

Summer 2025

michigan

IN TOUCH

A publication of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and Church Extension Fund

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Like Bees in a Hive

by Rev. David A. Davis

The Church is incurably congregational. Wherever God calls people to faith in Jesus, he calls them into congregations.

The idea that “I can follow Jesus all by myself and worship Him all by myself out in the middle of a field” may represent rugged American individualism, but it does not reflect either biblical teaching or historical Christian living.

Christians gather together in congregations.

Dan Kimball wrote a book titled *They Like Jesus But Not the Church*. Barna publishes

continued on page 2

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Table of Contents

- 1 From the President
- 3 Healthy Congregations
- 4 Great Compassion
- 6, 11 Great Commission
- 7 Church Extension Fund
- 12 LLL/LWML
- 13 Summer Appeal
- 15 News & Events
- 15 Special Recognition
- 16 Calendar of Events

continued from page 1

statistics about the demise of the Church and its congregations in America. Newspapers report abandoned church buildings repurposed as brew pubs.

Christians gather together in congregations.

Paul concluded his letter to the church of God in Corinth by writing, “*The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord*” (1 Corinthians 16:19). The writer of Hebrews warned Christians “[*not to neglect*] to meet together, as is the habit of some, but [*to encourage*] one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:25).

Christians gather together in congregations.

Parachurch organizations are fine. Preachers online or on TV or on the radio serve a purpose. Personal, private Bible reading and prayer are essential. But it is within the community of a local Christian congregation that God is at work through the Word and Sacraments to draw, gather, enlighten, equip, and send His Kingdom people. We gather for worship, encouragement, admonition, and service. We gather as a foretaste of the Kingdom to come.

Christians gather together in congregations.

And not just for worship. Read again Acts 2:42–47. Those earliest of Christians were not just sitting together on pews for an hour or so a week. They were a community. They ate together. They worked together. They loved their neighborhood together. It doesn’t say, but I wonder if sometimes they played euchre together.

Christians gather together in congregations.

Plan to live out your Christian life within the context of a local congregation. Keep in mind the following four things:

- *Your congregation will not be perfect.* Like a family, as long as it is comprised of sinners, there will be problems. Do not expect more of a congregation (and its pastor!) than is possible. Work within your congregation to make it a center of love and forgiveness.
- *You must be present to experience the blessings God has in mind for His people.* Have you heard it said, “You must be present to win?” Haphazard attendance and involvement at your local congregation WILL lead to dissatisfaction. Like all other relationships, you will not experience *quality time* without

quantity time.

- *A good local congregation takes work.* Indeed, the Kingdom is about grace. God saved us by His grace, but God worked hard at grace. A local congregation is a grace place. But to be such takes work. Be prepared to volunteer and serve. There are no bench warmers in the Kingdom.
- *Avoid church shopping and hopping.* Yes, you can find a “better” congregation. When you sit down for a Thanksgiving meal with your family, certainly there is a “better” meal available in another house somewhere in the neighborhood. But that meal would not be with your family, and the point of the meal centers on the gathering of the family, not the culinary excellences.

Christians gather together in congregations.

The 104th Michigan District has recently concluded. It was (hopefully) a time of seeing and experiencing the reality of a larger fellowship of faith and expression of the Communion of Saints. There are more with us, like Elijah was reminded, than we might think. There is something bigger than your congregation and you are a part of it: The Church on Earth divided into denominations, synods, districts, and so on. Some of that is good. Some of that not so good. Regardless, at the center of living out the Communion of Saints in such bodies is the local congregation.

Christians gather together in congregations.

We live in a time of change. We should keep in mind that that is *always* the case. Things have always changed. The pace of change today may be a little faster, but the reality of change has not... changed. Within the change, there are certain things that don’t. People need oxygen to live. Nutrition and eating are connected. The sky is blue. The sun is warm. Bees gather together in hives. The Church is incurably congregational.

Christians gather together in congregations. ■



Rev. David A. Davis serves the Michigan District, LCMS as its president.

A portion of this article was previously published at towardsignificance.org.



Introducing the Michigan District Podcast Network

by Adele S. Werner

In many different online spaces, people are asking, “What are some good Lutheran podcasts?” or “Where can I find good Lutheran content?” Podcasting is fast growing, and listening to podcasts can be very beneficial for our congregants in the Michigan District. The Michigan District, LCMS is seeking to step into this desire for content created by Lutherans with our distinct theological flair.

Let us introduce The Michigan District Podcast Network, which was born to present the Christian hope from a Lutheran perspective. This network will be composed of shows produced by the Michigan District, along with a curated collection of podcasts from fellow members, pastors, and church workers, covering topics relevant to the Church and our theology.

Our Original Content

Here are our original podcasts:

Mission in the Mitten

Mission in the Mitten asks ministries around our district about the misconceptions, driving passions, and replicability of their ministry. It’s not a commercial for their program (though we do want you to support them!), but an opportunity for them to share stories of the Church rightly being the Church.

Conversations on Culture & Faith

Paul reminds us in Romans 12:2 to “*not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*” This reminder drives all conversations on this podcast. Panels will discuss issues pressing to our culture and our churches through our uniquely Lutheran lens.

With One Heart: Stories of Lutheran Education

Lutheran education is valued in our district. Stories of how Lutheran education has impacted current students and their families, coaches, teachers, and other community members will be featured. “Concordia” means “with one heart,” and that’s exactly what we aim to build—a unified

community centered on forming disciples of Christ to live out their vocations in service to others.

MI Sermoncast – Launching Advent 2025

Sermons from churches across Michigan that bring the Word of God directly to you. We are currently seeking sermon submissions from all around the Mitten state. Have a favorite sermon of your own or your pastor’s? We encourage all to submit to: michigandistrict.org/podcast-sermon-submission-form/.

Our Partner Shows

We’ve also sourced a variety of partner shows and are thrilled these shows agreed to join our network. Our first cohort is as follows:

- *Life in Relationship* with David and Heidi Goehmann
- *Suffering Servants: Conversations of the Unspoken* with Tyler Cronkright
- *Ringside Preachers* with Ross Engel, Paul Koch, Joel Hess, and Tyler the Intern
- *The Next Step Podcast* with Justin Rossow
- *Grace on Tap* with Mike Yagley and Evan Gaertner
- *Beyond the Breakwater* with Ed Doerner and Lyndsay Smokovitz

Our new podcast network is an endeavor we are excited to watch grow. As episodes get released and you listen to the different shows of the network, we encourage you to share what you are learning. Our prayer is that this network would serve to edify you and encourage you to “*think on these things*” as stated in Philippians 4:

“*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things*” (Philippians 4:8).

Explore the podcast network: michigandistrict.org/podcasts-for-people-of-hope/. ■

Adele S. Werner is the Video Journalist/Digital Media Manager for the Michigan District, LCMS.



Supporting Families Through Life's Sacred Journey

A closer look at hospice care with Wellspring Lutheran Services
by Wellspring Hospice Care

“Hospice doesn’t mean it’s the end.
It’s the *beginning* of a new stage
where *every moment matters.*”

There is something sacred about the end of life—a time when presence, compassion, and peace matter most. Hospice care honors both the individual and the family, offering a space where love, dignity, and connection can take priority. At Wellspring Lutheran Services, the hospice team walks alongside individuals and their loved ones, offering comfort and support through one of life’s most tender transitions.

As people of faith, we believe life is a gift from God—from our first breath to our final one. Scripture reminds us that, even in death, we are held by God’s promises. Hospice care affirms this sacred truth by focusing on comfort, dignity, and being fully present in the time that remains.

“Hospice doesn’t mean it’s the end. It’s the beginning of a new stage where every moment matters. Having hospice meant we could still do the things we loved—take trips, attend special occasions, and make the most of our time together. Hospice made more possible,” shared one Wellspring Lutheran Services hospice family.

Hospice care is not about giving up—it’s about helping people live fully in the time they have left, surrounded by the people who matter most. Wellspring Lutheran Services focuses on quality of life by managing pain and symptoms, providing emotional and spiritual support, and easing the day-to-day pressures caregivers often face.

“Choosing hospice doesn’t mean giving up hope—it means shifting our focus to comfort, peace, and the relationships that matter,” said Dave Gehm, president and CEO of Wellspring Lutheran Services. *“Our team considers it a sacred calling to walk with people during this time. We support the entire family—physically, emotionally, and spiritually.”*

The Gift of Time

One message we hear time and again from families is this: *“We wish we would have called sooner.”* Choosing hospice earlier allows more time to build relationships, honor final wishes, and support loved ones during a meaningful and sacred season. With early hospice care, families can benefit from more days of connection, peace, and even joy—not just in the final hours, but throughout the final chapter.

The Wellspring hospice team includes a physician, nurses, social workers, chaplains, bereavement coordinators, aides, and trained volunteers. Together, they create a personalized care plan that reflects each person’s values and wishes, while also walking closely

with the family through each step of the journey.

Grief support continues long after a loved one passes. In Frankenmuth, adult grief support groups offer a place to share, connect, and begin healing. For children and teens, Camp Hope provides a safe, supportive space to process loss, ask questions, and learn healthy ways to cope.

A Role for the Church

Churches and faith communities have always walked with people through illness, loss, and death. As Lutherans, we affirm that Christ is with us in suffering, and the community of believers is called to be Christ’s hands and feet in times of need. Here are a few ways your church can support families facing end-of-life transitions:

- **Be present.** Sit, listen, or pray—sometimes quiet companionship makes the biggest impact.
- **Start conversations.** Encourage openness around end-of-life care to reduce fear and stigma.
- **Share resources.** If someone in your church could benefit from hospice care, help connect them.
- **Offer prayer.** Lift up hospice families and caregivers in prayer as they walk through this sacred season.
- **Involve your pastor.** Spiritual care from a trusted church leader can offer deep peace and help affirm God’s promises, especially when paired with hospice chaplain support.

Jesus said, *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).* Hospice care is one way this rest can be made real—with compassion, presence and peace at the heart of each day.

Wellspring Lutheran Services serves individuals and families within a 50-mile radius of Frankenmuth, Mich. Care is provided wherever the individual calls home—in a private residence, assisted living, or other setting.

To learn more about the Wellspring hospice program, call 989.652.4663 or visit wellspringlutheran.com/hospice. ■



Jesus in my Coat Pocket - A Prayer Walk Story

by Kristen Jordan

On a sunny day in the fall of 2024, several members from Christ, Milford accompanied Pastor Andrew Johnson on a prayer walk. As they walked through the Milford community, participants stopped at schools, businesses, and other places for Pastor to lead a prayer asking for the safety and spiritual health of our community. One place they stopped at was a fire station. After each prayer we would leave a little Jesus figurine near the location. On this day, the little Jesus was left on a fire hydrant in front of the station.

Fast forward to March 2025. A fireman/EMT from the station was at our church doing AED (defibrillator) training. Elder and church council member Jeff Kleckner was there for the training. During a review of our first aid supplies, the fireman was surprised to see a familiar sight: Perched on the first aid kit was a little Jesus figurine, watching over the narthex. He excitedly questioned, “You’ve got one of these too?” He quickly reached into his pocket and pulled the slightly dirty and grimy Jesus figurine out of his pocket and said he

had picked it up from the fire hydrant in front of the station last year. “I’ve kept this in my pocket on every run since I found it!” he exclaimed. “It makes me feel safer and I figured there was a reason why I found it.” Jeff explained that we had left it there and described

“It makes me feel safer and I figured there was a reason why I found it.”

what our prayer walks were all about, including the prayer that was said in front of the station that day for the firemen’s

safety.

There are many ways to express your faith, and this small one made a difference in this person’s life.

Want to learn more about engaging in your community and sharing your faith? Visit michigandistrict.org/wearenotalone/ and choose from options including E-learning, one-on-one, and group experiences. ■

Kristen Jordan is a member of Christ, Milford and manages Public Relations for the church.



Greetings from Church Extension Fund!

We hope you're enjoying the new version of the CEF website which launched in May. This update comes alongside broader improvements to our operations. CEF has partnered with a Christian software provider to enhance our back-end systems—resulting in a smoother experience for our users.

Here are a few highlights:

- **Refreshed User Platform:** The CEF Online Access portal now features a new look and feel, designed to make it easier to navigate and manage your investments.
- **Secure Document Upload:** You can now securely upload important documents directly to CEF including investment applications, maturity option forms, and beneficiary updates.
- **Familiar Functionality:** While the user experience has been improved, all the same functions you rely on remain available including electronic funds transfers to and from CEF investments, making mortgage payments, and viewing statements.

At CEF, we take pride in serving our partners with excellence. We pray these updates are a blessing to you and the ministries you support. As always, our dedicated staff is here to assist you with any questions or changes you may need help with.

Thank you for being part of our mission!

John Bates
President – Church Extension Fund

CEF Charges No Lender Fees!



Loan Origination Fee	\$2500*
Loan Application Fee	\$500
Underwriting Fee	\$750
Processing Fee	\$350
Document Prep Fee	\$100
Credit Report Fee	\$35
Tax Service Fee	\$75

*based on \$250,000 mortgage \$4,310

Loan Origination Fee	\$0
Loan Application Fee	\$0
Underwriting Fee	\$0
Processing Fee	\$0
Document Prep Fee	\$0
Credit Report Fee	\$0
Tax Service Fee	\$0

\$0

Call **Shannon** at **734-213-3248** to start saving on your mortgage today!

800-242-3944 • www.mi-cef.org

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JULY 2025

From Dinosaur to Dynamic: CEF Launches New Website

CEF’s website has always been a place where visitors could find what they needed. As of this spring, with a fresh new design and enhanced usability, users will experience much more than just the basics.

On May 1, 2025, Church Extension Fund officially launched its new website. It had become increasingly clear to CEF leadership that the previous version, while functional, had its flaws. Users were typically able to navigate a few pages and locate contact information if additional

help was needed, but the experience was showing its age.

Andy Sohn, CEF’s Vice President – Strategy & Marketing, led the redesign effort. His hope is that visitors now find the new website to be much more than utilitarian.

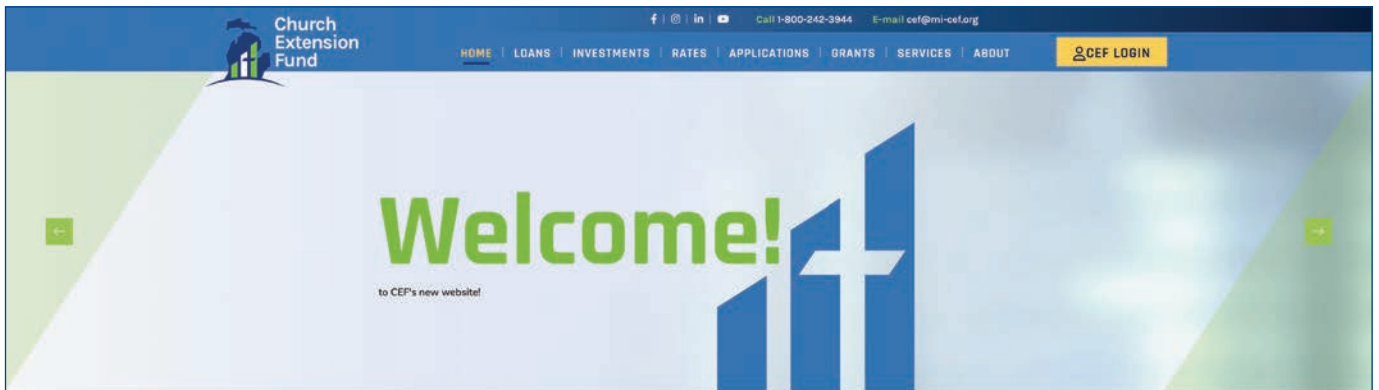
“When we set out to design the new website, the first thing we

thought about was our customers’ needs,” said Sohn.

“Why do they visit our site? How can they get what they need as easily as possible? Is it simple? All the while, we wanted to tell the story of CEF—regardless of where users navigate.”

When CEF introduced its updated logo in 2019, the website received a surface-level refresh to match. While visually improved, the underlying structure of the site remained unchanged. When he consulted with Hadrout Design for Business of Farmington Hills, owner and creative director Maria Petrenko didn’t mince words:

Year	Event
1901	Lutherans Establish Church Extension Fund to Build Churches In response to the desire to start new churches in Michigan, a group of faithful Lutherans create what is now known as Church Extension Fund. Eager investors contribute funds that are then loaned out to help build some of the first Lutheran churches in Michigan.
1922	Lutheran Churches Rely on CEF for Growth More and more Lutheran churches use CEF to help build or upgrade facilities. Pictured is St. John - Pinconning that used a CEF loan to build both a church and parsonage (circa 1922). This building served St. John until 1982 when a new church is constructed, once again with the help of a CEF loan.
1926	Growing Loan Demand Spurs Call for More CEF Investments As loan demand rises, so does the need for more investments from Lutherans throughout Michigan. This ad in the Michigan Lutheran from October 1926 pleads with parishioners to invest with CEF. The ad also appears in German as many Lutheran churches held worship services in German.
1940	Post Great Depression Growth Having weathered the Great Depression, CEF experiences steady growth in both loans and investments. The Fund's total assets are approximately \$750,000 in 1940, (equivalent to \$17 Million today), a healthy number following such a major economic downturn.
1957	CEF Expands, Hires First Director & Moves to Detroit Office As CEF enjoys banner growth, something more than volunteers are needed to manage the fund. The Board hires Marv Heinitz to oversee operations. CEF operated out of a choir robing room at Epiphany Lutheran - Detroit, until moving to its first brick-and-mortar office along 7 Mile Road in Detroit.
1961	CEF Launches Savings Stamps Program to Teach Young Investors CEF begins selling its first savings stamps to the school children at St. Paul - Farmington. The stamp program soon expands to the entire District as it proves to be a great way to teach stewardship to a younger generation of investors. Throughout the years, the Savings Stamps program uses themes like Tracky the Stamp, Heroes of the Faith, and Noah's Weird Animals.
1966	CEF Moves to Ann Arbor Land is procured by the Michigan District to build Concordia Junior College in Ann Arbor. CEF moves to a new office building on the land which also houses all District operations. The move to Ann Arbor fosters a great working relationship between the Michigan District and CEF that lasts to this day.



“It was a dinosaur,” she said. “Websites, like anything, have a shelf life. The CEF website was at least 8 years old—which, in website years, is ancient!”

The redesign process began with initial consultations in November 2024, and production ramped up quickly. The new site was delivered in late January, leaving the task of content creation to Sohn. Over the following two months, Andy worked diligently, guided by the project’s core principles.

“The design team did a great job turning our vision—usability,

mobile responsiveness, ease of navigation—into reality,” said Sohn. “They also delivered the storytelling capabilities, both visual and textual, that we were looking for.”

The new site offers several key improvements:

- **Current interest rates** are now featured prominently on the homepage.
- **Mobile responsiveness** ensures the site looks and works great on any device.
- **Streamlined navigation** gets you where you want to go in fewer clicks.

- **Expanded loan information** and easy access to all forms simplify the application process.

One of Sohn’s favorite additions is a digital timeline of CEF’s history. If you’ve visited the CEF office, you may have seen a similar display in the lobby. Now, that 125-year legacy is available to all—whether in person or online.

While the look and layout have changed, rest assured: everything you’ve come to rely on is still there. If you have questions about navigating the new site, give us a call at 800-242-3944. A real person—one of our dedicated staff members—will be ready and happy to help, just as you’ve come to expect.

At CEF, our commitment to building and maintaining long-lasting relationships with our customers remains unchanged—online and in person.

Year	Event
1994	Marv Heinritz Retires, Ron Steinke Named CEO as CEF Nears \$100M
1997	CEF Launches Church Worker Housing Loan Program, Issuing Nearly \$100M
2003	CEF Hits \$200M, Expands Services with Grants & Giving Programs
2016	Ron Steinke Retires, Jim Saalfeld Becomes CEO as CEF Hits \$50M in Net Worth
2018	CEF Surpasses \$500M in Total Loans with Shepherd of the Lakes Expansion

CEF Partners with Ministry Workers

I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. Philemon 1:6

At Church Extension Fund, it is literally our mission to be “trusted and innovative stewards” to help Lutheran ministries and members build God’s Kingdom. This takes partnership!

We spend a great deal of time thinking about how we can be better partners with churches, schools, other ministries, and the individuals who serve them. Ministry workers are a vital part of building these bridges, so we want to highlight a few ways CEF is supporting them:

- **Housing Loan Program:** CEF partners with ministries to provide low-cost financing for ministry workers. The process is simple and timely, with no lender fees and available down payment assistance.

All ministry workers are eligible.

- **Ministry Worker Extension Plus:**

Introduced in May, this option allows employed ministry workers to qualify for our highest available interest rate tier—without regard to balance.

- **Auto Loans:** CEF is pleased to share that auto loans are now available through Lutheran Federal Credit Union.

To learn more, email autoloans@lutheranfcu.org.



At CEF, we strive to be trusted and innovative stewards in ministry, listening closely to our partners and investors to serve evolving needs—while remaining firmly committed to our mission of helping grow God’s Kingdom.

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“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

Colossians 3:23-24 (ESV)



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A Foretaste of Heaven

by Elisa L. Schulz

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9).

In mid-March, a joyful group of people gathered at St. Luke, Haslett (Meridian Campus) for the first Michigan District All Nations Celebration event—a time of worship, fellowship, and mutual encouragement. There were 217 attendees from several countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and others.

The worship service was led by Rev. Trevor Sutton, Rev. Craig Bickel, Rev. Zerit Yohannes, and Rev. Elamin Banjor. Michigan District President, Rev. David Davis, was the preacher.

During the worship service, these six different choirs brought musical offerings:

- Arabic choir from St. Luke and Living Word, Lansing
- Hmong choir from Our Savior, Lansing
- Hispanic choir from Pan de Vida, Detroit
- Pakistani choir from All Nations/POBLO
- French-speaking choir from Immanuel, Grand Rapids
- Swahili choir from St. Luke, Haslett and Immanuel, Grand Rapids

During the Scripture readings, a passage from Revelation 7 was read in English, Arabic, Swahili, French, and Spanish. A highlight for many participants was the prayer of the Church, in which everyone prayed out loud in their native tongue—first following prompts and then joining in the Lord’s Prayer.

After the service, participants enjoyed fellowship and authentic Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Indian foods, as well as pizza.

“We pray that this will encourage more congregations to explore multiethnic ministry amongst newcomers.”

The last part of the celebration was the presentation of testimonials and videos.

There were vendors from different mission and support organizations, including Christian Outreach For Africa (COFA); MOST Ministries; Lutheran Bible Translators; Living Word, Lansing; For Sudan; Christians in the Holy Land (art); POBLO; and Lutheran Heritage Foundation.

Rev. Trevor Sutton commented on the success of the event: *“We were overwhelmed by the tremendous turnout for this inaugural event! We pray that this will encourage more congregations to explore multiethnic ministry amongst newcomers.”*

To know more about or find multiethnic ministries in the Michigan District, visit michigandistrict.org/ethnicministry/. ■

Elisa L. Schulz is a staff writer, copy editor, and photographer for the Michigan District, LCMS.

LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

Michigan District Lutheran Laymen's League Elects 2025-26 Officers, Highlights Global Gospel Impact

At the recent Michigan District Lutheran Laymen's League convention, held April 26 at Faith, Grand Blanc, Lutheran Hour Ministries officers for the 2025-26 term were announced. Dennis Engelhard will serve as President, with Phil Krauss II re-elected as Secretary. Phil Krauss I will continue as Treasurer, and Aaron Baylis was newly elected Vice President.

During the convention, keynote speaker Jeff Craig-Meyer, Chief Global Constituency Officer at Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM), emphasized the global reach of LHM programs, which are sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with billions worldwide. Convention attendees learned how LHM is actively proclaiming the Gospel locally, across Michigan, throughout the United States, and around the world.



Photos courtesy of John Raffel

SAVE THE DATE

LLL/LHM Summit Celebration
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
Sunday, February 1, 2026

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Praise God!



**The following
 Mission Grants
 have been fully
 funded!**

PRAYING FOR SAFE SUMMER TRAVELS!

THE LORD WILL KEEP YOUR GOING OUT AND YOUR COMING IN FROM
 THIS TIME FORTH AND FOREVERMORE.
 PSALM 121:8 ESV

www.lwmlmichigan.org

Welcoming All God's Children
 (Lutheran Special Education Ministries) -
 \$25,000

Powering the expansion of Franklin Avenue
 Mission Mobile Ministries -
 \$25,000

Afghan Refugee Ministry
 (St. Michael, Portage Michigan) -
 \$25,000

Ministry scholarships for Shepherd's Canyon
 Retreats -
 \$20,000

Gospel Building for a Child's Future
 (Hands of Mercy) -
 \$14,500

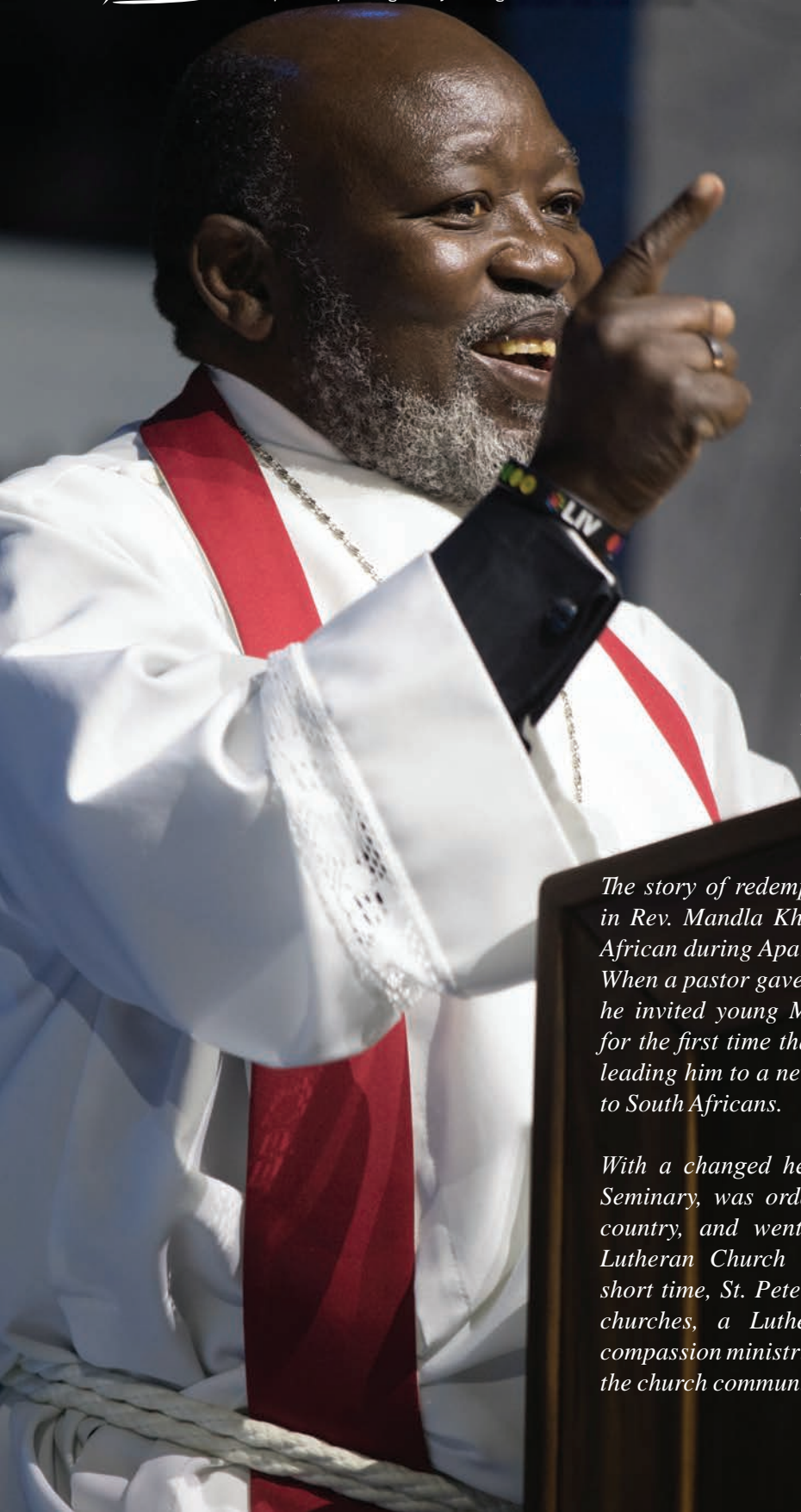




Michigan District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

People of Hope ... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ



2025 Summer Appeal

We continue to fix our eyes on Jesus and the mission He has to seek and to save the world. Through congregations in our District the Gospel is being shared across the state and the world.

We seek to continue to do more together.

This story is a true and powerful account of God's heart and work in Michigan District missions:

The story of redemption flowed through every word and deed in Rev. Mandla Khumalo's life. A non-believing young South African during Apartheid, he knew only violence and rebellion. When a pastor gave him respite as he ran from the government, he invited young Mandla to church. It was there he learned for the first time that God loves all people. He knew God was leading him to a new life of speaking and demonstrating peace to South Africans.

With a changed heart, he studied at Concordia Theological Seminary, was ordained by an LCMS partner church in his country, and went on to establish St. Peter Confessional Lutheran Church in Mhluzi, Middleburg, South Africa. In short time, St. Peter became a thriving network of 10 satellite churches, a Lutheran preschool and grade school, and compassion ministries to attend to health and economic needs in the church community.

Continued on reverse side



Rev. Moses Dangba

In 2019, the Michigan District welcomed Rev. Khumalo for a 2-year stay as a visiting missionary and evangelist. God's miraculous transformation that started with a pastor's invitation and turned a young rebel into a community builder compelled District leaders to ask, "How can we work together as God's people and People of Hope?"

Rev. Khumalo helped numerous Michigan District congregations develop and implement evangelism experiences. He shared his powerful transformation story with schools and congregations. He encouraged and participated in outreach to diverse racial and economic communities in Michigan. He mentored Rev. Moses Dangba, who was installed in 2023 as pastor at Living Word Lutheran Church in Lansing. He sought international partnerships for his beloved St. Peter Church.

He loved others as Christ loved him (John 13:34).

Friends, this is the mission of the Church! Christ came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).

With the same fervor as Rev. Khumalo's, the Michigan District will establish new and revitalized congregations, increase ethnic immigrant ministry, form campus ministry partnerships with local congregations, strengthen urban ministry community mentoring and workforce development, grow congregation-based compassion ministries, and enable international missions.



Attendees at the All Nations Celebration held in March.

Grants and assistance from the District already help congregations and ministries to share the love of Christ with their communities in all these ways. **Your gift to the Michigan District Mission & Ministry Fund or the Missions Endowment will continue Rev. Khumalo's vision to reach all God's people in the Michigan District and beyond.**



Rev. Randy Duncan meets with students.



Rev. Chris Bodley at A2E Camp

Shortly after Rev. Khumalo returned to South Africa in 2021, God called him to eternal rest. We remember his words: "At some point we will depart this world, no matter how and at what age, and when my time comes, my hope is that I shall have contributed to someone who could do better than I have done and that my name should not be remembered for anything but the humble contribution I shall have made to this world."

Thank God for our Brother Khumalo. We will carry on his work here in the District.

... eyes on Jesus ...

Rev. David A. Davis
Rev. David A. Davis, President
Michigan District, LCMS



Yes, President Davis, I would like to support the Michigan District, LCMS!

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of : \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Congregation/City _____

I would like my gift to support: Greatest Need (Unrestricted)
 Mission & Ministry Missions Endowment Other _____

I'm considering including the Michigan District in my estate, please contact me.

To donate via credit card visit michigandistrict.org/summerappeal

For a listing of additional funds visit: michigandistrict.org/donate/ways-to-give

Return to:
Attn: Development Department
Michigan District, LCMS
3773 Geddes Road Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Find Encouragement in Your Calling at BPM-Heartland 2025

Ministry is important and a blessing from the Lord ... but it's not always easy. Whether you are a pastor, teacher, church leader, volunteer, or any other church worker—here's a conference for you!

St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth invites you to Best Practices for Ministry – Heartland (BPH). This year's theme is *Encouragement in Our Callings*, focusing on the joy and gifts that our callings bring, as well as the stresses and challenges that may come our way. Through worship, fellowship, and practical learning, this conference is designed to encourage and strengthen you!

What you can expect:

- Inspiring worship services
- Dozens of breakout sessions on real-life ministry topics
- Opportunities to connect with leaders and other

Special Recognition

Welcome to the Michigan District!

The Michigan District welcomed 6 pastoral candidates and 4 vicars to its roster this week.

On Monday, April 28 and Tuesday, April 29, two separate worship services took place at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. (CTSFW) for assignment of vicarage and internships and for call placements, respectively. No vicars or deaconess interns from CTSFW were assigned to the Michigan District this year. The following pastoral candidates received their first placement in the Michigan District: Peter Candreva (St. Peter, Petersburg), Alexander Hinojosa (Prince of Peace, Farmington Hills), Sean McNeil (St. John, Au Gres), Alexander Ogden (Family of God, Detroit), and Michael Speckhard (St. Peter, Hemlock).



ministry workers from across the region

- A welcoming atmosphere—come as you are!
- And yes—it's free to attend!

Best Practices in Ministry – Heartland will take place on August 10–12, 2025 at St. Lorenz Worship and Event Center located at 850 W Genesee St., Frankenmuth, Mich. Whether you've attended before or this would be your first time, please consider being a part of BPH 2025. For more information or to register, visit stlorenz.churchcenter.com/pages/bpmh.

On Wednesday, April 30, Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. (CSL) held two separate worship services for assignment of vicarage and internships and for call placements, respectively. Vicars assigned to the Michigan District are Karl Camp (St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth); Paul Engelhardt (Our Savior, Lansing); Robert Moore (Messiah, Clio); and Jarod Vorseth (St. Luke Haslett). Candidate receiving his first placement in Michigan from CSL is Peter Burch (Emmanuel, Britton).

Please keep these students and their families in your prayers as they transition from seminary life into vicarage and full-time ministry.

Photos courtesy of Concordia Seminary St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne

LCMS MICHIGAN DISTRICT

CALL DAY APRIL 28–29, 2025



PETER CANDREVA
(PASTOR ELECT)

ALEXANDER HINOJOSA
(PASTOR ELECT)

SEAN MCNEIL
(PASTOR ELECT)



MICHAEL SPECKHARD
(PASTOR ELECT)

ALEXANDER OGDEN
(PASTOR ELECT)

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, FT. WAYNE



LCMS MICHIGAN DISTRICT

CALL DAY APRIL 30, 2025



PETER BURCH
(PASTOR ELECT)

KARL CAMP

PAUL ENGELHARDT



ROBERT MOORE

JAROD VORSETH

CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS





Michigan District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-3098

People of Hope ... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

Michigan In Touch Summer 2025 Issue

Congregational Ministry Summit
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
January 31, 2026

Live to
Tell About It!
1 Peter 3:15-16

SAVE THE DATE

LLL/LHM Summit Celebration Worship Service
February 1, 2026

Calendar of Events

JULY 2025

- 19–23 National Youth Gathering
New Orleans, Louisiana
- 28–30 Higgins Lake Principals Conference
Higgins Lake

AUGUST 2025

- 3–5 Board of Directors
Zion, Holland
- 6 Early Childhood Directors Day
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
- 7 Early Childhood Conference
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
- 10–12 Best Practices Heartland
St. Lorenz, Frankenmuth
- 12–14 Junior High Gathering
Frankenmuth

SEPTEMBER 2025

- 2–3 Emeriti Conference
Frankenmuth
- 16 New Church Worker Conference
Holiday Inn, Mt. Pleasant

For more information about these and other events visit:
michigandistrict.org/events

- 17–18 Circuit Visitors Conference
Peace, Ann Arbor
- 22–25 Transitional Interim Conference
Hillsdale
- 26–28 Church Extension Fund Conference
Auburn Hills

OCTOBER 2025

- 2–4 Lutheran Educators Association Conference
St. Louis, Missouri
- 6–8 All Pastors Conference
Boyne Mountain
- 13–15 Ministry Specialist Conference
Drury Inn, Grand Rapids
- 21 Board of Directors
Historic Trinity, Detroit

Roster updates can be found at
www.michigandistrict.org/callsandvacancies