

# LUTHERAN LIFE

The Newsmagazine of the  
Florida-Georgia District of the  
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod  
March-April 2019



*Let Jesus Be Seen  
In Twenty-Nineteen*



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 e-mails. 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@flgadistrict.org](mailto:lutheranlife@flgadistrict.org)

# LUTHERAN LIFE

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Cover photo shot on location near Camp Lutherock on the south slope of Sugar Mountain, Boone, NC at the St Paul Lutheran School/Boca Raton 7th Grade Fall 2018 Retreat. Photo credit: Jeff Potter, Assistant Principal, St. Paul Lutheran Church & School Boca Raton, Florida



# floridageorgia DISTRICT CAPSULES



by Greg Walton District President

## Calling Congregations

Peace/Decatur, GA .....Sole Pastor  
King of Kings/Jasper, GA .....Sole Pastor  
Faith/Fort Lauderdale, FL.....Sole Pastor  
Faith/Hialeah, FL..... Senior Pastor  
Bethlehem/Jax Beach, FL .....Assoc. Pastor  
Epiphany/Lake Worth, FL ..... Senior Pastor  
Oak Road/Lilburn, GA .....Sole Pastor  
St Paul/Weston, FL..... Senior Pastor  
Epiphany/Tallahassee, FL..... Senior Pastor  
Woodlands/Montverde, FL ... Senior Pastor

## Calls Issued

Trinity/Lake Placid, FL called  
Marthinus "James" Olckers as SMP Pastor  
Forest/Silver Springs, FL called  
Larry Dexheimer as SMP Pastor

## Calls Accepted

Marthinus "James" Olckers accepted  
Asst. SMP Pastor at Trinity/Lake Placid, FL  
Larry Dexheimer accepted  
SMP Pastor at Forest/Silver Springs, FL

## Transferred OUT to Other Districts

Rev. Kenneth Fuehler to Northwest  
Ms. Annalisa Fitzsimons to SELC  
Rev. Rodney Zwonitzer to English

## Transferred IN from Other Districts

Mr. Joe Battle from Missouri  
Rev. Paul Wiegert from Mid-South  
Rev. Patrick Runk from New England  
Rev. Allen Deinert from Pacific Southwest  
Rev. Bradley Heinecke from Wyoming

## Ordained/Commissioned Minister

### Initial Placements

Mr. Kreighton Rahn/Concordia Ann Arbor  
to St. John/Ocala as a teacher

### Ordained/Commissioned Minister Installations

Rev. Brian Albrecht, Pastor  
Trinity/Port Charlotte, FL  
Ms. Carol Schroeder, Deaconess  
Trinity/Athens, GA

### Status Change in the District

Rev. Kwant (Daniel) Jeon (Chun)  
from Candidate to Emeritus  
Rev. Juan Martin  
from Active to Emeritus  
Rev. Paul Droutz  
from Candidate to Emeritus

### Called to Glory

Mrs. Joan Trinklein  
January 3, 2019

### Reinstated to the Roster

Mrs. Monika Walcheski, Commissioned

### Removed from the Roster

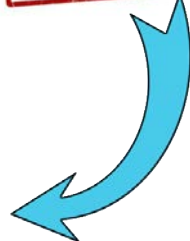
Ms. Cherie Pintsch, Commissioned

## Did you know?

The Florida-Georgia District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has:

- ▲ 184 member congregations
- ▲ 50,130 baptized members
- ▲ 15 new congregation starts
- ▲ 41,264 communicant members
- ▲ 60 preschools
- ▲ 30 elementary schools
- ▲ 2 high schools
- ▲ 1 awesome, bi-monthly news magazine\*

\*are you sending your congregation and school news and photos to [LutheranLife@aol.com](mailto:LutheranLife@aol.com)? We want your news!





# Annual Veterans of the Cross Retreat Held in Leesburg, FL

Retired church workers, laypersons and spouses gathered in March to celebrate “bearing fruit on the edge,” a theme chosen from John 15: 12-17.

Read about the Behnken Award recipients on pages 6-8 of this issue. A few photos below show (from left) pastors Bob Besalski, Richard Pieplow, Greg Seltz, Ken

Schamens and Earl Steffans during some of the workshops and presentations.



Concorida/Seward alumni gathered for a photo on stage.



Concorida Seminary/Saint Louis alumni gathered for a photo on stage.



“Luke” visited the VPOC Retreat to greet participants. Lucky is one of the comfort dogs in the District.

## DISTRICT CALENDAR

Hearts for Jesus Project  
In 2019 we will be supporting the  
Lutheran Special  
Education Ministries

Florida Georgia District 70th Anniversary  
Celebrating 70 years 1948-2018

### Regional Pastor Conferences

- Region 1 April 28-29
- Region 2 May 7-8
- Region 3 May 4
- Region 4 May 7
- Region 5 May 6-7

Locations In Each of the Five Regions

### 2019 National Lutheran Youth Gathering

July 11-15, 2019  
Minneapolis Convention Center  
Minneapolis, MN

### 2019 LCMS National Convention

July 20-25, 2019  
Tampa Convention Center  
Tampa, FL

District Pastors Conference  
September 23-25, 2019  
Hilton Daytona Beach, FL

District Educators Conference  
September 25-27, 2019  
Hilton Daytona Beach, FL

Middle School Youth Gathering  
November 1-3, 2019  
Lake Yale Conference Center  
Leesburg, FL



One of my favorite accounts of the Resurrection of Jesus comes from the Gospel of John. It shows us such a rich human reaction to the good news. Mary comes to the tomb early in the morning with an expectation of caring for the dead body of Jesus, whom she had seen crucified.

*things to her.” — John 20:11–18.*

Sorrow turns into joy in an instant as Mary, overwhelmed with grief at her loss, sees Jesus, but didn't recognize Him until He spoke her name. In that moment, Mary's hope was restored and she was filled with an exuberant elation. However, as tempting as it was

blessed our nation in so many ways, but so much of this has been taken for granted. Amazingly, many still have a passion when it comes to sending and supporting missionaries overseas. Yet, when it comes to reaching people in our own neighborhoods and communities it often seems we have been lulled into a false sense of security that someone else will take on that responsibility.

Some relegate the task to “professionals” who are trained and called to reach out in Jesus' name. Others have simply failed to recognize the privilege and challenge of Jesus to share His love with a dying world.

We have a stated vision for the Florida-Georgia District to *equip, empower and engage* people so they are able to *connect people to Jesus*.

The primary target for this is our laity. In fact, this Spring I will have the privilege of attending the Call Services at our two seminaries. The combined number of available candidates this year is 80. *There were well over double that number*

*of congregations who requested a candidate.*

At present there are more than 400 vacancies across the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We know that fewer folks show up on a Sunday morning, and when they do, the majority who come do so as a result of being invited by other lay members of the congregation. These are often men and women who have cultivated a relationship with neighbors or friends and simply invited them. I have always been fascinated by the fact that it was a lay woman, Mary, who brought the good news of the resurrection to the disciples. What a great pattern for everyone impacted by the resurrection of Jesus to follow.

Believers are called to connect people to Jesus, but often it seems our love for the things of the world overshadows our love for Jesus. It is far too easy to get distracted or neglect the call of Jesus in favor of the temptations in the world. Have we so lost the sense of wonder, mystery and excitement in our faith that we no longer hear the voice of Jesus?

It changed Mary's world.



## Whom Do YOU Seek?

John writes, “*But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.”*

*Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”*

*Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord” — and that he had said these*

to remain in that moment — Jesus and me — He immediately commissions her to go and tell the disciples. This so characteristic of Jesus. In the Upper Room, later that evening, He appears in a locked room among the disciples, huddled together in fear, and He breaths the Holy Spirit on them and says, “As the Father has sent Me, so I send you!” We have a sending Savior. That didn't just happen after the Resurrection. In the calling of the disciples Jesus made it clear that they would be fishers of men. He sent out the 72 to proclaim the good news. In the same way, as believers in Jesus, He sends each of us out to connect people to Him.

This is the role of the Church in the world. This has always been the role of the Church. In fact, in the centuries leading up to our current time there seemed to be a more or less clear understanding that disciples make disciples. In fact, at one time the United States was a leader in sending missionaries to other parts of the world. Today the United States is the third largest mission field in the world behind China and India. God has

She was so eager to hear the risen Lord, and she would have done anything that Jesus asked her to do. Often we approach Easter Sunday with great fanfare and celebration, but it quickly returns to a more “normal” pattern. Perhaps you remember the surge of worshippers the Sunday following the 9/11 event in New York. Within a few weeks, when things had calmed down across the nation, worship attendance returned to the pre-9/11 levels. By the way, did you know that the Sunday following Easter is called “low” Sunday, because so few worship on the following week? How fickle we can be when it comes to the life of faith.

In the text from John 20, consider the question that Jesus asked Mary as they stood in the garden. It’s an extremely important and personal question. Jesus said, “Whom are you seeking?” Mary didn’t hesitate for a second. She wanted to see Jesus! Her purpose and intent was clear and even though she thought He was dead, she had a deep and abiding

love and respect for Him. She wanted to serve Him even then. Imagine her exhilaration when she actually found the One she was seeking!

Someone has said that you will find what you seek. The problem that many experience is that they are seeking the wrong things. Jesus said, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33. Everyone is seeking something. What are you seeking in this season of life? More importantly, whom are you seeking? Jesus calls us as His followers to seek Him. More than that, there are people all around us who are seeking, and God may just use you to connect them to Jesus!

This is why we are working with Five Two to start new missions and ministries. I am convinced that the more we find ways to build into our communities the more opportunities we will have to answer the question of whom people are seeking. It begins with a firm conviction in our own hearts that Jesus has claimed us and

called us to be His servants.

During this season of Lent and Easter, may our hearts and minds reflect again on the price Jesus paid for our life and salvation. Knowing what we know from His Word, whom do you seek? May it always be Jesus, and may that inspire our personal mission and ministry in life to connect people to Him. **Let Jesus be seen in 2019** — beginning in your life!



*Let Jesus Be Seen  
In Twenty Nineteen!*  
**GREG**





## District's Veterans of the Cross Bestows

The annual Veterans of the Cross retreat for the Florida-Georgia District was held March 4th through 6th, under the theme "Bearing Fruit on the Edge" (John 15:12-17).

The following brief biographies profile the honorees by category.



### Jane Anderson, Teacher

— Rev. Dr. Dennis Glick, Presenter  
Hymn: *Immortal Invisible God Only Wise*

Jane was born in Collingswood, New Jersey. Her teenage years were spent during the days of World War II, at which time everyone was required to have a job somehow related to the war efforts. She worked as a comptometrist the summer before entering college working for a company that made boxes to ship items overseas to sailors. Jane attended Trenton College where she graduated in 1946 and began teaching music at the age of 19.

She married her high school sweetheart, Andy, in 1947 after they knew they would make at least \$47 a week, which is what they figured they would need to live on. This marriage was blessed with three sons, Blair, Paul and Mark and four grandchildren. The Andersons moved to Boca Raton, Florida in 1970.

Andy passed away in 1993 after a battle with cancer and more recently her son, Blair passed away after struggling with epilepsy for many years.

When Jane arrived in Boca Raton, St. Paul Lutheran School only had pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes. Once the students completed kindergarten, they were bused to Trinity Lutheran School in Delray Beach for their elementary education. In 1971 Jane started the first 1st grade and St. Paul Lutheran School has been sharing the love of Jesus with students from Pre-K to the 8th grade every day since.

In 1989, Jane retired from full-time teaching after 46 years but continues to be an educational reading consultant. She also taught Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, confirmation classes, several choirs including adult and youth handbells.



### Maggie Bowles, Layperson

— Rev. John Frerking, Presenter  
Hymn: *Here I Am, Lord*

As we honor Maggie, we also recognize her faithful partner in marriage and ministry, Gary. Maggie was born in Mayville, North Dakota, a Scandinavian farming community in the Red River Valley. Her family moved shortly thereafter to Big Fork, Montana, along the shores of Flathead Lake.

Maggie attended Pacific Lutheran University and the University of Montana, graduating with a double major in Sociology and Political Science. Waiting to enter Law School she traveled to Europe, only to fall in love with both skiing the Alps, and her future husband, Gary, who was stationed in Munich.

When Gary was called to Vietnam, Maggie headed to Bangkok, working for the Stanford Research Institute on a State Department Contract. During Gary's second tour in Vietnam, Maggie stayed in Washington, D.C. working for an economic research firm while their son, Anthony, was under doctor's care at Walter Reed. After Gary's retirement from military service, her career included seven years with The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation as Assistant Corporate Secretary.

After moving to Florida, she spent thirteen years in county government in Naples, Florida. She was a member of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Florida State Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Children and Families.

Maggie grew up in a Lutheran home dedicated to ministry and so received daily lessons in how to live out one's faith. Those lessons bore rich fruit when Pastor Ted Klees at Marco Island Lutheran Church in 1987, wrote a phone number on Maggie's hand and said: "call these Catholic Sisters at the Mission in Immokalee; they need help."

Maggie then began a career serving Christ in multiple ways through Florida Gulf Coast Campus Ministry; Lutheran Services America Conference Planning Committee;

as a member of Peace Lutheran, Naples; founding member of EXEL Foundation, raising educational scholarships for families in southwest Florida; member Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors and Ron Biel's TCN team; Florida-Georgia District Human Care Advisory Committee; member Trinity Lutheran, Orlando School Board and Leadership Council; conference speaker and many committees and task forces. She played a key role as Board member in the restructuring of Lutheran Services Florida during a financially stressful time. Her calm demeanor and keen insight helped to lay the foundation for the healthy organization it is today. "Here I am, Lord... I will go where You lead me."



### Kenneth Hennings, Church At Large

— Rev. Dr. Greg Walton, Presenter  
Hymn: *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

Ken is a son of the Florida-Georgia District. He was born in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in 1947. He was baptized at Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Lauderdale by the Reverend Dallas Gibson in July of 1947. He has lived in Belle Glade, Immokalee, and Fort Myers, Florida, where he graduated from high school in 1965.

Ken graduated from St. John's Lutheran College in Winfield, Kansas, in 1967 and Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1969. Reverend Hennings' Master of Divinity Degree was earned from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1973. He has distinguished himself as part of an illustrious group of seminarians during a very rocky time in the LCMS.

Pastor Hennings' first Call was to a dual congregation – Trinity Lutheran Church, Uvalde, Texas, and St. Paul Lutheran Church, La Pryor, Texas. In 1978 he accepted the Call to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fort Worth, Texas, as the Associate Pastor. In 1979 St. Paul Lutheran Church called him as their Senior Pastor, where he served 12 years.

In 1991, he accepted the Call to serve

# Lloyd Behnken Medallions on Six Honorees

as the Executive Director of the Board of Mission Administration of the Texas District of the LCMS in Austin. He served as Mission and Ministry Coordinator of the Texas District and worked with the Board of Mission Administration in directing the District's mission outreach. As Mission Executive of the Texas District, Reverend Hennings implemented a plan to bring all financially assisted congregations off District support. At the same time, he began a program known as "Returnable Dollars," where mission starts repay the dollars given to them during a 20-year period with no interest charged — a plan providing an annual income stream of approximately \$175,000. The Texas District is a leader in the new congregation starts and the Florida-Georgia District adopted this model in 2015 with Ken's help.

The Texas District elected him four times to serve as president. From 2015 to 2018 he was Chairman of the Council of Presidents of the LCMS. When he retired this past summer, it marked more than 45 years of service in ministry.

Ken Hennings has held several leadership positions beyond the Texas District, including serving as Chairman of the North American Mission Executives of the LCMS, Chairman of Floor Committee #1 (Missions) for the 2010 LCMS Convention, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Lutheran Outdoors Ministry of Texas, Chapter Advisor to Lutherans for Life, Facilitator of the LCMS New Church Development Task Force, Zone Counselor for Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), and as a member of the LCMS Harmony Task Force.



## Rev. Bruce Lieske, Ordained

— Rev. David Ludwig, Presenter  
Hymn: *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*

Bruce Lieske's father, Hal, was a Civil Engineer who spent several years working for the federal government. For many years the family lived in the Washington D.C. area. That's where Bruce attended high school as did Barbara. The two were,

in Bruce's words, a "real item."

Bruce was born on March 20th, 1935, in LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

In his childhood and youth Bruce was a voracious reader, an activity which influenced him in the disciplines of science and technology and led to his becoming a polar meteorologist. After graduating from Pennsylvania State University in 1956, he spent a year in Antarctica as a member of a government team.

During the next few years Bruce continued his profession while serving in the Air Force as an aviation weather forecaster. In 1959 he married his wife, Ann, and the two of them together with their first two children spent two years living in half a Quonset hut in Point Barrow, Alaska.

In 1964, while Bruce and Ann and the family (now three children strong, Stephen, Becky, Daniel) were worshipping in a small Lutheran Church he felt a strong "call." Afterwards he wrote, "Scientific research was important. I loved polar meteorology and writing the reports, but the possibility that people might know the goodness and love of God in Jesus, the Messiah, was far more important."

Bruce, Ann and the children loaded up their VW Microbus and drove over the mountains and through the prairies to Concordia Seminary, Springfield, IL. After graduating in 1969, Bruce served a deferred vicarage in Apopka, FL.

In the ensuing years the Spirit led Bruce and Ann to pastor three congregations — six years at St. Lukes in Philadelphia, PA, where the congregation was located in a community populated with many Jewish people; eight years at Our Savior in N. Fondulac, WI, where Bruce was founding pastor; and 10 years at Our Redeemer, in North New Jersey; once again, he was the founding pastor.

In 1993, Bruce who for many years had developed a passion for sharing the Gospel message that Yeshua is the Messiah for all people — including the Jews, he was called by the Florida-Georgia District to head up the ministry proclaiming Jesus as Messiah to persons of Jewish heritage. This came to be known as the Burning Bush ministry. It was near and dear to Bruce's heart. During all these years, his partner in marriage, Ann, stood by his side, serving the Lord with him, even in the latter years when she was fighting the cancer battle.

On September 17, 2009, after 50 years of marriage to Bruce, the Lord called her to the heavenly home which he had prepared for her. Bruce being Bruce, as he mourned

he continued to carry on his ministry to lift high the cross of Yeshua.

Just before Ann died Bruce attended a high school reunion and reacquainted with Barbara, whom he had not seen for 40 years. After high school Barbara attended the University of Maryland, served on the faculty, and then moved to Austria, where she headed the Art Department at the University for many years.

Nothing really happened at that reunion but sometime after Ann's spirit went to her heavenly home Bruce's mind returned to Barbara. It took some doing, but finally he persuaded her to leave Austria and return to the states. They were married at a small Lutheran Church in southern California in 2011, and have been a wonderful ministry team ever since.

Bruce Lieske, has the gift of Evangelism. I don't know of another LCMS pastor who went to Daytona Beach during spring break, walked up and down handing out tracts and engaging the students in Gospel-centered conversation. In the evening he and his teams would work the night clubs. He did this for three years. For 10 years Bruce and his faithful team at Prince of Peace in Orlando spent Monday evenings going out into the neighborhoods making 'cold calls.'

He currently heads up the District Task Force for Muslim Evangelism. He and Barbara mentor a young Palestinian Christian couple and the four of them stand ready to conduct Cross and Crescent workshops around the District.



## Lois Walker, Teacher

— Rev. Charles Reich, Presenter  
Hymn: *My Life Flows On In Endless Song*

Born as a twin daughter of a pastor in Orlando, Oklahoma, Lois Haefker Walker learned the life of a servant of Christ from her parents and absorbed that life into her own spirit. Lois started playing organ for hymn singing and church services at age 12 and did it regularly throughout High School. She liked school and loved to learn. Lois always thought of herself as becoming





# 8 District's Veterans of the Cross Retreats in Leesburg, FL

a Lutheran School teacher, as did her sisters.

Lois attended Concordia Teachers College in Seward, Nebraska, graduating with the class of 1967 with a B.S in Education, emphasis in history and music.

Lois student taught at St. John's Lutheran in Chester, Illinois and they called her back to teach 4th Grade and help out with music and youth. The head pastor of St. John did ministry at the State Penitentiary located in Chester. Lois accompanied the pastor and played the piano for the prisoners. While she was there she took the opportunity to sit down in the electric chair.

In October of 1967, while at St. John's, she met a man named Roger Walker — a young principal in Murphysboro about 30 miles away. They were engaged the following March and married August 17, 1968. Their first child, Todd was born in 1970. Lois helped with the care of other children for the next several years — her own little day care service. Jennifer was born in 1972 and Ellen in 1975. Todd lives in Winter Haven, Jennifer lives in Scottsdale, Arizona and Ellen lives in Phoenix, Arizona. Their three children are married and have blessed them with seven wonderful grandchildren.

In 1976, Lois and the kids moved with Roger to Memphis, Tennessee. At Holy Cross Lutheran School Lois taught 5th Grade for five years during a very tense time in the life of our country, especially civil life in the Mid-South. She remembers how quiet the class became when studying history and Lois didn't skip over the part in the book that stated the South actually lost the Civil War.

In 1981, the family moved to South Florida where the kids became teenagers. During the school year, Lois took over the 4th Grade class of St. Mark's Lutheran School in Hollywood and also taught music, choir and Sunday School in the church while being very active with AAL.

From 1990 to 2012, Lois served at Grace Lutheran Church and School in Winter Haven, FL. She began as the 3rd Grade teacher and later served as the long time 4th Grade teacher retiring from full-time teaching in 2012. She played music for school chapels, assisted the church music program and accompanied the children's choirs.

In retirement, Lois has taken up the role of music director every Sunday for a neighboring Lutheran church while continuing to worship in her home congregation, Grace/Winter Haven, on Saturday nights.

Lois is a passionate contributor in Bible class. She enthusiastically and actively gets into the lesson to discover the rich teachings of Jesus and their multifaceted significance for our lives. Lois considers it a great blessing to have been a Lutheran School teacher and she always enjoyed what she did. She loved to learn and she has inspired many to learn with her gift of teaching. She especially relished in those ah-hah moments of her students. She liked all the subjects and unlike some others teachers, she didn't skip stuff in the books, but she taught it all. If she didn't know something, she would learn it in order to be able to teach it. Lois especially enjoyed teaching religion classes and history. Some of her students were so excited about what they learned that they enthusiastically shared it with their parents. God gave Lois the reward of getting to hear these words from several parents over the years.

Lois also considers it a great joy that her two daughters also became Lutheran School teachers. She admits that it is a true blessing that her children actively participate in church ministry to this day, as do her grandchildren.

## Mr. Roger Walker, Teacher

— Rev. Charles Reich, Presenter  
Hymn: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

Roger Leslie Walker was born in Chicago, IL in 1943. His father was from London and the Church of England, which was Episcopalian. Roger's mother was from Scotland and the Church of Scotland, which was Presbyterian. Roger's older brother was eligible for Kindergarten and since American Public schools didn't teach religion and these parents wanted their children to learn religion, they enrolled him in St Luke's Lutheran School. Later Roger was also enrolled there — during a time when Lutheran schools rarely accepted non-Lutheran students. From that beginning, Roger's parents got quite involved in the Lutheran church.

Many of Roger's teachers had impact on him and while attending Lutheran High North (Chicago) he was encouraged to attend college at Concordia/River Forest, IL. He is part of the class of 1965 graduating with a B.A. in Education with a focus on history and religion. He completed his Master's from River Forest in Administration and Supervision and did his student teaching at St Paul Lutheran Church and School, Mt. Prospect, Illinois. Roger accepted a Divine Call to serve as Principal of Immanuel Lutheran School in

Murphysboro, IL.

Roger was introduced to Lois at a Teacher's Conference and they did attend a common funeral together but the real acquaintance began at a card party. The wife of Lois' principal set it up for a special invitation to be issued to a neighboring young principal named Roger Walker to be invited to their Friday night card party. Roger soon became a regular.

After Roger and Lois married and started their family he received and accepted a call to Holy Cross Lutheran School in Memphis, Tennessee where he served from 1976 to 1981.

In 1981, Roger received a call to St. Mark's Lutheran Church and School in Hollywood, Florida. His mother and father grew to love visiting Roger and his family there, especially in the Winter. The ministry of 300 students was blessed under Roger's leadership and he helped lead the school to become accredited.

Later a Call came from Grace/Winter Haven, Florida. The first call had come right before school started in 1987, but God's Call from Winter Haven came in 1991. Roger served Grace with faithfulness, humbleness and excellence. His servant motto has been, do your best the best you can to get the job done. Don't sell things short and spend your time doing what you really need to do.

Beginning retirement in 2009, Roger has not stopped serving. He enjoys hearing from former students — many who are retiring themselves.

Roger has held many district positions during the years — both Educator's and Administrator's Conference Planning Committees, Stewardship Advisory Council and the Accreditation Committee from 1989 to the present.

With the National Lutheran Schools Association he has made 62 site visits for accreditation of Lutheran Schools and served on the Lutheran Educators Association Board and LEA Administrators Conference Planning Committee and Convocation Planning Committee.

He served 13 years on the District Board of Directors and currently serves as Chair of the Mission Advisory Council. In 2012 the Florida-Georgia District of the LCMS award Roger the Christus Doulos, Servant of Christ, Award.

Roger continues to serve the community in his retirement and really enjoys helping out as the Assistant Coach of the Winter Haven High School Golf team — even after his grandson's graduation.





# Schuschke Settles in New Call in the Land of Luther

by Lois Ford

The Rev. Gary Schuschke, formerly of St. Luke's in Oviedo, now serves the Lord through the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a missionary in Frankfurt, Germany. He is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, an English-speaking congregation in Frankfurt. Frankfurt, a central German city on



*Missionary Pastor Joseph Asher, Kaiserslautern Germany, Gary Schuschke and Vicar Nathaniel Jensen from Kaiserslautern in front of the Old Nicholas Church in historic Roemer*

the river Main, is a major financial hub that's home to the European Central Bank. It's the birthplace of famed writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose former home is now the Goethe House Museum. Like much of the city, it was damaged during World War II and later rebuilt.

Trinity began ministering to military families serving at the military bases around the area. Most of the United States bases have closed, yet God brought people from all around the world to this very international city. Every Sunday, Trinity welcomes English-speaking people from all over the world to hear the Gospel. More than one-third of Frankfurt's population of 2.3 million people have foreign passports. This comes out to some 700,000 people who are living and raising their families far from

the support of home. The members of Trinity are dedicated to making a difference in their lives in the name of Jesus Christ.

Schuschke arrived in Germany on January 11 and was pleased to begin serving Trinity right away as he participated in the farewell and sending service for Pastor Rex and Linda Rinne, who had been serving Trinity since October. January 20 he had the privilege of leading worship and preaching at Trinity for the first time as their Pastor. He says that Trinity's mission is very much like Pentecost. These worshippers can hear the Gospel and then take it home with them one day, literally to the four corners of the earth. The Trinity congregation is currently made up of members from 16 different countries. Pastor Schuschke is looking forward to helping them to grow so that they will be equipped to share the Gospel when they return to their home countries.

Pastor Schuschke is looking forward to getting to know the members of his new congregation and the best way to serve them as their pastor. He is also looking forward to his first Lenten season as he prepares a sermon series from Exodus entitled "Let My People Go!" — and to work with the volunteers that are helping the youth at Trinity to prepare to attend the National Lutheran Youth Gathering this coming summer.

Many people may remember that Gary Schuschke became known for his portrayal of Martin Luther in the first person and may have seen his portrayal of Luther while preparing for his call to Frankfurt.

To begin to get to know Frankfurt better, Schuschke took a walking tour of Altstadt (Old City). His guide knew a great deal of the rich history of this

city which has been home to such people as Johann Goethe and Anne Frank. Imagine Pastor Schuschke's

surprise when the guide showed him a plaque on an old house near the Main River. It turns out that Martin Luther actually stayed in Frankfurt in early April 1521 on his way to the Diet of Worms. Schuschke is curious to learn more of the circumstances of Luther's time in Frankfurt.

Pastor Schuschke thanks everyone who supported him as he prepared for this mission call. Please continue to pray for Schuschke as he transitions into his new ministry and home. Pray that God will lead him in the way that He would have him go to best serve in his new unique congregation.

You can contact Pastor Schuschke at [gary.schuschke@lcms.org](mailto:gary.schuschke@lcms.org) and ask to receive his newsletter for updates. To support the LCMS through the work of Pastor Gary Schuschke, you may send a tax-deductible gift to: The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod PO Box 66861 St Louis, Mo 63166-861. Make checks payable to the LCMS. Mark checks "Support of Pastor Gary Schuschke."

*Lois Ford is the 4th grade Religion and Language Arts teacher at Faith Lutheran Church & School in Eustis, FL. She is also a member of the Florida-Georgia District Board of Directors.*



*Gary Schuschke portraying Martin Luther*



# National Lutheran Schools Week Celebrated



**St. Luke's/Oviedo, FL** celebrated NLSW by launching a *Team Spirit Day* with jeans — where students could pay \$2 to wear their jeans to school. The money raised went toward the church group from Avoyelles House of Mercy in Marksville, Louisiana. This was the United Pentecostal Church family on their way to Disney World when they were involved in a deadly crash on I-75 in Gainesville, FL. A total of nine children and three women — including

the pastor's wife — were in the van and five children ages 9-14 lost their lives. Several other members suffered major injuries. The money collected for jeans day was donated to an account where 100% of the monies will go to the families involved in this tragedy. St. Luke's raised \$679 towards this endeavor.

Later that day St. Luke's kicked off National Lutheran Schools Week. The photos show Wacky Tacky Day, and a

Fun Color Run.

They also raised \$3,258.64 for Anchor Lutheran School in Anchorage, Alaska using their Penny Wars funds. Anchor suffered significant damage in the earthquake late last year. They are currently functioning on a backup boiler pump for their heat and can't afford a new one. St. Luke's contribution went toward the purchase a new boiler to provide heat for the school.



**Trinity/Athens, GA** students lift their Bibles high on "Bring your Bible to School Day"



**St. Paul/Weston, FL** Child Enrichment Center formed a cross to celebrate Lutheran Schools Week



# Throughout Florida-Georgia District



The Student Council at **Family of Christ Christian School/Tampa, FL** worked with teachers to plan a range of activities to celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week. Themes for the week were Real Grace, Real Places, Real Praise, Real Time, Real People and Real Family. Students below are shown during a bungee jump and wearing some of their favorite tee-shirts during the spirited week.



Loving Arms Preschool of **Christ The King/Largo, FL** students also made a cross for their NLSW photo.



**St. Paul/Boca Raton, FL** enjoyed morning chapel, conducted by Ms. Rebecca Schaffer, in their pajamas on "Pajama Day."



## LWML Gears Up For Fall District Retreat, Service Project

Are you excited about the LWML Convention? I can't wait. From the opening worship service, where we all come together to share Holy Communion, to the very end, it's exciting to see so many women (and men, too!) in purple, and have the chance to talk to them about what they're doing in the Lord's service.

If you haven't volunteered to work

go. Get your volunteer application in!

After the convention, we all deserve a break, and we've got the perfect break for you at the retreat. Friday, September 27 — Sunday, September 29, we'll have a chance to rest and regroup at Lake Yale

Baptist Conference Center.

Deb Burma will be the Bible study leader on

the topic, "A Woman of Joy," and we'll have time for prayer, devotions, and just relaxing.

Welcome to our

new Webmaster, Stephanie Edgar, and Membership Resources Chair, Karen McCarthy. We are fortunate to have many talented women in our district.

If your talents include editing, Word, and Publisher, we still need an editor for the *Evangel*. Contact me by email: [patpowell912@yahoo.com](mailto:patpowell912@yahoo.com) if you would be willing to help in this important area.

Do you enjoy sewing or embellishing clothing? The LWML Florida-Georgia

District Retreat, scheduled this coming September offers you a hands-on service opportunity to touch young girls and women in tropical countries served by our LCMS International Missionaries.

We're looking for women who like to sew or would enjoy decorating pillow case

dresses (or both!), you can help with the project by bringing one or more of the following to the convention:

- ▲ Sewing machines
- ▲ Pillowcases
- ▲ 12" of ½" wide elastic
- ▲ Double fold seam binding
- ▲ Safety pins
- ▲ Decorative trim
- ▲ Fabric glue
- ▲ Iron
- ▲ Scissors
- ▲ Thread

You'll love the service project planned for Retreat!



### FUTURE & HOPE

by Pat Powell  
LWML District Vice President  
for Communications

yet, and made your plans to go, don't wait! We still need workers. More workers just makes each job easier! None of the jobs is a hard job to do, and assignments are made according to what you are willing and able to do. You may be a greeter, or hand out worship folders before a service, or just stand at a busy corner in the convention center and tell people where to

## Save the Date!

Fri., Sept 27 – Sun., Sept 29, 2019

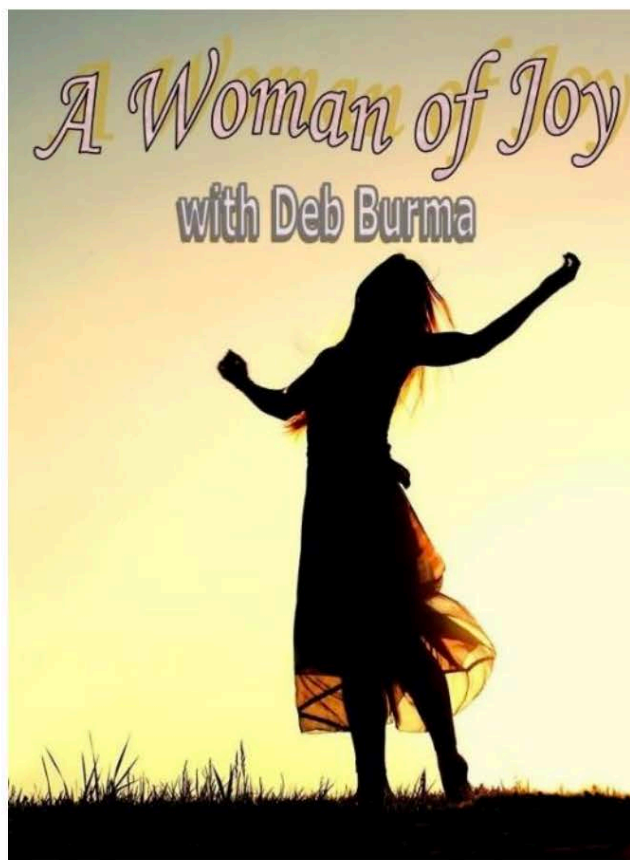
### LWML FL-GA District Retreat

Lake Yale Baptist Conference Center,  
Leesburg, FL

*I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)*

- Retreat Bible Study Leader, Deb Burma
- Singing
- Outdoor Sunrise Devotion
- Remembrance Service
- Servant Event
- Gifts from the Heart
- Prayer Stations
- Free Time—Walk, Read, Meditate, Relax
- Closing Communion Worship Service

More Information: [patpowell912@yahoo.com](mailto:patpowell912@yahoo.com)





## Are You Raising Up Leaders? How?

If you needed to round up a bunch of new leaders, where would you start? Perhaps you would look at the congregation gathered on Sunday morning and start to identify a few faces who might be good candidates. You might even look to catch them and tap them on the shoulder in the parking lot or at the coffee station in the fellowship hall. So what do you say? You are standing eyeball to eyeball with someone. What comes out of your mouth?

“Hey we really need someone to be (BLANK) and you’ll really be helping us out! It won’t take much time at all! You’ll hardly ever have to go to meetings! We’ve got a lot of vacancies in the leadership and we need you! Every one else has said “no” and so we really need you! Please!”

Do these things sound familiar? Do they work? Not really. Not very inspiring. They may try to avoid you next Sunday or even find something else to do next Sunday!

On the other hand, you approached someone.

Good.

You showed interest in someone.

Good.

Yet the coaching leader would probably say different things and ask different questions.

First a coaching leader would say: “How are you?” People are not mere widgets to get things done, they are people with blessings, challenges, faith and life events. Get connected or re-connected. Get to know them. It will be a blessing to both of you!

Next, look for a way to genuinely affirm who they are in Christ Jesus. Share with them and affirm for them the gifts and abilities you have noticed that they have by God’s grace.

“I have always seen in you someone who genuinely cares for others.” “I see in you the ability to work with others.” “I see in you a faith that is confident even at difficult times.” Be genuine and honest. Then talk about that. Ask them where they are in their spiritual journey. We often minimize our gifts and are blind to our unique abilities so it is healthy to hear others affirm what they see we are in Christ.

Then as someone’s awareness grows of who they are and what they have been given through Christ, a coaching leader would ask them how they see themselves using and growing in those gifts for the sake of God’s kingdom. Do a little daydreaming together. It may be in the church or even in the organizational structure and a position of responsibility. Or, more likely it might be at their job, in their neighborhood, in their family or somewhere else. Perhaps God has been stirring them to start something new. Affirm them and ask how you can pray for them and genuinely support them. Then do it!

It’s about Stewardship. Managing the gifts that God has given. It is not about twisting arms to fill the hole in the organizational chart at the church. Yet as more and more people are affirmed in their gifts and are supported in finding a niche where they can “make a difference” and “steward the gifts” God has given them, many of those holes will be filled.

It may not happen tomorrow, it may not be with that person. Yet over time, through these affirming

conversations, people will be encouraged to take the next steps that are appropriate for them and grow into the servant leaders God wants.

Then along the way you can enjoy the blessing of being in partnership in the body of Christ. You can rejoice in the growth of others who experienced your affirmation and encouragement! God may even use you and them to bring others to faith!



### COACHING COMMANDER

by Rev. Scott Gress  
Lutheran Counseling Services  
Leadership Coach

*Rev. Scott Gress is called by Lutheran Counseling Services as an independent contractor in the areas of leadership training, consulting and coaching. The Coaching Leader Podcast is also available on iTunes. Contact Scott through LCS (407-644-4692) or through email [scottgress@me.com](mailto:scottgress@me.com) or his blog [page.scottgress.com](http://page.scottgress.com).*



“This is Volunteer Appreciation Sunday. Find a volunteer and thank them for what **you** should be doing.”



Megan Miessler was installed as executive director of Lutheran Counseling Services in March. The installation took place at Ascension Lutheran/ Casselberry, Florida. Megan is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Rick Armstrong will continue working with LCS in a part-time position to offer counseling and support — especially to the Ministerial Assistance Program which is designed to help clergy, church workers, educators, parish nurses, secretaries, etc, and their families cope with the challenges and demands of church life and work. Shown (left to right) are District President the Rev. Dr. Greg Walton, Miessler, and pastors Rick Armstrong and Tom Eggebrecht, pastor of Ascension.



The Kantorei Chorus of **Concordia Theological Seminary/ Fort Wayne, IN** enjoyed a spring concert tour through several regions of Florida. Under the direction of Kevin Hildebrand and organist Matthew Macherer, the 16-member male chorus performed at Faith/Naples, Grace/ Naples, Redeemer/Englewood, Grace/Saint Petersburg, Our Savior/Zephyrhills, Shepherd of the Coast/Palm Coast, Abiding Savior/Gainesville and Immanuel/Pensacola.

Some 15,000 military men and women are requesting God's Word for their personal use through chaplains. **Trinity/Toccoa, Georgia** is now collecting donations for pre-recorded audio units called "Sticks." They are distributed free to military personnel upon their request to their chaplain and include the New Testament and the book of Psalms (ESV).

At right — Kevin Brockschmitt is shown displaying a Bible Stick. Trinity is now collecting funds to send these devices to the United States Military. To participate or for more information, Brockschmitt can be reached at (772) 224-9266.



More than 150 participants from all parts of the United States and Canada (with Florida most widely represented) enjoyed "Extravagant Love," a women's retreat cruise on the Independence of the Seas, this past February. Guest speakers included author & Bible study leader, Deb Burma, musician, Wendysue Fluegge, as well as Connie Denninger & Pat Maier of Visual Faith Ministry. The event was planned and coordinated by Director of Travel Ministry, Diane Biel with Educational Opportunities Tours





## Weston Minister Charged With Locking Youth Up!

Jeremy Becker, **St Paul/Weston, FL's** director of youth and family ministry, has enjoyed going to escape rooms — a physical adventure game in which players solve a series of puzzles and riddles using clues, hints, and strategy to complete the objectives at hand. Escape rooms may consist of a large, single room, or span multiple rooms. Players are given a set time limit to unveil the secret plot which is hidden within the rooms. They're especially popular among people who enjoy video games.

"They are fun and make for great memories with people/family/friends and can be a great group building experience for the youth," Becker explains. "I wanted to create one designed for our Lock Out/ Lock In overnight event. I gave our participants 45 minutes to escape the safe room."

In Becker's scenario, the youth had five to seven participants securely "locked" in a safe room from any danger that might be outside. There were three keycards hidden/locked in the safe room and Weston's youth teams had 45 minutes to locate the three keys and insert them into the control table which deactivated the countdown and would "alert the authorities" allowing them to leave the safe room free from the "danger."



"There were codes to figure out, problems to solve and barely enough time to get it accomplished. Only groups that worked together were able to find all three keys in 45 minutes and escape. It was a big hit — and I plan to take this to the District Retreat in May for DCEs and professional youth and family workers."

St. Paul's youth are exploring the possibility of using this as a fundraiser for the National Youth Gathering. We would set it up on a Sunday afternoon and run five or six groups through it in an afternoon or evening. Contact Jeremy Becker for more information: [jbecker@stpaulweston.org](mailto:jbecker@stpaulweston.org).



Jeremy and Kristen Becker share a moment at Disney's Epcot.



## What Do You Do To Restore Your Soul?

Sometimes when I have some time off, I just want to "veg out" do nothing and not really think about anything. That is not a bad thing, I imagine we all do that. I have come to



### EMERGENT LEADERS

by Kurt Bickel  
Leadership Trainer

the realization, however, that I don't feel as refreshed as I had hoped for.

For me, I feel more refreshed, revived and restored — more ready to go back to work when I have a plan for my time off.

So it goes like this, I see a day that is open without a lot of commitments

and I imagine what I might do with that time. I am going to wake up with a little more rest than usual. If the weather is nice I am going to have my coffee outside and read for about

a half an hour from my favorite Christian author. Then I am going to look on my cell phone's Bible verse of the day. Most days I just read it. But this day I am going to let this passage really sink in. I am going to quiet my mind and just pay

attention to what I am thinking about God and what my heart is feeling in the moment.

This can last for ten minutes to an hour. Sometimes I write in my journal. So that is what I do. You will probably design something very different. The

point is not how you do it but that you are being intentional about feeding your soul. I have explored this idea with many Christians, asking, "What do you do to restore your soul?" I get many different answers. When I ask, "Would you like to do more of that?" One answer is always the same. They all say, YES.

Be intentional about making an appointment with Jesus. He says, "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

(Matt. 11:28, 29 — *The Message*)



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### Are You Not Going to the LCMS National Youth Gathering?

by Alaina Ruskowski, DCE Intern, Hope/Bradenton, Florida and Member of the District Youth Ministry Council

So ... you don't have a group going to the LCMS Youth Gathering this year. That's ok! You — yes you! — are still a part of the Gathering. The LCMS Youth Gathering is a *family effort*. Our Synod walks together.

The LCMS Youth Gathering is the largest gathering of our church body and the largest regular assembly of young people in the United States. More than 25,000 youth will be attending this coming July 11-15, 2019 and it is the *first* Gathering in the northern part of the United States.

That being said, there is A LOT that goes into making it happen every three years.

Preparing for the Gathering can be quite a task. Youth Directors must find enough adult chaperones, book restaurants, rooms, flights, schedule fund-raisers, host informational meetings, and make sure that all their youth are properly registered. The youth must attend meetings, make sure that their registration fee is covered, and mentally prepare to arrive in Minneapolis, MN. The Gathering planners have been pouring out their time and devotion to ensure that everything is ready by the time July comes. The Young Adult Volunteers and Community Life Builders joyfully arrive early to train for their particular role during the week.

With all this said, the easiest and best way to support those attending the Gathering is to *pray for them!*

Not sure what to pray for?

- 1) The spiritual development of the youth participating;
- 2) Safe travels for groups and all the volunteer participants;
- 3) Fund-raisers to meet the goals;
- 4) For the Holy Spirit to continue working the hearts of the youth even after they return from the Gathering;
- 5) The Holy Spirit to move in the hearts of the people in Minneapolis.

Another important way to support the Gathering is monetarily. You can support a youth group that is going in your community. You could also send gift cards

for the volunteers to get food or coffee while they are serving during the week. Giving monetarily provides the opportunity to joyfully support the Gathering without actually flying to Minneapolis in July.

The Gathering is quickly approaching! If you feel moved to support the Gathering, talk to the people in your church and see what you can come up with working together!

*Below — more than 22,000 youth gathered in 2016 in New Orleans. More than 25,000 are expected in Minneapolis this July.*



### 2013 National Lutheran Youth Gathering Participants in San Antonio, Texas







Spring is a time of visitation for a lot of college students and soon to be students. Current college students may be

coming back home for Spring Break (unless they have other plans) and soon-to-be students may be taking their Spring Breaks to visit the colleges and universities that they have been accepted to.

So here are some excellent tips for students, church workers, and family members to consider during this time of visitation:

### Students Coming Home for Spring Break:

Coming back home is comforting in many ways for students, but there may also be some anxiety around this time coming back. One of the most stressful things for students returning home is finding changes in their relationships.

Because the student has been maturing so much and in so many ways when they have been away from home, they may feel like the relationships they have with parents and friends (especially those that did not leave for college) may be strained. Additionally, students may feel some guilt over sins they have committed since being away.

It is possible that they haven't been going to church. It is possible that they



have been making decisions about things like drinking, drugs, and sex. Not all of these decisions are going to be God-pleasing, and they will likely know that and feel guilty. It is important for family and church workers to be two things for these students: *interested* and *gracious*.

## CAMPUSCORNER



Ask questions about decisions that the student has made, including if they have made it to church during their time at school. Celebrate the good and God-pleasing decisions that the student has made — good decisions are actually more important than their grades and

to visit that school. This is a great idea for many reasons, including getting to know the area, meeting people, and developing a sense of the campus culture.

It is also good during this time to make it a part of the itinerary of the

### Tips to Consider Over College Spring Break

should be celebrated as such. If the student confesses to making a bad decision, be gracious and forgiving, letting them know that a sin will not change the security of your relationship with them. After that security has been assured, ask for ways that the student might think of for you to help before (or instead of) you offer to help them in a way that you thought up. Throughout the student's time at school, they will visit from time to time. It is important

to assure them that they still have a place in their family and their home church.

### Students Visiting Campus:

If you have a high school student who has been accepted to a school, it is possible that the student will want

visit to check out the local churches and ministries. Most campuses will have some collection of ministries called a "Campus Ministry Cooperative" or "Interfaith Council." Search the website of the school that you're visiting to view these and see what options are available. Additionally, you can look up the FLGA District Campus Ministries at <https://flgadistrict.org/campusministries/> or if you're traveling outside of the District you can check out the listing at [lcmsU.org](https://lcmsU.org). It is important, if at all possible, to visit with the campus minister at your campus to make a connection with your student before they come to campus, even if it is just dropping by the campus ministry center or meeting the minister somewhere on campus. Studies have shown that students who get to know a campus ministry or church *before* they start classes are *80% more likely to attend during the year*.

*If you have any questions about either a current or prospective student and how to minister to them and connect them to Jesus, please feel free to contact any of our campus ministers at <https://flgadistrict.org/campusministries/>*



# FLORIDAGEORGIA

## REGIONAL NEWS

*Out and About in the  
Florida-Georgia District*



The wife of U.S. Brig. Gen. William T. Yates, smiles while pinning brigadier general rank insignia on her husband during his promotion ceremony at Stout Field in Indianapolis, Feb. 9, 2019. Yates is the Air National Guard Assistant to the U.S. Air Force Chief of Chaplains and is a member of **Our Redeemer/Augusta, GA**.

Send your congregation and school activity photos to [LutheranLife@aol.com!](mailto:LutheranLife@aol.com)



**Savior of All/Cartersville, GA** middle and high school youth (above) enjoyed a game night involving speed rotations — and then made M&M canisters ( in February) as part of their fund-raising activities toward the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis this coming summer. In January they attended a pre-gathering weekend with other Georgia LCMS Churches at **Mount Calvary/Warner Robins, GA** (below). Bible studies, servant events, team building, and just getting to know other participants in the NYG.

## REGION



# 1



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**Circuit 3 Atlanta S Circuit Visitor:**

George Murdaugh | Prince of Peace/  
Douglasville

**Circuit 4 E Central Georgia Circuit Visitor:**

John Lehenbauer | Christ/Perry







**St. Paul/Peachtree City, GA** participated in a “toiletry drive” to benefit the Real Life Center, also of Peachtree City. The organization helps families cope with the unexpected financial, emotional and spiritual hardships of life, such as job loss, health issues, death or divorce. The local organization is committed to walk alongside needy families for one full year helping them through the trials of life and providing a catalyst for change.



**St. Paul/Peachtree City, GA** had their PK3 class participate in “Read Across America Week” by wearing “silly socks.” Read Across America is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually on March 2 — Dr. Seuss’s birthday. Across the country, thousands of schools, libraries, and community centers participate by bringing together kids, teens, and books to celebrate reading with young people.



◀ **Lake Oconee/Eatonton, GA** welcomed several new members recently. New members are shown here with Pastor Steve Hayden.

Under the expert training of pastoral candidate for **Living Faith/Cumming, GA**, Dr. David Kang, two of his Tae Kwon Do students received their yellow belts! Shown with Dr. Kang is Josiah Pattison, Reagan Galbreth along with Living Faith’s senior pastor Tim Drogenmueller.





## Trinity Albany Hosts Souper Bowl Sunday & Chili Cookoff



On February 3, 2019, **Trinity/Albany, GA** hosted their first annual Souper Bowl Sunday and Chili Cook off. The event was a fund-raiser and collection of food for Dougherty County local charities. The \$10 registration fee was a donation to register members who entered home-made chili to be judged. The cost included a sampling of all the chili recipes. Judges sampled the chili and voted on the top three entries. During all this “Souper” Bowl Sunday was conducted where more than \$300 was received. At the same time more than 250 pounds of food was collected. Winners of the chili cook off were Marie Grebel, 3rd place, Pastor Doug Hudson 2nd place and Barbara Logan 1st Place. Thrivent Action Team funds were used to support both the chili cook off and Souper Bowl Sunday. More than 50 members attended. Trinity’s Youth Members delivered the food and funds to Neighbors In Need, a local food kitchen and financial assistance program. Youth were treated to a tour of the Neighbors In Need Food Kitchen.

Chili Cookoff Champions — Marie Grebel, Barbara Logan and Pastor Doug Hudson



◀  
**Christus Victor/Athens, GA** gathered last month to host a trivia night. Congregation members were encouraged to bring friends. Participants worked in teams of 4-5 people and questions came from a range of subject areas. Donations were gathered for Our Daily Bread, an organization in Athens that provides meals to homeless and low-income individuals. Student fellowship also held a winter retreat at Vogel State Park under the theme “Oasis.” It was an opportunity to refresh and get away for a weekend, mingle with fellow students, and grow together in the Word.





▲ On February 17th the Rev. Larry Dexheimer was installed as pastor of Forest Lutheran/Silver Springs, FL. Attending were these fellow clergy: Front Row R-L: Ken Schamens, Larry Dexheimer, James Rockey (3rd VP), Joseph Signore, Bob Jacobs, John Glover (back row) Bob Besalski, Roy Zerbe, Ron Mueller, Ron Scheer, Alan Struckmeyer (Circuit Visitor), Jeff Shanks.



**First/Inverness, FL** donated 75 hand-made pillowcases and pillows to ladies from the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Michigan who spend their winters in Inverness. The ladies are shown with Pastor Tom Beaverson.



The Amazing Grace Early Learning Center was blessed by **Amazing Grace/Oxford** volunteers — a “Drop-Off & Donuts Day” on Tuesday, January 29 with a variety of Dunkin’ Donuts, bagels, juice and coffee. This provided a short break in the morning for parents to be greeted by some of our volunteers, get to know one another, and even chat with Pastor James Rockey.

A surprising bonus was that volunteers then took donuts, bagels and coffee to a nearby fire station to let the Lieutenant know that the Amazing Grace Early Learning Center was celebrating Lutheran schools week and extended a blessing to the First Responders (below) of the community.

**REGION**

**2**



**Vice President:**  
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Amazing Grace/Oxford

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Frank Kinast | Messiah/Valdosta

**Circuit 6 First Coast Circuit Visitor:**

Dana Brones | Bethlehem/Jacksonville

**Circuit 7 N Central Florida Circuit Visitor:**

Alan Struckmeyer | Abiding Savior/Gainesville







◀ **Hope/Plant City, FL** hosted their annual Teddy Bear Sunday in February. The purpose is to share the warmth and love of God with children in the community and beyond Plant City. This year, more than 100 teddy bears were donated that will be given to Tampa Bay Rough Riders Association who distribute bears to children in hospitals throughout the Tampa Bay area.

“This annual event,” according to Hope’s Pastor, Dean Pfeffer, “has become such a tradition for us. Each bear is tagged with a note from Hope’s Human Care Ministry Team and with the words of John 3:16 to remind the recipient of God’s never ending love for us. It is fun to watch the adults come to church carrying teddy bears and to see the joy on their faces as they give that bear to a child in need.”

Pictured is Alex Attalla on “bear mountain” that Sunday.



**REGION**



**3**



**Vice President:**

Charles Reich | Grace/Winter Haven

**Board Treasurer:**

Renee Varga | Woodlands/Montverde

**Laity Board Members:**

Katie Abercrombie | Prince of Peace/Orlando

Sheryl DeWitt | Redeemer/Sanford

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:**

Lois Ford | Faith/Eustis

**Circuit 8 Space Coast Circuit Visitor:**

Bruce Alberts | Good Shepherd/Titusville

**Circuit 9 Orlando East Circuit Visitor:**

Ken Green | Prince of Peace/Orlando

**Circuit 10 Orlando West Circuit Visitor:**

Marc Kappel | Faith/Eustis

**Circuit 11 Winter Haven Circuit Visitor:**

Dean Pfeffer | Hope/Plant City

Comfort dogs Peace (left) and Jacob visited **St. Luke’s Lutheran School in Oviedo, FL** Upper left, sixth-grade-student, Kyle, pets Peace.



## New Launch of Peace Center for Immigrants at Prince of Peace/Orlando

A new Florida-Georgia District ministry was launched in February at **Prince of Peace/Orlando** under the coaching of Oscar Benavides, Vice-President of Strategic Initiatives for FiveTwo Network. FiveTwo is the organizing partnering with the District to equip Christian entrepreneurs in successful launches of a wide range of sustainable “start-ups” to reach people for Jesus Christ.

FiveTwo provides clarity, camaraderie and know-how so that the startup thrives. They work with church plants and re-plants, non-profits, and “business as mission” for-profits. The network goes through an assessment, training, and coaching process and then helps entrepreneurial men and women of faith

realize their dreams of creating faith-based start-ups that lead to more baptized followers of Jesus.

This newest launch opened at Centro de Paz Para la Vida (Peace Center for Life). The opening was celebrated by a immigration and community outreach event at the church.

More than 75 people attended including refugees from Venezuela, immigration attorneys, community organizations and city leaders. The group is now invited to return to Prince of Peace for ESOL classes (English for speakers of other languages) and a workshop on being a first time home buyer. The hope is to build relationships with them and introduce them to the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

This launch was led by a team of lay leaders and pastors from Prince of Peace that have been trained and coached by FiveTwo. Every team is trained and coached and most teams launch the new ministry within a year. The proven model used by FiveTwo has started more than thirty new ministries that are reaching thousands across the nation. FiveTwo’s heart is to see lay leaders get trained and launch new ministries. Currently there are five teams in the FiveTwo incubator in Orlando, Lakeland, Boca Raton and Port Saint Lucie.

*The next incubator for new starts is on May 16th-18th, call or email Pastor Oscar Benavides to set up a phone call. [Obenavides@fivetwo.com](mailto:Obenavides@fivetwo.com) or 972-754-2830.*



*The Prince of Peace Spanish language congregation is celebrating its 20th anniversary, and expanding its services to many new Central Florida residents from Venezuela, Puerto Rico, and other areas who seek religious, political, and economic freedom.*



*The Rev. Ken Green, Prince of Peace Lutheran*

*The Rev. Oscar Benavides, Vice-President of Strategic Initiatives for FiveTwo Network*







To kick off Lent, **Christ The King /Largo, FL** hosted the Watoto Children's Choir — a group of African children choirs based in Kampala, Uganda. Watoto means “Children” in Swahili language. The choir is made up of children who have lost one or both parents to the AIDS epidemic or to war.

The choir has toured Asia, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Israel, The Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States and many other countries. The choir travels with a team of adults who look after the children and also manage the day-to-day affairs of the tour

on the road. Their performances are a blend of native African rhythms, contemporary gospel music and creative dance. They have released several albums including Mambo Sawa and Beautiful Africa. Their latest album “Signs and Wonders” features live music played throughout the concerts on most of the tours.

They have performed with

many artists like Chris Tomlin, Brad and Rebekah, Israel Houghton and others. They have also been to the UK Houses of Parliament, Canadian Parliament, Australian Parliament as well as the White House on different occasions. Their unique ministry also comprises Watoto Child Care Ministries, three babies' homes, social work services, medical clinics, pastoral and discipleship, three primary schools, a high school, a vocational school among other services. All these facilities are on the communities (children's villages) that have been built by the church for some of the most vulnerable orphans and children with no one and no where to go.



On February 16-17 **Faith/Punta Gorda, FL**, celebrated their 45th Anniversary. Pictured is Pastor Dana Narring, his wife, Susan, Edith and President Greg Walton at the reception following the Sunday morning worship service. Pastor Walton preached Saturday night for the contemporary service, and Sunday morning for the traditional service, encouraging the people to walk in unity with a renewed attitude, planning for their future to connect people to Jesus!

## REGION



# 4



### Vice President:

Jon Zehnder | St. Michael/Fort Myers

### Laity Board Members:

Evita Gonzalez | Beautiful Savior /Lehigh Acres

Daniel Najjar | Beautiful Savior/Sarasota

**Commissioned Minister Board Member:**

Jesse Crosmer | Our Savior/St. Petersburg

**Circuit 12 Heartland Circuit Visitor:**

Richard Norris | Trinity/Lake Placid

**Circuit 13 Suncoast Circuit Visitor:**

David Brockhoff | Holy Trinity/Masaryktown

**Circuit 14 St. Petersburg Circuit Visitor:**

Paul Burtzloff, Our Savior/St. Petersburg

**Circuit 15 Tampa Circuit Visitor:**

Gilbert Kuehn | Messiah/Tampa

**Circuit 16 Sarasota Circuit Visitor:**

Rossetter Leavitt | Beautiful Savior/Sarasota

**Circuit 17 SW Circuit Visitor:**

Richard Browning | Hope/Bonita Springs





Sunday, February 24th marked a very special day in the brief history and ministry of the Tampa Bay Hispanic Ministry based at **Messiah/Tampa, FL**. The pastors involved in the ministry gathered to mark the retirement of Rev. Miguel Sanabria, Sr. and give thanks to God for his ministry.

Under the leadership of Sanabria, the ministry has grown from Messiah to include **Family of Christ** (north and west), Tampa, FL and **Hope/Plant City, FL** as well as outreach to Hispanics in other parts of the Greater Tampa Bay area. Numerous Deaconesses have been trained and serve in ministry and numerous programs

have been developed to reach the growing area Hispanic population. The recently ordained and installed pastors, Revs. John Cabos and Miguel Sanabria, Jr. now lead the ministry.

Pictured prior to the service are (from left): Rev. Jim Guelzow, Messiah, Tampa; Rev. Shea Pennington, Hope, Plant City, Rev. Gil Kuehn, Tampa Circuit Visitor; Rev. Bill Whitehead, Family of Christ West, Tampa, Rev. Miguel Sanabria, Sr.; Rev. Mark Adrian, Messiah, Tampa; Armando Perdomo, Crucifer; Rev. John Cabos; Rev. Dean Pfeffer, Hope, Plant City; Rev. Dr. Samuel Gomez, Grace, Escondido, California.

▼ The Rev. Andrew Apple was installed as Associate Pastor at **First/Clearwater, FL** in February. Pictured below are the clergy participating in the installation worship. Front Row — Pat O'Brien, Andrew Apple, District President, Greg Walton. The rest from left to right — Eric Eichinger, Andy Sorensen, Joseph Adams, Arnold Piering, Erich Heintzen, Alan Barber, Kevin Loughran, Robert Steinke, Paul Burtzloff, Chris Futch, Edward Krauss, Dave Horn.







The Rev. Angel Ramos was called and installed as Pastor at **Faith/Clewiston, FL** — now partnered with **St. Peter/Belle Glade, FL**.

On February 17, 2019 a commissioning service — which will include his service to St. Peter — was held. Pastors in the picture at left include, front row (left-to-right) Pastors Robert Maulella, Ben Schroeder, Angel Ramos, Greg Walton, John Hirst; back row Anthony Arias, Candidate James Olckers, Scott McLean, and Richard Norris.

St. Peter's gave all the pastors who attended a box of vegetables, which included cabbage, corn, radishes, and lettuce and all of the congregants who attended the service were given fresh ears of corn.



Members of the choir of **Trinity/Fort Pierce, FL** posed after worship one recent morning to celebrate the music ministry. The congregation also has a praise team.

Girls 3-years through 3rd grade can be a "Princess for a Day" at **Our Savior/Plantation, FL**. They'll be swept away in late March for a hair and makeup session, manicure and crowning and then will have the opportunity to dance with Tinkerbell, read stories with Snow White and Belle and play games with Rapunzel. They'll also be able to take pictures with all of the characters.

**REGION**



**5**



**Vice President:**

Stephen Carretto | St. Paul/Boca Raton

**Laity Board Members:**

Samuel Ludington | Holy Cross/North Miami

Stephen Bradshaw | Trinity/Lake Placid

**Circuit 18 Treasure Coast Circuit Visitor:**

Mark Stillman | Faith/North Palm Beach

**Circuit 19 S Palm Beach Circuit Visitor:**

Dennis Glick | St Paul/Boca Raton

**Circuit 20 Gold Coast Circuit Visitor:**

Timothy Hartner | St. Paul/Weston

**Circuit 21 Monroe-Miami-Dade Circuit Visitor:**

Tony Mandile | Martin Luther/Marathon





**St. Paul/Boca Raton, FL** — The St. Paul Girls Varsity basketball team had a season for the ages! An undefeated season at 19-0 *and a State Title* — the first since the year 2000. The Lady Falcons next head to the National Tournament in Valparaiso, IN in March.

The Boys Varsity team also had a successful year as they went 13-7 and placed third at State. Congratulations to both Falcon teams for their exceptional representation of St. Paul throughout the basketball season.



Students at **Grace/Key West** had a great opportunity to be a blessing to their community. Older students worked to set up and sort essential items for those in need. Younger students helped pack the blessing bags and then the students distributed the bags to the needy of the community.





## Spring 2019 Mission: Haiti Trips Moving

Mission: Haiti will be 20 years old in December of this year. In the past 20 years there have been many wonderful relationships forged, successful trips made, projects completed and new endeavors identified. We are always working with the goal of giving glory to God by assisting in the transformation of lives and helping those in need we look to walking alongside the people of Haiti by participating in sustainable projects



### MISSION: HAITI

by Helen Roenfeldt  
Executive Director

including, education, agricultural aid, skill training, medical assistance and humanitarian aid. Many of the greatest blessings of Mission: Haiti come from mission/service teams that travel from the U.S. to Haiti to work alongside brothers and sisters, in hands on projects, community health outreach, training, community worship and shared Bible Study.

Most recently, there has been a good deal of unrest in Haiti. The chaos started when the Haitian government announced its plan to raise prices on gasoline, diesel and kerosene. The proposal would have nearly doubled the cost of fuel. The hike was prompted by the International Monetary Fund, which pushed Haitian officials to reduce government subsidies for fuel. Officials also agreed to increase

social services spending, improve infrastructure and do a better job of collecting taxes. In response, many Haitians rioted. Activists set up flaming roadblocks,

bringing travel around the more major cities like Port-au-Prince to a standstill.

Markets, banks, hospitals and schools have closed intermittently, sometimes for weeks. People have been afraid to travel or even go to work for days on end. Which of course meant no paycheck.



Noel Duffault is now home with his family recuperating from his accident

To make matters worse, inflation has caused the cost of many daily needs to rise dramatically. One of our own, Noel Duffault, our Security Director is also one of the policemen who guards the President and other important government officials, was





## Forward In Spite Of Recent Unrest

injured in a motorcycle accident on his way to work at 3 am. Noel lost 3 toes on his right foot and had to have the foot surgically repaired. He spent a week in the hospital and is now recuperating at home with his wife and children.

For the sake of safety one team was rescheduled to the end of May but our normal teams will resume at the end of March since things have settled down and Haiti has been somewhat quiet for more than a month. It seems like peace has been restored because of the most recent announcement by the prime minister, that he was going to delay things like gas price increases.

But that wasn't enough to calm the capital. Several airlines, including American Airlines, Delta and Jet Blue, have canceled most flights to Port-au-Prince. That has caused delays in travel for many church-based groups attempting to do quality mission work.

However the needs of the people are greater than ever, since they have lost so much during the inflation and disruptions of this past year. For that reason our April 27-May 4 Community Health Outreach is more important than ever. We need 2-3 medical professionals and 2-3 non-medical people to round out the team. There is also need for service teams to partner with the completion of a church building in the village of Colminy —



*Pastor John Roth (center), Thrive/Estero is shown in Haiti earlier this year*



*Firewood is gathered to boil water to ensure clean drinking and cooking*

about three hours north of Port-au-Prince. There will be other important servant projects during 2019.

Many of the pictures shown in this spread are from the January, 2019 servant trip. Any congregations or individuals interested in a servant trip can contact me for coordination and information. My email address is [missionhaiti99@aol.com](mailto:missionhaiti99@aol.com) and my telephone is (954) 868-8218. I also invite you to follow Mission: Haiti on Facebook and there are many Mission: Haiti organizations but ours is the one based in Davie, Florida. Please

pray for the people of Haiti and the many workers and encouragers throughout the Florida-Georgia District. We are truly grateful for their encouragement and support.







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## Boca Raton Hosts 4th Annual Tim Tebow Foundation Night to Shine Prom for Special Needs Youth

**St. Paul/Boca Raton** hosted their fourth annual Night to Shine prom for people with special needs. This event is a worldwide presentation by the Tim Tebow Foundation. At St. Paul, more than 300 volunteers worked fervently during months of planning to serve 165 guests with special needs.

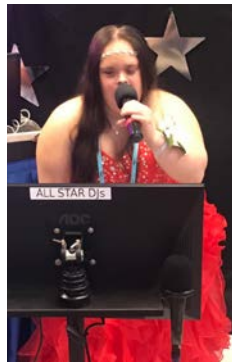
Senior Pastor Steve Carretto served as the evening's Master of Ceremonies and Susan Franskousky and Sue Merritt co-chaired the event with numerous volunteers.

Participants were greeted at registration by their "buddies" for the evening, then on to hair and makeup stations for the ladies, shoe shines for the men. After receiving corsages and boutonnieres and having photos taken, guests walked the red carpet to the cheers and warm welcome from well-wishers and paparazzi.

Next they moved on to the congregation's decorated Family Life Center, where a live DJ kept the crowd dancing while enjoying abundant food and beverages. Other activities included karaoke, limousine rides, a catered dinner, funky photo booth and the highlight of the night: a video featuring Tim Tebow that ended with a countdown to each guest being crowned king or queen.

Caregivers and parents were also special guests as they were treated to a separate dinner in the congregation's youth room — with a closed feed of the dance floor so they could enjoy the party. As the night drew to an end many of the caregivers came to the dance floor for the last celebratory dance.

Night to Shine launched in 2015 with 44 host churches and 15,000 volunteers honoring more than 7,000 kings and queens of the prom. The event has grown each year and promises to continue that trend into 2020 — an evening that once again will include St. Paul.



Above, Sue Merritt, Steve Carretto and Susan Franskousky. Both ladies teach in St. Paul Lutheran School where Carretto serves as Senior Pastor.

Below, the red carpet stretched from registration point where guests first received hair styling, makeup applications, shoe shines and corsages or boutonnieres. Abundant food and drink was served.