DISTRICT
CAPSULES
by Greg Walton District President

Calling Congregations
Faith/Haleah, FL — Senior Pastor
Lake Oconee/Lake Oconee, GA — Associate Pastor
Holy Trinity/Lutz, FL — Associate Pastor
Marco/ Marco Island, FL — Associate Pastor
Christ the King/ Orlando, FL — Associate Pastor
LiveOFC/ Orlando, FL — Associate Pastor
Trinity/ Orlando, FL — Senior Pastor
St Paul/Peachtree City, GA — Senior Pastor
Our Savior/Plantation, FL — Associate Pastor
RiverVill/Sand Springs, GA — Associate Pastor
Beautiful Savior/Sarasota, FL — Associate Pastor
Trinity/Tocca, GA — Associate Pastor
Lakeside/Venice, FL — Associate Pastor
Redemser/Verona Beach, FL — Associate Pastor

Calls Issued
Marco/ Marco Island, FL — to Rev. Jason Taylor as Associate Pastor
Woodlands/Montverde, FL — to Rev. Joshua Pettit as Associate Pastor
Our Savior/Plantation, FL — to Rev. James Korch as Sole Pastor

Calls Accepted
Faith/Dunedin, FL — to Rev. Andrew Sorenson as Sole Pastor
Woodlands/Montverde, FL — to Rev. Joshua Pettit as Associate Pastor

Calls Declined
Holy Trinity/Lutz, FL — to Rev. James Korch as Sole Pastor
Marco/ Marco Island, FL — to Rev. Jason Taylor as Associate Pastor

Transferred to Other Districts
Rev. William F. Caughey — Iowa West (O)
Mr. Ann M. Groote — English (C)
Rev. Scott Hether — Missouri (O)
Ms. Melynda E. Stackhouse — Southeastern (C)
Rev. Andrew J. Sorenson — New England (O)

Transferred from Other Districts
Mrs. Judith E. Cunningham — Florida-Georgia District (O)
Ms. Jennifer A McKnight — Florida-Georgia District (O)
Rev. Robert Steinke — Florida-Georgia District (O)
Rev. Mark Schulz — Florida-Georgia District (O)
Rev. Andrew J. Sorenson — New England (O)

Ordained/Commissioned Minister
Initial Assignments
Stephen Farrel — Concordia Sem; St. Louis (O)
Jack Michael Proctor — Concordia Austin; TX (C)
Doug Hudson — Concordia Sem; St. Louis (O)
Joseph Warnke — Concordia Sem; St. Louis (O)

Ordained/Commissioned Minister Installations
Rev. Andrew J Sorenson — Pastor, Faith/Dunedin, FL (O)
Rev. Mark Schultz from Active to Emeritus (O)
Rev. Robert Steinke from Active to Emeritus (O)

Change of Status within the District
Ms. Dorothy C Warnke — from Active to Candidate (C)
Ms. Jennifer A McKnight — from Active to Candidate (C)

Reformation 500th Anniversary
Website Established
The LCMS has established a special website — Lutheranreformation.org — for this 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation. Available on that site are:
✓ Calendar of Reformation celebration events throughout the LCMS;
✓ Reformation timeline;
✓ Reformation Celebration Congregation Kit;
✓ Resources, including bulletin inserts; Luther quotes; one-session Bible study: It’s Still All About Jesus; children’s and Spanish materials.

Bart Day Named New LCEF Head
Rev. Bart Day, Executive Director of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod’s Office of National Mission, will be the next President and CEO of Lutheran Church Extension Fund. He succeeds Rich Robertson, who in November 2016 announced that he would retire on October 1, 2017. Day’s start date is September 1, 2017.

Day will oversee LCEF’s investments, loans and ministry support activities, communicate to and with partner organizations and assist the Board of Directors in establishing the course and direction of the organization.

In his six years of directing the Office of National Mission, Day’s primary responsibility was implementation of the policies of the Board for National Mission. This work included overseeing 20 ministries that supported LCMS districts, congregations, schools and workers.

Day served as the interim Chief Mission Officer from 2014 to 2015. From 2015 to 2016 he was interim Executive Director of Pastoral Education. He began his career in 1997 as an associate pastor at Memorial Lutheran Church/Houston, TX. From 2005-2011 he served concurrently as headmaster at Memorial Lutheran School.
The waters of holy baptism, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we were re-formed by grace through faith. He places His own indelible mark on us, cleanses us and claims us as His very own. We are set apart to be made holy by His hand and always with purpose. This is God’s re-forming work.

In the context of the Church, the context of the Church as the faith community that we take something already formed and form it once again. We re-purpose it and use it in a new way. Such was the case 500 years ago. The Gospel of Jesus Christ hadn’t changed, but over time, with perhaps the greatest of intentions, that Gospel got lost and covered up in the pageantry and legalistic requirements that rose, especially during the Middle Ages. The desire to protect and venerate the Gospel got lost in the shuffle. How easy it is to lose sight of what is really of value.

The nation of Israel in the Old Testament is a sacrificial system that pointed to the future promise of a Savior. When Jesus came it was difficult to understand that the old system was no longer necessary. They were used to their practices and waiting for the promised Messiah, not recognizing the truth before their eyes. Many missed out on the truth that God had provided as they continued to sincerely strive after what they thought God wanted from them. This writer to the Hebrews addresses this with, “According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but only serve until the appearance of the new covenant, by whichPERIODICTABLE

July 21

Time for Another Reformation!

The Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 2, “As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves also, like living stones are being built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” This process is an ongoing event; it isn’t complete or finished. God’s Word has a purpose in this, to reach each individual and puts them together in His own arrangement. Each of us are continually being built into a spiritual house to serve our God, engaging in the Master’s business, connecting people to Jesus! Just as stones are shaped over time, maybe slightly, maybe in a major way, we change and grow in the manner of connecting people to Jesus, but God’s purpose always remains the same. His desire for us is to connect people to Jesus!

Reformation! Your partner in ministry, Greg

Martin Luther was committed to connecting people without compromising his faith, but also unwilling to settle for how things had always been done.

Lutherans firmly believe in the necessity of being the Church in our time, educating and empowering the laity and I had the
dare to step out on faith, no matter what!

In fact, Peter declares, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a People for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

It is God’s re-forming work. We live in a time of reformation. God is reshaping His Church once again for our day, looking toward the future. History bears out the fact that transition is part of the life of the Church. While there is a continuous thread and the law and the Gospel haven’t altered, the way we communicate this to the world has changed significantly. The Latin, German or other languages spoken in the churches past are not the context of the Church anymore. While we may occasionally sing ancient hymns, the majority of them date back less than 500 years and some churches use new praise songs. Communication has expanded beyond the mother tongue and town crier, and not only in the Church. When Edith and I were dating and I was at Seminary in St. Louis and she was in college in Bronxville, I would call her long distance. It was a pretty high cost. It was an ordeal because of time changes, costs and the phone itself. In April I was in Haiti for an Ecumenical Conference and the same time I could pick up my cell phone and talk to Edith. We didn’t shop the way that our grandparents did or pump gas the same way, or get the news the same, to name just a few of the best practices we can develop, all without compromising our faith. Dear Martin Luther was a leader in this area, taking bar songs in Christ’s church and finding similar tunes to familiar litanies. Today we are continually being built into a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves also, like living stones are being built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

This process is an ongoing event; it isn’t complete or finished. God’s Word has a purpose in this, to reach each individual and puts them together in His own arrangement. Each of us are continually being built into a spiritual house to serve our God, engaging in the Master’s business, connecting people to Jesus! Just as stones are shaped over time, maybe slightly, maybe in a major way, we change and grow in the manner of connecting people to Jesus, but God’s purpose always remains the same. His desire for us is to connect people to Jesus!

I’m not certain how the Church will look in the future, but I am certain of one thing. No matter what, no matter how things have changed and will change, and no matter what we have come to know as “Church.” What is important is that we as a community of believers, has a role in this, but it is individual Christians, pastoral or lay, actively sharing in their faith in the public forum that makes a difference.

Your partner in ministry, Greg

The Apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 2, “As you come to Him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves also, like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” This process is an ongoing event; it isn’t complete or finished. God’s Word has a purpose in this, to reach each individual and puts them together in His own arrangement. Each of us are continually being built into a spiritual house to serve our God, engaging in the Master’s business, connecting people to Jesus! Just as stones are shaped over time, maybe slightly, maybe in a major way, we change and grow in the manner of connecting people to Jesus, but God’s purpose always remains the same. His desire for us is to connect people to Jesus!

Lutherans firmly believe in the necessity of being the Church in our time, educating and empowering the laity and I had the
Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! I thank God for you, the Congregations of the Florida-Georgia District, and for your wonderful support of the District with your time, talent, treasures, and prayers. It is with this thanksgiving for your partnership in the Gospel that I offer this summary of District Financials for FYE January 31, 2017.

Overview
Last year the District mission was challenged a bit as revenue did not meet projections. Yet, the District continues to operate with no real debt and all designated/restricted funds are fully funded. Expenses are closely monitored, the missions of the District are funded and moving forward, and we have about one month of operating expenses in reserve.

Statement of Activities
Unrestricted support from congregations totaled $1,966,918—a $603,077 decrease from the prior year and $123,598 underspent from the budgeted $2.1 million. Net assets released from restriction decreased by $348,432 year over year. This change is due to the very large Soli Deo Gloria Fund released the prior year. Assets released from restriction fund specific projects or needs and are not utilized to fund operating expenses or ministries. Their usage is determined by project need or donor restriction and can vary greatly from year to year. Convention/Conference income increased by $13,381 year over year as this past fiscal year there was a Synod Convention. Total expenses for FYE 2017 were $3,707,385 versus $3,977,385 for FYE 2016, a decrease of $290,000. This overall change, as reflected in the Congregational Services line item, is mainly due to the distribution of the Soli Deo Gloria Fund. For the FYE 2017 we increased our overall tithe to Synod ($351,876) from 10% to 17% 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 increase in use of the Pastoral Leadership Institute. The increase in Ecclesiastical Administration is due to the reconciliation training, funded by a financial gift, provided to all Circuit Visitors to facilitate and streamline that work within the District.

The total change in Net Assets for the past fiscal year was an increase of $34,867, largely due to an anonymous gift received late in the year. Per the donor’s instructions, this gift was divided up to support long-term efforts to fund Student Aid and short-term efforts in Missions and School Ministries. It is the District’s intention to always model good stewardship with the funds entrusted to us and use them in a manner that follows the donor’s direction and meaningfully benefits and supports ongoing ministry.

2017 Work Program
Highlights of the 2017 work program are as follows:
- Congregation support continues to be budgeted at $2,100,000.
- Net Assets Released from Restrictions is projected to be $180K lower than last year.
- Through unanimous support of the Board of Directors, the budgeted tithe on Congregational Support is set at 10%. This 10% tithe is broken into two components: Synod support remains at 17% and the remaining 8% funds District Revitalization efforts.
- The Mission Grant budget remains at $600,000 and supports 12 approved missions throughout the District.
- The overall Missions budget also includes support for 7 other Lutheran organizations (e.g., Lutheran Services Florida and Mission Haiti), as well as taking care of several large maintenance items for buildings at two Campus Ministries.

We believe this work program is financially responsible, within current funding forecast and enables 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 monitor expenses and will make necessary adjustments. If you have any questions regarding this report, please 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

DISTRIBUTION ANNUAL REPORT

January 31, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th></th>
<th>January 31, 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>$2,712,314</td>
<td>$2,084,075</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts Receivable</td>
<td>71,548</td>
<td>56,024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
<td>59,972</td>
<td>86,858</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions Receivable</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>From Split-Interest Agreements</td>
<td>170,604</td>
<td>189,087</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loans Receivable</td>
<td>220,000</td>
<td>240,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installment Sale Notes Receivable, net</td>
<td>224,030</td>
<td>233,354</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property and Equipment, net</td>
<td>756,277</td>
<td>677,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advances</td>
<td>493,969</td>
<td>685,286</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-Term Investments</td>
<td>1,845,387</td>
<td>1,587,339</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assets</td>
<td>481,048</td>
<td>756,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,054,549</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,110,944</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities and Net Assets</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$230,372</td>
<td>$291,068</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes Payable</td>
<td>232,442</td>
<td>232,399</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Liabilities</td>
<td>335,388</td>
<td>354,084</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,198,102</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,028,544</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Investment in Land, Buildings and Equipment</td>
<td>756,277</td>
<td>677,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Designated</td>
<td>1,409,409</td>
<td>1,410,939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily Restricted</td>
<td>1,249,316</td>
<td>1,206,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently Restricted</td>
<td>1,740,708</td>
<td>1,833,409</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,937,471</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,910,928</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,054,549</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,110,944</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For The Years Ended January 31, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses by Critical Target for FYE Jan 31, 2017</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregation Support</td>
<td>$1,968,918</td>
<td>$1,845,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets Released from Restriction</td>
<td>$706,317</td>
<td>$635,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreements with LCEF</td>
<td>$260,165</td>
<td>$127,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions, Conf and Workshops</td>
<td>$410,680</td>
<td>(331,576)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$148,162</td>
<td>(397,399)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,707,385</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,977,385</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Net Assets Released from Restriction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregations Support Over and Above Pledge</td>
<td>$34,867</td>
<td>$50,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
<td>45,075</td>
<td>384,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently restricted</td>
<td>627,378</td>
<td>488,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total change in net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$34,867</strong></td>
<td><strong>$34,867</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net Assets—Beginning of Year: $6,312,588

Net Assets—End of Year: $6,345,445

Expenses by Critical Target for FYE Jan 31, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synod</td>
<td>$361,648</td>
<td>$370,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Services</td>
<td>$748,033</td>
<td>$741,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing Church Workers</td>
<td>111,673</td>
<td>162,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missions</td>
<td>880,613</td>
<td>635,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Support</td>
<td>448,621</td>
<td>741,647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecclesiastical Administration</td>
<td>23,507</td>
<td>338,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,028,996</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,130,199</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Includes Congregation Support Over and Above Pledge

"Includes Synod Ministries, Conference, Conventions, Conferences, Human Care, Church Worker Family Care

"Includes Synod Ministries, Conference, Conventions, Human Care, Church Worker Family Care

"Includes Synod Ministries, Conference, Conventions, Human Care, Church Worker Family Care

EXPENSES

Synod: 361,648
Congregational Services: 748,033
Preparing Church Workers: 111,673
Missions: 880,613
Ministry Support: 448,621
Ecclesiastical Administration: 23,507

Total: 2,028,996
### Congregational Support Enables Florida-Georgia Mission & Ministry

In this issue you’ll find the Annual Report of our District. Our goal is always to maintain transparency with the congregations of the District and validate to all our ministries and members that we are, to the best of our ability, wisely and effectively using the assets that God has supplied through our ministries in the most efficient and effective ways as good stewards of His gifts. Leaders in our District are often surprised when they learn how congregations support the missions of the Florida-Georgia. God has blessed our District through our partnership with congregations, and we can only imagine the marvelous things that could be accomplished if all our congregations participated.

Despite the challenges, the District remains debt-free and all our restricted accounts are fully funded. This has enabled us to more freely engage in the Master’s business to connect people to Jesus. All expenses are closely monitored, and a thorough audit is completed each year to help us evaluate the District’s financial situation. I am pleased to say that the audit firm has cited no issues.

The Board of Directors of the District has committed 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 in the Florida-Georgia District. We take your trust very seriously as we strive to be a model of good stewardship.

As in the past fiscal year, congregational giving is down. Many of our congregations joyfully, sacrificially and regularly support the work of ministry, for which we are so grateful. We thank you for making our ministry a joy, and not a burden (Hebrews 13:7). All of us are aware of the decline in membership across the Synod, and our District is not immune. Some congregations are experiencing financial struggles of their own, and there are always exceptional circumstances.

Wedaily pray for our workers and congregations, that God would fill each with renewed passion and vision for ministry in their community. The District Office exists to support the vital work that you do on the “front lines” of ministry. We have discovered there are some congregations who simply have chosen to keep more at “home,” or choose not to support the work of the District because they see little value in this partnership. When a congregation fails to realize the benefit of stewardship, and that when healthy stewardship is modeled it motivates members to greater stewardship, benefitting the whole, they miss out on some great blessings that God has for His people. Together we make up the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in this place, and the value, while not always visible, is essential to our proclamation of the Gospel to the World.

You may wonder just what the Florida-Georgia District does with the funds received.

**EXPENSES**
- Synodical Pledge $357,000
- District Congregational Revitalization $63,000
- World & National Missions $935,600
- School Ministries $242,808
- Congregational Services $239,900
- Mission & Ministry Support, Net $875,400
- Eclesiastical Administration $318,200

**Total Expenses** $3,032,000

**REVENUES**
- Congregation Support $2,100,000
- LCDF Program Income $265,000
- Installment Loan Repayments $247,700
- Net Assets Released from Restriction $352,200
- Other $67,100

**Total Revenues** $3,032,000

**Change in Net Assets** $-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/State</th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Financial Support</th>
<th>Confirmed Members</th>
<th>Support/Member</th>
<th>Circuit Totals/Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 - Northeast Georgia</td>
<td>Athens, GA ... Grace</td>
<td>15,992</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>509.23</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Athens, GA ... Trinity</td>
<td>11,958</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>451.68</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blairsville, GA ... All Saints</td>
<td>21,577</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1,137.83</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blue Ridge, GA ... Grace Mission</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gainesville, GA ... Good Shepherd</td>
<td>12,436</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>50.63</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ocala, FL ... Oak Road</td>
<td>33,514</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>353.50</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suwanee, GA ... Trinity</td>
<td>3,278</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>303.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit Totals/Average</td>
<td>85,999</td>
<td>1,199</td>
<td>717.78</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>02 - Atlanta North</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA ... Grace</td>
<td>4,080</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>51.85</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atlanta, GA ... Evergreen</td>
<td>30,750</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>449.14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atlanta, GA ... Living Faith</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alpharetta, GA ... Friendswood</td>
<td>12,060</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>53.58</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canton, GA ... Trinity</td>
<td>29,500</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>266.81</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dalton, GA ... Grace</td>
<td>5,507</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>103.87</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jasper, GA ... King of Kings</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>95.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kennesaw, GA ... Seabury</td>
<td>3,713</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>62.34</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Warner Robins, GA ... Holy Trinity</td>
<td>12,436</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>237.32</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atlanta, GA ... Holy Name</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>280.00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woodstock, GA ... Trinity</td>
<td>19,820</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>53.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit Totals/Average</td>
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<td>Lake Worth, FL ... Trinity</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Jacksonville, FL ... St. Paul</td>
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<td>Plant City, FL ... Good Shepherd</td>
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<td>Circuit Totals/Average</td>
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<td>1,477</td>
<td>29.66</td>
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**Notes:**
- Confirmed Members numbers have been adjusted from those reported in the previous year due to changes in methodology.
- Grand Total for 2017 includes all reported financial support and confirmed members. Unrestricted Gifts and gifts for missions are not included.
- **Confirmed Members** are the latest numbers available.

**Source:** Lutheran Life • 2017 Vol. 4

**Lutheran Life • 2017 Vol. 4 • 11**
LWML Celebrates 75 Years of Mission, Outreach, Service

The June 22-25 LWML Convention in Albuquerque, NM, was absolutely fantastic! This historic event marked the LWML’s 75th Anniversary.

Have you ever been to one? If not, you have no idea what you are missing! Besides the business part that every convention must have, there were times when we just broke out in laughter! For example, our humorous interrupter, Katie Luther, a.k.a. Jan Struck, had us laughing regarding her life with Martin. Only Jan Struck can tell a story in such a gentle, humorous way.

Have you ever heard anyone speaking about mites in action? We had some wonderful grant recipients share how the funds helped their ministries. The Adelante Ministries of Pablo. This musical group is an outreach and care ministry of Voleta Lutheran Mission in El Paso, TX. Much of their music is sung in Spanish and English in order to serve, unite and reach others through song.

Or how about Vicar Tim Norton speaking to us on his ministry serving the Navajo Indians in Navajo, NM. These are the things that just love about the LWML. Our grants go so far and impact so many. Hearing how our mission grants bless people truly gives you a different perspective on how we impact ministries.

And the LWML really knows how to celebrate! On Saturday evening, we began with a parade of all districts coming in from different directions, with Florida-Georgia led by President Trish Aamoth. When we saw our District coming down the aisle, we rang our cow bells and blew our whistles for them!

A PowerPoint presentation showed highlights of all past conventions. Skits represented the various decades and illustrated the most important aspect of that decade. It was fantastic!

More than 3,400 people attended the convention, including 81 Young Woman Representatives, 850 first-timers and 10 Heart 2 Heart Sisters. And let’s not forget the exhibitors! A life-size Martin Luther cutout stood ready for photos at the LWML Gifts of Love. At the Concordia University Chicago booth we shared that two of our grandchildren were alumni. The young ladies manning the booth knew them both. What a small Lutheran world! Speaking of small worlds, my husband and I ran into our granddaughter’s in-laws, who were exhibiting. Then we shopped till we dropped in the LWML and CPH stores.

Happy Birthday LWML, and thanks for sharing your birthday with all of us! ■

— This report is from Joan Koch, Florida-Georgia District LWML VP Communications

District LWML Retreat Update

Registration is now open for the Florida-Georgia District retreat on September 30 – October 1 at Jekyll Island, GA. Villas by the Sea is also accepting reservations for the retreat. There are lots of wonderful things planned for this event, from Bible Studies to “Homegrown Entertainers.”

Please go online to www.flgalwml.com and register for this amazing weekend. You will also find the latest Evangel there with lots of information pertaining to the retreat. ■

Convention Offerings as of 7/7/17

- Pledge Walk ............................................................. $72,483.06
- Golf Outing ............................................................ $72,395.70
- Convention Offering #1 .............................................. $48,810.52
- Convention Offering #2 .............................................. $51,959.84
- Convention Offering #3 .............................................. $33,710.56

2017-2019 Mission Grants — $2.075 Million Goal

- Mercy Medical Ministries .............................................. $40,000
- Mercy House/ Franklin Avenue Mission, Flint, MI ......................... $100,000
- LCMS Ministry of the Armed Forces ........................................ $27,750
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania .................................. $25,000
- LCMS International Mission ........................................... $100,000
- Lutheran Heritage Foundation ........................................... $100,000
- LWML Christmas Hope Through Mass Media in Egypt .................. $100,000
- Christian Families United for Progress .................................. $100,000
- Lutheran World Relief Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund ...................... $80,000
- Christian Eldercare Home in Haiti ....................................... $100,000
- Biblical Orthodoxy Lutheran Mission .................................... $100,000
- Lutheran Church Uganda ................................................. $40,000
- Lutheran for Life ........................................................... $25,000
- Lutheran Braille Workers ................................................... $100,000
- Bethel Lutheran Communities ............................................ $100,000
- Education Loan Repayment Assistance Grants/ Ministry Focus ........ $100,000
- LCMS Office of International Missions .................................... $25,000
- Lutheran Indian Missions .................................................. $75,000
- Circuit 28 – Iowa District .................................................... $50,000
- Prison and Jail Ministry 2018 Synod-wide Conference .................. $56,500
- Family Scholarships for Short Term Mission Trips/MOST Ministries  $60,000
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia ................................... $97,000

Lutheran Women in Mission

LWML’s new logo was unveiled at the convention.

Voleta Lutheran Mission

Human Care not only gave a wonderful witness of how our grant worked for them, but introduced us to the Mariachi San Pablo. This musical group is an outreach and care ministry of Voleta Lutheran Mission in El Paso, TX. Much of their music is sung in Spanish and English in order to serve, unite and reach others through song.

At Lutheran Women’s Missionary League Awards, Katie Luther, a.k.a. Jan Struck, shared stories of her life with Martin.

LWML Celebrates 75 Years of Mission, Outreach, Service

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- Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia ................................... $97,000

At the convention, Lutheran Hour Ministries President/CEO Kurt Buchholz presented LWML President Patti Ross with the Luther Seal from the Lutheran Hour Float in the 2017 Rose Parade. He said, “It is an exciting time as you are celebrating 75 years and we are celebrating 106 years to look back at what this combined effort has done but more importantly looking forward ... to what God will do through His people in bringing Christ to the nations and the nations to the church.”

Katie Luther, a.k.a. Jan Struck, shared stories of her life with Martin.
God’s exhortation to Joshua as the Israelites approached the promised land was “Be strong and courageous,” (Joshua 1:6) — and then He emphasized it by saying “Be strong and very courageous.” (Joshua 1:7) Courage is the clear call to all of God’s people. The Bible chronicles a parade of courageous men and women through the ages. Abraham left his comfort zone and migrated to a strange land. In spite of his poor speaking ability, Moses confronted pharaoh. Joshua led the Israelites into battle. David battled Goliath. Jeremiah spoke God’s truth to a civic power — and suffered because of it. Stephen spoke God’s truth to the religious establishment and was martyred.

These are all fascinating Bible stories but do they have anything to do with us? Yes. Jesus said, “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” (John 14:20) Most of us are familiar with the stories of Christians being thrown to the lions in ancient Rome because they would not recognize Caesar as a god. But today the persecution of Christians is far greater. Christians in Egypt, Iraq are given the choice to convert to Islam or die. Canon Andrew White, known as the “Vicar of Baghdad” because he would not recognize Caesar as a god, was told to convert to Islam or die. Then he was told that his three boys would be killed if he didn’t. So he said the conversion shahada: “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet” in order to save his sons. The Muslim jihadist then asked the three boys to convert. They took courage, refused to say the shahada, and were executed. Rev. White notes that 30 years ago there were 1.4 million Christians in Iraq. Today there are less than 250,000.

Similar conditions exist elsewhere. Christianity is forbidden in Iran. Church buildings are burned to the ground in Egypt, Syria and China. The North Korean Church has been driven underground, and known Christians are executed or worked to death in slave camps. This is tragic because Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, was known as the “Jerusalem of the East” from 1895 to 1942.

History records consistent persecution of Christians in many lands under different anti-Christian ideologies — just as Jesus predicted. In the 16th and 17th centuries Jesuit missionaries boldly traveled to Japan in wooden sailing ships to evangelize. The church grew to about 400,000 until a new leadership assumed power in Japan. Brutal persecution — similar to the atrocities done by ISIS — martyred common, and the church was almost exterminated. All this is graphically depicted in the historical novel Silence by the Japanese Christian Shusaku Endo, which was made into a major motion picture in 2016. What does this mean for us? It means an immediate call to prayer and physical help where possible for today’s persecuted Christians. They are the Body of Christ. Paul reminds us, “If one part suffers, every part suffers with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:26) All these suffering brothers and sisters in Christ are our family. They are also examples of courage in the face of adversity and evil.

There is an old hymn titled “Faith of our Fathers” which carries the line, “Faith of our fathers, living still in spite of dungeon, fire and sword.” Unlike the Iraqi Christians, we do not face dungeon, fire and sword. But until physical persecution comes to us in the United States we, too, must show courage. Courage to confront civic idolatry even though it might mean social censure. In the 16th and 17th centuries Jesuit missionaries boldly traveled to Japan in wooden sailing ships to evangelize. The church grew to about 400,000 until a new leadership assumed power in Japan. Brutal persecution — similar to the atrocities done by ISIS — martyred common, and the church was almost exterminated. All this is graphically depicted in the historical novel Silence by the Japanese Christian Shusaku Endo, which was made into a major motion picture in 2016. What does this mean for us? It means an immediate call to prayer and physical help where possible for today’s persecuted Christians. They are the Body of Christ. Paul reminds us, “If one part suffers, every part suffers with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:26) All these suffering brothers and sisters in Christ are our family. They are also examples of courage in the face of adversity and evil.

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**COURAGE FOR TODAY**

by Rev. Bruce Leske
District Chairman of Task Force on Mission Evangelism

Opposition to what God has said, our culture has moved the ancient boundary stones (Proverbs 23:10) of pro-life, pro-marriage of one man and one woman and respect for Godly family. They are also examples of courage in the face of adversity and evil.

Jesus died for us to pay our sin debt. This is good news for our dark, deceitful, despising culture. Jesus is light, truth and hope! He is needed by all people, even though they do not always realize it and frequently resist Him. Life is a battle. But we have the final victory in Christ, so like courageous soldiers we confront our culture with God’s Word and march onward with the cross of Christ going on before. ■

**Some have advocated a Bible study, worship and giving requirements. On the other hand, perhaps those are not the only or best indicators. So what other opportunities to serve (vacancies) shouldn’t just be filled with a “warm body” and you don’t want musical chairs anymore. So how can you be more intentional about picking leaders?**

**“Come on John, I was chairman for the last three years, now it’s your turn.”**

Is filling the leadership positions in the church a game of musical chairs? Sometimes it feels that way. Perhaps that’s why it seems like things don’t change very much. The same group always seems to fill the positions of responsibility. On the other hand, perhaps you’ve heard someone say, “We need some new blood around here.” That might be true. Or it might be that “John” just doesn’t want to come to meetings any more.

In a previous article we talked about your starting place in filling leadership vacancies. Typically, we start with the open spot and try to fill it, rather than starting with the people first and then finding the places where they will best fit. In this article we’re addressing a different aspect of filling leadership positions: qualifications.

Perhaps your constitution says they need to be members. Yet you know in your gut that these opportunities to serve (vacancies) shouldn’t just be filled with a “warm body” and you don’t want musical chairs anymore. So how can you be more intentional about picking leaders?

Some have advocated a Bible study, worship and giving requirements. On the other hand, perhaps those are not the only or best indicators. So what other opportunities to serve (vacancies) shouldn’t just be filled with a “warm body” and you don’t want musical chairs anymore. So how can you be more intentional about picking leaders?

**“Flip a Coin? Roll the Dice? Cast Lots?” How to Pick Leaders.**

Here are four categories that are suggested as additional indicators that one may be ready to take on more responsibility in the Lord’s church.

1-Spiritual trajectory. These are the people who have a hunger to grow closer to Jesus and are serious about their faith. This may be compared those who have stalled or are not interested in growing, 2-Teachable. People who are teachable are open to grow, will accept feedback and are willing to be challenged. This is compared to those who know it all and want their way. 3-Relational Intelligence. These are people who care about others and want to help them grow closer to Jesus, whether they are church members or their neighbors. They are good with people and you like being around them. They pass the “caller ID test” in that when you see their name show up on your phone, you actually want to answer it. 4-Passed the Step Up Test. People with a critical spirit like to be critical and complain and point fingers. Those who pass the step up test will notice the needs but will not stop there. They will step in to do something about it, and with a servant’s heart.

There are times and seasons when people are not ready for leadership. Of course, leadership is not for everyone, yet we all are to be on the pathway of growing in Christ. Thus serving people by supporting the development of the body of Christ is a gift. It requires prayer, discernment and loving care. It will not doubt make an eternal difference.

**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 (407-444-4809) or through email scottgress@gmail.com or his blog page wotjehtest.com.**
Consecrated Stewards Instructors Ready to Assist District Congregations

Designed to energize members in their ongoing giving, the Consecrated Stewards program of the LCEF is not tied to the church budget. The focus is instead on members’ desire to give. Many participating congregations have reported increases in annual commitments of 15% to 30%.

Consecrated Stewards

Benefits and features of the Consecrate Stewards program include:
• The commitment process is tied to the Sunday morning act of worship
• Members do not need to ask each other for a financial commitment
• Can be used at any time throughout the year
• Includes Lutheran Bible study materials and sermon outlines
• Includes publicity and communication aids

Recently Florida-Georgia Stewardship Advisory Council Chair Rev. Dennis Bartels let a stewardship training session at the District office. Nine individuals were trained to lead Florida-Georgia congregations in stewardship:
- George Murdaugh,
- Larry Schaefer,
- Bernard Julmiste,
- Nicholas Delien,
- Dean Pfeffer,
- James Wiggins Jr.,
- John Glover,
- Mark Abram,
- Ron Biel.

For more information on how Consecrated Stewards can positively impact your church, contact Debbie Talbot: dtalbot@fjgadistrict.org, 877-457-5556, ext. 4.

Understanding the Dynamics of Stewardship

The stereotypical understanding of “stewardship” describes a process of giving, encourages generosity and seeks to inspire sacrificial giving.

In my seven years in stewardship consulting, I came to see “stewardship” and “generous giving” as a likely second dynamic to “receiving” (yes, receiving). The grace to receive, the acceptance of God’s Gifts in whatever sacrificial fashion, is directly related to the ability to give them away.

You can’t give away what you don’t have. You won’t give away what you believe isn’t there. Although the implosive desire of human nature may want what every greedy person desires—just a little more.

There is great potential for the maturing disciple to recognize the greater Truth. Overflowing abundance stirs the Spirit-given calling to give back to the Author of Plenty.

In your preaching, teaching and conversing, be quick to point out God’s immeasurably more; marvel at the spiritual gifts that are poured into your lap; shake your head in wonder of the grace that keeps coming in easy times and hard. Weave into your family and into the liturgy of the family of God wonder at baptismal identity. Create a tapestry of blessed images of forgiven freedom in Christ.

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Responding to God’s Abundant Blessings

Today we are faced with a society and a church culture that is not living up to the purpose for which our Lord has called us. According to a recent Gallop poll 50% of all church members have no interest in serving in any ministry at all in God’s Kingdom. Think about that! Half of all church members say they simply want to be spectators.

But our Lord has great expectations for His body the church. He expects every one of us whom He has saved to be actively using the gifts and talents that He has given for ministry.

That is what Stewardship is all about: not just money but our whole life and what we are doing to connect people to Jesus. Consecrated Stewards is just one of many programs to assist congregations to use their gifts for ministry. It is an educational, Bible-based process designed for small and large congregations alike that has become very cost effective.

Have an active Stewardship plan. Last year more than half of the congregations in the Florida-Georgia District did nothing in the area of Stewardship. Let’s change that! As we are told in Ephesians 2:10, “We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

God has prepared things for each one of us to do. Let’s do it!

Karl Galik, Karl Galik, former Vice-President for Capital Funding Services and author of “The Love Paradox,” was installed as Pastor of Peace/Naples this past April

Dennis Bartels
Dennis Bartels, Chair
Florida-Georgia District
Stewardship Advisory Council

Participating in the stewardship training were (left to right) Rev. George Murdaugh; Gerald Kirk, LCEF Chief Credit Officer; Rev. James Wiggins Jr.; Rev. Ronald Biel; Rev. Dean Pfeffer; Rev. Larry Schaefer; Nicholas Delien; Rev. Bernard Julmiste; Rev. Dennis Bartels; Rev. Mark Abram; Daniel J. Reichard, LCEF District Vice President; Rev. John Glover.
Christ/Perry Expanding Facilities

Construction is underway on the new education wing at Christ Lutheran/Perry.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund is providing ministry assistant to the congregation in the Perry/Kathleen area. The first Sunday worship for Christ was held in 2006 in the chapel of a Perry funeral home.

Mount Calvary Vicar Steve Schave served as the Mission Developer for Christ Lutheran and was called as the congregation’s first pastor on June 4, 2006. Christ was chartered as a mission outreach of Mount Calvary and the Florida-Georgia District on June 18, 2006. The congregation met in rented facilities for several years.

Schave accepted a call to Ohio in August of 2008—the same month that a building committee began meeting. For the next year, the congregation planned, raised funds and investigated potential church sites. By late 2009, the building fund totaled $40,000 that was used as a land purchase down payment.

Rev. Dr. David Bernthal served as Christ Lutheran’s Interim Pastor from October 2008 to June 2009. Rev. John Lehenbauer was installed as Christ Lutheran pastor on July 26, 2009.

In late 2009, the congregation purchased nine acres of land several miles north of Perry. Funding was provided by LCEF, and Laborers for Christ were on site to do construction. The congregation moved into the new facility on June 17, 2012.

In March 2013, the men of the congregation built a picnic shelter next door to the church for use for Vacation Bible School and outdoor picnics and events. Christ Lutheran has an active youth group, works with Perry Volunteer Outreach Center to provide a weekly free meal to the community, and leads weekly devotions in four different wings at a local senior care facility and supports the work of Children of Love Lutheran orphanage in La Paz, Honduras.

with a construction loan and with its Laborers for Christ team on site to work on the building.

Volunteer Laborers for Christ from around the country arrived in Perry early June and were commissioned for service before starting construction the week of June 11th.

Christ Lutheran began in 2005 when a group of members from Mount Calvary/Warner Robbins and Pastor David Brighton began discussing the establishment of a daughter congregation in the Perry/Kathleen area.

The congregation purchased nine acres of land several miles north of Perry. Funding was provided by LCEF, and Laborers for Christ were on site to work on the building.

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A ministry team from Rivercliff Lutheran/Atlanta traveled to El Salvador in June for a multi-faceted mission trip.

For much of their time the group focused on a build project, first tearing down an old structure and preparing the site for new construction. Work on the

house was completed in a matter of days and dedicated to the family.

The Atlanta team hosted several King’s Table Feeding Programs for area children. They participated in the Seeds of Hope children’s program by performing a skit about Jesus feeding the 5,000.

During their time in El Salvador, Rivercliff team members visited an area hospital to hand out sweet bread and coffee, providing the opportunity to meet and pray with families as well as handing out cards made by Rivercliff VBS students. Mission team members also spent time in the El Salvador mall, evangelizing and praying with the people there.
Love Ocala Youth Stay Mission a Success

Youth of St. John Church/Ocala and their counselors and other volunteers put their love into action the week of June 18-23. During that seven-day Love Ocala Youth Stay Mission the St. John contingent partnered with different community organizations in a variety of service projects.

New Minister of Music Serving Our Redeemer/Ocala

After many months of serving as guest organist, Bob Short is the new Minister of Music for Our Redeemer Church/Ocala.

Short began his second career as a church musician after retiring from a career in computer science, revisiting his love of music and the organ with the help of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod's organist workshops. Prior to serving as guest organist for Our Redeemer on a weekly basis, he helped several area churches as a substitute organist.

Short began his musical training on the piano at the age of seven. He was taught music composition, theory and harmonization. He transitioned to the organ in high school and also plays the trombone.

Our Redeemer/Lake City Welcomes New Pastor

Rev. Stephen Fair was ordained and installed as pastor of Our Redeemer Church/Lake City during a June 17 service led by Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton.

Attending were clergy from North Florida and South Georgia congregations.

Fair graduated from Concordia Seminary/St. Louis in spring of 2017 and received his first call to Our Redeemer in April.

The first congregational meeting for Our Redeemer was on May 10, 1964, when First Lutheran/Gainesville Pastor Bob Besalski and a small group met at St. James Episcopal Church. In attendance that day were 41 worshippers. Later that year the fledgling congregation adopted the name “Our Redeemer Lutheran Church” and continued to meet at St. James until the spring of 1965.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund helped the Our Redeemer congregation purchase a church building on U.S. 441 on Alligator Lake. Services were held there from May 16, 1965, until May 3, 1987, when the new sanctuary was completed on Our Redeemer’s 5056 SW State Road 47 campus.

Doug Hudson Installed at Trinity/Albany

Rev. Doug Hudson is the new pastor of Trinity Church/Albany, the congregation he served as vicar for the past year. He was placed as Trinity’s pastor during April call services at Concordia Seminary/St. Louis. Hudson was ordained at his home parish of Bethlehem Church/Jacksonville Beach on June 25 and installed as Trinity’s pastor at his calling parish on June 28. Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton presided at the ordination service; District Fifth Vice President Frank Marshall presided at the installation. Participating in the services were clergy from area congregations.

Groundbreaking for a new sanctuary took place in September of 2008, and this Worship Hall was dedicated on October 25, 2009. The original sanctuary is now the Fellowship Hall.
Hope/Melbourne members on Saturday, June 24, partnered with Thrivent Financial, Family Promise of Brevard, Children’s Home Society and Children’s Hunger Project to assemble more than 300 First Aid Kits for families. The congregation was able to provide the containers for this impactful ministry.

**ESOL Ministry Reaches Community**

Prince of Peace-Príncipe de Paz/Orlando members have for many years offered English as a Second Language Classes (ESOL) to the community. This ESOL ministry does not simply seek to equip people with language skills, it also provides an opportunity for students to experience Christian hospitality, receive genuine care and compassion and connect with other tangible ways the Prince of Peace-Príncipe de Paz ministry reaches out to the community.

Associate Pastor Adolfo Borges and Deaconess Ligia Borges lead the ESOL classes. A number of students have come to the church to worship and a few families have become members. Several students have volunteered in Prince of Peace-Príncipe de Paz community outreach programs.

Over the past year as demand for English language classes has grown, the Prince of Peace-Príncipe de Paz ESOL ministry has increased. Additional classes have been added to the schedule, and classroom space has been configured in the Family Life Center to accommodate the additional students.

This spring, more than 40 students completed the Prince of Peace-Príncipe de Paz ESOL training.

**Liz Borth Joins RLOM Team**

Deaconess Liz Borth was installed as Director of Program Ministries for Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries in a morning service at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer/Sanford on June 11. Redeemer Pastor Ed DeWitt officiated.

RLOM is the governing body for Redeeming Life Maternity Home, which is located walking distance from the church. The Home was founded by DeWitt and his wife Sheryl to reach out with the love of Christ and offer hope and opportunity to single, expectant women in crisis. Pastor DeWitt is President and Chairman of the Board for RLOM; Mrs. DeWitt is the Executive Director.

Most recently Borth served as Deaconess for Trinity Church & School/Orlando. The congregation bid a heartfelt farewell to Borth on June 5, sharing love and appreciation for her service to Trinity and the downtown community.

Borth in 1995 earned her bachelor of arts degree from Lindenwood University/St. Charles, MO, with a major in business administration. In 2005, she was awarded a master of arts degree by Concordia Seminary/St. Louis with a major in systematics and a minor in church history. She received her deaconess diploma with a major in spiritual care from Concordia University Chicago in 2007.

Deaconess Liz Borth with one of the gifts presented by Trinity/Orlando at her farewell reception.

**The Angels of Prince of Peace/Orlando** set a goal and accomplished it by completing and delivering 120 Lapghans for the Veterans of Lake Nona from March through June. Each lapghan had a heart attached and a card which read: “With one strand of yarn this lap robe was created while saying a prayer of gratitude for the bravery and time you spent defending our country and keeping us safe. Thank you for your service.” Thrivent Financial provided financial assistance for the project.

“The feedback from these brave men who served in our military and kept our country safe has made this labor of love even more meaningful,” said Lu Burchfield, Angel coordinator. Other members of the group include Marge Estes, Peg Henderson, Mary Ellen Branneky, Joyce Miller, Sheila Dunn, Lois Stanhope, Kay Ann Richards, Nancy Plotzko, Marlene Browne, Kathy McCarrin and Connie Lechern. The group’s next project is crafting hats for homeless school children in Orange County.

**The Angels of Prince of Peace/Orlando**

LUTHERAN LIFE

Please send your congregation and school news — including your photography — to LutheranLife@asl.com
Caleb Haack was inducted as the Director of Christian Education Intern for Hope Church/Bradenton during worship services July 15 and 16.

Haack graduated in May 2017 from Concordia University Nebraska with majors in DCE and theology and a minor and emphasis in worship arts. His focus at Hope will be to conduct a ministry of educational outreach children’s and youth ministry, as well as to lay a foundation and bolster a strong ongoing outreach mission in the future.”

The Lydia Quilters of Zion Church/Fort Myers took on a new project this past winter to recognize the congregation’s 2017 graduating high school seniors. Four graduating seniors were identified for this recognition: Faith Deterding, Syndey Hummel, Haley Yankovich and Parker Wunderlich.

“The mission of this new project was to celebrate our students, remembering their faith journey at Zion and that the quilt would be a reminder of God’s love and guidance wherever life would take them,” Junghans added.

“Lydia Quilters anticipate with pleasure this ongoing outreach mission in the future.”

Florida-Georgia District Launches Flood Bucket Drive

The Florida-Georgia District launched its Flood Bucket Drive in cooperation with the LCMS Disaster Response program of Synod. The Florida-Georgia District has issued an invitation for congregations to join the third joint effort to prepare Flood Buckets to share mercy with those affected by flooding.

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The Lydia Quilters of Zion Church/Fort Myers celebrated the 15th anniversary of the dedication of the church sanctuary on Sunday, June 25. The worship services included a special children’s message by Senior Pastor Rusty Leavitt. Robert Schwantzke and Dan Najjar shared their memories of the sanctuary construction. A cake reception was part of the celebration.

Members of Beautiful Savior/Sarasota celebrated the 15th anniversary of the dedication of the church sanctuary on Sunday, June 25. The worship services included a special children’s message by Senior Pastor Rusty Leavitt. Robert Schwantzke and Dan Najjar shared their memories of the sanctuary construction. A cake reception was part of the celebration.

REGION 4

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** Jesse Cramer / Our Savior/St. Petersburg

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** David Beckhoff / Holy Trinity/Masaryktown

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** Arnold Piering / Emeritus/New Port Richey

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** Jon Zehnder / St. Michael/Fort Myers

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** Evita Gonzalez / Beautiful Savior

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** Jeff Richards / Hope/Bradenton

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:** Karen LaCroix, a Lydia Quilter, presented each student with their prior chosen quilt. “The mission of this new project was to celebrate our students, remembering their faith journey at Zion and that the quilt would be a reminder of God’s love and guidance wherever life would take them,” Junghans added.

“Lydia Quilters anticipate with pleasure this ongoing outreach mission in the future.”

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Trinity Church & School Debary Beach hosts a SunFun summer camp program. During a recent camp day, the prek-students enjoyed making art with their names. Trinity School serves students from PreK to eighth grade.

Graduation ceremonies were a highlight of the academic year at Peace Lutheran Preschool/Okeechobee. Shown presenting a diploma to one of the graduates is Director Karen Smith. Peace School implements the SCEWD curriculum which is a developmentally appropriate curricula designed for Christian schools. The SCEWD plan — Spiritual/Social, Communication Arts, Wellness and Discovery — all for a variety of resources.

Most recently serving in that same capacity at St. John School/Ocala, Schaffer graduated from Concordia University/Saint Paul, MN in 2001 with a bachelor of arts degree in music education and a minor in Lutheran confessionals. She earned her master education and a minor in Lutheran in 2010.

Our Savior Church/Lake Worth is continuing its yearlong 90th Anniversary celebration entitled “90 years of Grace.”

The celebration launched in March with History Sunday. A special pot luck was enjoyed after the service during which a photo video of past and present ministries was shown.

On June 18, Our Savior members gathered at John Prince Park for a combined picnic with daughter congregations Epiphany/Lake Worth and Salem Haitian/Lake Worth. The celebration included fellowship and Holy Communion as well as choral and band music.

Capping the celebration will be a December 3 worship service and dinner. Plans are under way for a history book, cookbook and trivet memento to be available at that time.

“All former members and friends are invited to praise God with us at our special services,” said Rev. Stephen K. Wipperman, who has served Our Savior since 2005.

After worshipping in various places from the early 1900s, a small group of Lutherans got together and chartered Our Savior Lutheran Church in December of 1927 with Rev. W. Meyer as the first called pastor.

“Through the years, buildings and communicants grew, and with God’s blessing we were able to help daughter congregations grow,” Wipperman said. “We have opened our facilities to the community by supporting a Christian school, Cross Ministries, the Alzheimer’s Association and Alcoholics Anonymous.

“Today we serve our Lord by sharing His love through Family Promise, homeless family ministry; Rebecca’s Garden of Hope, tutoring and mentoring; Soccer Saturdays, devotional athletics; and quilting Promise, homeless family ministry; Rebecca’s Garden of Hope, tutoring and mentoring; Soccer Saturdays, devotional athletics; and quilting programs. During a recent SunFun summer camp, the pre-k students enjoyed making art with their names. Trinity School serves students from PreK to eighth grade.

Rev. Jim Weist and Norma Lan were married at Epiphany Church/Lake Worth on June 10. Weist is Epiphany’s pastor and serves as the Florida-Georgia District’s Gold Coast Circuit Visitor. The new Mrs. Weist is a pre-school teacher at Epiphany. Pictured at the wedding are (l-r) Norma and Jim Weist with Darrell and Linda Stuehrenberg. Weist was Associate Pastor at Gloria Deli Davie during Stuehrenberg’s time there as Senior Pastor.
Holy Cross Installs DCE Intern Spencer Owen

Spencer Owen was installed as Director of Christian Education Intern at Holy Cross Church & School on July 16. He is a student at Concordia University Nebraska and a member of the Iowa East District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Holy Cross is one of the 32 LCMS congregations to be assigned a DCE intern for the upcoming year. Owen, who is from Arcadia, IA, will be working under the leadership of Holy Cross Pastor Dennis Bartels.

On Pentecost Sunday, Holy Cross members surprised their pastor. Following that day’s worship, Elder Sam Lundington made an announcement. As he spoke, a picture of a bright red, 2010 Ford F-150 truck appeared on the sanctuary screen. The keys to that vehicle were presented to Bartels, who was overcome with emotion and at a complete loss for words.

The congregation had started a truck fund to replace the truck that Bartels was driving. That truck, a 2003 Ford F-150 with 350,000 miles on it, had been well used for many moves of families and their furniture, building materials for the church and school and numerous trips to the dump over the years.

“The new truck has continued that same ministry, and in its first month of operation more than 25 loads of various materials for a variety of ministries has been accomplished,” Bartels reported.

The gift presentation coincided with Bartels’ anniversary for 35 years in the Ministry and serving 30 years at Holy Cross.

Grace/Arcadia Welcomes Andrew Arias

Anthony Andrew Arias was ordained into the ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and subsequently installed as Pastor of Grace Church/Arcadia on July 9.

The former blueberry farmer is a graduate of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program of Concordia Seminary/St. Louis. Established in 2007, this four-year distance education program supplemented by periodic short-term residential courses prepares men for pastoral ministry in the LCMS.

“It has been my joy to serve as Pastor Arias’ primary mentor through the first half of this training,” said Rev. Richard Norris, pastor of Trinity/Lake Placid and Heartland Circuit Visitor. “He still has two more years of rigorous classes.”

Martin Luther Explains The Significance Of His “Luther’s Rose” Logo

The Luther Seal, or Luther Rose, a widely recognized symbol for Lutheranism, was designed for Martin Luther at the behest of John Frederick of Saxony in 1530 while Luther was staying at the Coburg Fortress during the Diet of Augsburg. Luther interpreted his seal in a July 8, 1530, letter to Lazarus Spengler:

Grace and peace from the Lord. As you desire to know whether my painted seal, which you sent to me, has hit the mark, I shall answer most amibly and tell you my original thoughts and reason about why my seal is a symbol of my theology. The first should be a black cross in a heart, which retains its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. “For one who believes from the heart will be justified” (Romans 10:10). Although it is indeed a black cross, which mortifies and which should also cause pain, it leaves the heart in its natural color. It does not corrupt nature, that is, it does not kill but keeps alive. “The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17) but by faith in the crucified. Such a heart should stand in the middle of a white rose, to show that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace. In other words, it places the believer into a white, joyous rose, for this faith does not give peace and joy like the world gives (John 14:27). That is why the rose should be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and the angels (cf. Matthew 28:3; John 20:12). Such a rose should stand in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in spirit and faith is a beginning of the heavenly future joy, which begins already, but is grasped in hope, not yet revealed. And around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that such blessedness in Heaven lasts forever and has no end. Such blessedness is exquisite, beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable, most precious and best metal. This is my compendium theologiae (summary of theology). I have wanted to show it to you in good friendship, hoping for your appreciation. May Christ, our beloved Lord, be with your spirit until the life hereafter. Amen.

At left — a colorized rendition of Luther’s seal began appearing as printers began to include color images in Luther’s works. Each one was laboriously painted by hand.

At right — Current rendition of Luther’s Seal in a stained glass window.

Participating in the installation service were (back, l-r) Rev. John Hirst; Rev. Scott Mclean; Rev. Benjamin Scheeder; Rev. Richard Norris; Rev. Mark Stein; Rev. David Nabinger; (front, l-r) Florida-Georgia District President Greg Walton; Rev. Anthony Arias; Rev. Robert Muselius.
Florida-Georgia District churches are hosting vibrant Vacation Bible School programs this summer, with popular themes including Mighty Fortress and Maker Fun Factory. Crafts, skits, fun and fellowship are elements of the programs, which attract participants from inside the church as well as the community. Shown here are some of the VBS programs in action in the District.

VBS Programs Reach Thousands in Florida and Georgia

Ascension/Casselberry, FL

Amigos Center/Bonita Springs, FL

Concordia/Kendall, FL

Hope/Melbourne, FL

Great/Jacksonville, FL

Lyphland/Alpharetta, FL

Living Hope/Kennesaw, GA

St. John/Ocala, FL

Mission: Haiti/Haiti

Our Redeemer/Augusta, FL

Rivercliff/Atlanta, GA

Ascension/Casselberry, FL

Hope/Melbourne, FL

Concordia/Kendall, FL

Living Hope/Kennesaw, GA

St. John/Ocala, FL

Mission: Haiti/Haiti

Our Redeemer/Augusta, FL

St. Paul/Boca Raton, FL

Messiah/Valdosta, GA

Living Faith/Cumming, GA

Our Savior/St. Petersburg, FL

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✓ BE EMPOWERED with others.
✓ BE ENGAGED in the world.

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Pastors, educators, DCEs, music ministers and lay members will come together for three days to become better equipped to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with their world. Sessions for professional church workers as well as workshops to train volunteers in congregational tasks. Breakout sessions will be featured for all leadership positions — offering practical, strategic and implementable ideas that will work in almost all congregations. Fellowship, worship and personal time will all be on the agenda.

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