in the exhibition area were Rev. Raleigh Sims, Director of Facility Operations (second from left) and Carol Landaeta, Residential Sales Counselor (far right). Shown in the booth with them are SELC District President Andrew Dzurovcik (far left) and Jill Sims (second from right).



Rebecca’s Garden of Hope provides a free template for organizations to help develop strong tutoring and mentoring programs where children feel safe and are encouraged to grow. Shown in the organization’s booth are Board members Rev. Harold Storm and Rev. Larry Schaefer with Carol Schaefer.



Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries, which operates Redeeming Life Maternity Home in Sanford, FL, was represented by founders Rev. Ed and Sheryl DeWitt. Pastor DeWitt serves Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Sanford. Mrs. DeWitt is the Executive Director of Redeeming Life



Former Presidents Recognized

Among special guests recognized at the 2016 LCMS Convention were (at left) Rev. Dr. Robert Kuhn, Terry and Rev. Gerald Kieschnick. Both men have served the church body as president. ■



Participating in a special recognition of the LCMS’ partnerships with churches around the world were (l-r) Rev. Amos Bolay, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Liberia; Rev. Christian Ekong, Lutheran Church of Nigeria; Rev. Modise Maragelo, Lutheran Church in Southern Africa; Rev. S. Rajagambeeram, India Evangelical Lutheran Church; Rev. Dr. J. Samuel, India Evangelical Lutheran Church; Rev. Dr. D. Monikaraj, Concordia Theological Seminary, India; Rev. Tatsuomi Yoshida, Japan Lutheran Church; Rt. Rev. Janis Vanags, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia; Rev. Torkild Masvie, Lutheran Church in Norway; Rev. Adalberto Hiller, Portuguese Evangelical Lutheran Church; and Rt. Rev. Arri Kugappi, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia. ■



Dr. Juan Gonzalez (left), pastor of Beautiful Savior/Lehigh Acres, FL, with Rev. Rob Maulella, pastor of Faith/Sebring, were among the Florida-Georgia District’s pastors at the convention. ■

Tim Droegemueller Elected to Mission Board

Rev. Timothy Droegemueller, senior pastor of Living Faith/Cumming, GA, was elected to the LCMS Board for National Mission as the ordained/ commission representative from the East-Southeast Region. ■



Educational Opportunities Tours is dedicated to providing quality Christian travel programs at an affordable price. Over the years, more than 300,000 Christians have traveled on the various faith-based tours. Shown here are (l-r) Rev. Ron & Diane Biehl of The Villages, FL, with EO Director of Sales & Marketing Development Mark & Linda Yeh.



The Lutheran Legal League is a group of Christian attorneys who stand ready to help LCMS churches, schools, rostered workers and congregation members. League Founder Rusty Huseman — shown with wife Kris at the Convention booth — serves as legal counsel for the Florida-Georgia District.



Rev. Nabil Nour, newly-elected LCMS third vice-president, hugs Rev. Greg Walton, president of the LCMS Florida-Georgia District, for an embrace of forgiveness after mispronouncing Nour’s last name the day before, on Monday, July 11, at the 66th Regular Convention of the LCMS.



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Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
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The BACKPAGE

More Than 600 District Youth Participate in New Orleans LCMS National Youth Gathering



LCMS NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING ... More than 750 members of the Florida-Georgia District were among the 22,200+ participants in the 2016 LCMS National Youth Gathering held July 16-20 in New Orleans. The Florida-Georgia mass event at Mardi Gras World brought together almost 600 of the District NYG attendees. They toured the facility where Mardi Gras floats are stored, enjoyed lunch and made personal Mardi Gras masks. More NYG photos and stories will be in the next issue of Lutheran LIFE.