



# TEXAS MESSENGER

*From the president*

## We have the Sacrament

By Rev. Michael Newman  
President,  
LCMS Texas District  
[txlcms.org](http://txlcms.org)  
[mnewman.org](http://mnewman.org)



### FIRST OF THREE-PART SERIES

You know that the Thanksgiving meal is not merely about food. It is about relationships, gratitude, love, serving one another, sharing joy and even lifting each other up during sorrow. This special holiday cannot be distilled into calories, or a basic nutritional formula for individuals. No, there is much more.

The same is true of the church's Thanksgiving meal, its Eucharist, Holy Communion. This article is the first of three that examines the administration of the Lord's Supper in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. For several months, the LCMS Council of Presidents has engaged in study and discussion on this topic. I've also worked with the Texas District circuit visitors to study and discuss our theology and practice of the Lord's Supper in view of the COVID-19 shutdown.

Foundational to the administration of the Sacrament is the understanding of the doctrine of the church.

The church is about more than individual intake of God's blessings. According to God's Word, His church is people in relationship with God and each other. As God loves us, we love each other (**1 JOHN 4:19**). As God gives His gifts, we are led to "stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another" (**HEB. 10:24-25**). When we are clothed with Christ in Baptism, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (**GAL. 3:28**). In the Lord's Supper, "because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (**1 COR. 10:17**).

God's church is a hope-giving and soul-restoring family, confessing sins to one another and praying for one another (**JAMES 5:16**). God's redeemed people, connected through the Means of Grace, become a city set on a hill in a dark world, a community that loves one another, exhibits gentleness with one another and bears one another's burdens (**GAL. 6:1-2**). The church is exactly what a lonely, individualized, fear-filled, anxious, love-starved and hopeless world needs.

But isn't it true that each of us often needs to repent of how we have

regarded Jesus' church — even pre-COVID? Have you ever considered church a 60- or 120-minute weekly activity, looking for a sermon that fed you and music that pleased you, but your relational calling with fellow members of the body of Christ was lost as lunch plans floated prominently in the back of your mind? How often have accountability, prayer for one another and bearing one another's burdens slipped away as church became one more stop in a busy life?

In a conversation about the administration of the Lord's Supper, the nature of the church needs to be understood. The church is a unique beacon of eternal hope for a lost world. Along with the vertical relationship of Christ Jesus with us, the horizontal relationship of one believer with another is integral to understanding the Holy Supper.

How does media factor into the church's practice? That's coming next month.

### Questions for reflection:

Read Col. 3:1-17

What do these verses say about life as the church — God's people together?

What growth areas do you see as a congregation? What successes?

**Prayer starter:** Ask God to slow you down so you can connect with fellow believers in need.

# SUPPORTING MISSIONS ACROSS TEXAS



## GIFTS

No gift to Texas Partners in Mission is too small. We need gifts to reach the thousands of people in Texas with the life-saving Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Every dollar contributed to Texas Partners in Mission goes directly to bringing the Gospel to people who don't know Jesus Christ. Thank you for your dedication to the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ!



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Texas District Church Extension Fund will match the gift 100% to Texas Partners in Mission AND pay an additional 1% APY during the first term of the new investment.

Learn more at: [texascef.org/texastwostep](https://texascef.org/texastwostep)



"That's what we're all about. Giving Him the glory and making sure that these kids get to know Him more deeply. So we really want to emphasize discipleship and help a lot of students grow in that faith. Some that don't even know Him at all, getting to come to faith too."

~ Rev. Mark Hotopp,  
Co-Founder of Veritas, Veritas Teacher, Planting Pastor

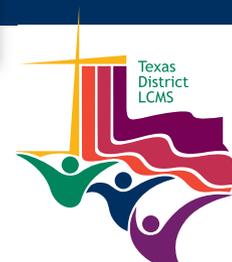
**GIVE NOW!**  
[txlcms.org/tpim](https://txlcms.org/tpim)



## PRAY

It is our number one priority. Our goal is to have 10% of the Texas District, LCMS members praying regularly for the mission.  
[bit.ly/missionprayertx](https://bit.ly/missionprayertx)

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." ~ Mark 16:15





## Be an INTERPRETER

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. **2 TIM. 4:3-5**



I have had the opportunity of providing linguistic services to the Department of Justice as a federal interpreter. During the training, I was taught to never alter the message whatsoever, but to convey it to the non-English speaker exactly how it is being said in a language that they can understand.

But sometimes the judge didn't have very good news to convey. I have had to let many people know that they have "x" number of days to leave the country. Many times, my heart would break and I would want to not say what the judge said, but rather what the respondents would like to hear. But then again, it would be me having a hearing for lying in court.

When I read 2 Tim. 4:3-5, I can't help but think about my court experience. Paul reminds Timothy of the importance of preaching the Word faithfully, never altering the message whatsoever, conveying the message exactly how God said it in a way that his hearers could understand. And His message is always Good News for those who repent in Christ. But Paul says that there would be a time (today!) when people would not endure sound teaching, they would not want to hear the truth. Instead, they would have

itching ears and would find for themselves teachers (or interpreters) that would say what they wanted to hear instead of what God had said.

So Paul instructs Timothy — and us — to be sober-minded, to be aware and focused on conveying God's message and to do the work of an evangelist. But what is an evangelist? We read in our district's very own *Evangelist 101* training manual that "the word 'Evangelist' is the English version of the Greek word *euangelizomai*," meaning "to share a good message."

Acts 21:8 tells us that Philip was an evangelist who was one of the seven appointed by the apostles to care for the church's poor and neglected.

These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them." (**ACTS 6:6**)

They were sent to convey God's message without alteration.

I want to do that too! I want to be an interpreter for God's Kingdom, like Philip. I want to convey God's message without alteration, to be sober-minded, to endure suffering, to do the work of an evangelist and to fulfill the ministry that God gave me.

What about you? Would you join me in the evangelist movement that the Spirit began in the Texas District? Would you join me in bringing God's Word to those who are far from Him, an unaltered message that proclaims Jesus Christ and Him crucified?



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Contact Deaconess Guerra at [noemi@txlcms.org](mailto:noemi@txlcms.org) or **515-528-6148**.



**Rev. Dr. Jerry Kieschnick**  
Chief Executive Officer

In a few weeks folks from around the country will be gathered in the homes of loved ones, most of whom will be seated at a table laden with food of all kinds.

In our home, Terry pulls out all the stops, trying to please every family member who has a favorite menu item, and to provide options for those who don't care for the stuff others requested.

The items on Terry's menu usually include the following:

- ▶ Appetizers of boiled shrimp, bacon wrapped mini sausages, cheese and crackers and spinach dip
- ▶ Baked or smoked ham and turkey
- ▶ Mashed potatoes with brown gravy
- ▶ Candied yams with marshmallows and pecans
- ▶ Creamed corn casserole
- ▶ Rolls and butter
- ▶ Garden salad and Jello-salad
- ▶ Pecan pie, cherry pie and pumpkin pie
- ▶ Water, tea and coffee
- ▶ Chocolate, vanilla and strawberry ice cream

After dinner has been consumed, some folks lounge around the family room, others watch football games, some snooze for a few minutes or more, and

then we get called out to the backyard to help with an annual project requiring more than one person to accomplish. Many hands make light work.

Before the meal, I always offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessings of people, health and home, faith and freedom, family and forgiveness. Here's at least a part of the prayer I'll be praying this year:

Dear Creator of the universe, Savior of the world, Comforter of mankind. We thank and praise you.  
For forgiveness in a world where many live in guilt;  
For freedom in a world where many live in slavery;  
For family in a world where many live in isolation,  
For food in a world where many live in hunger;

For friends in a world where many live alone;

For faith in a world where many live in fear;

We give you thanks O Lord, imploring your power and presence among us, this day and every day.

In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

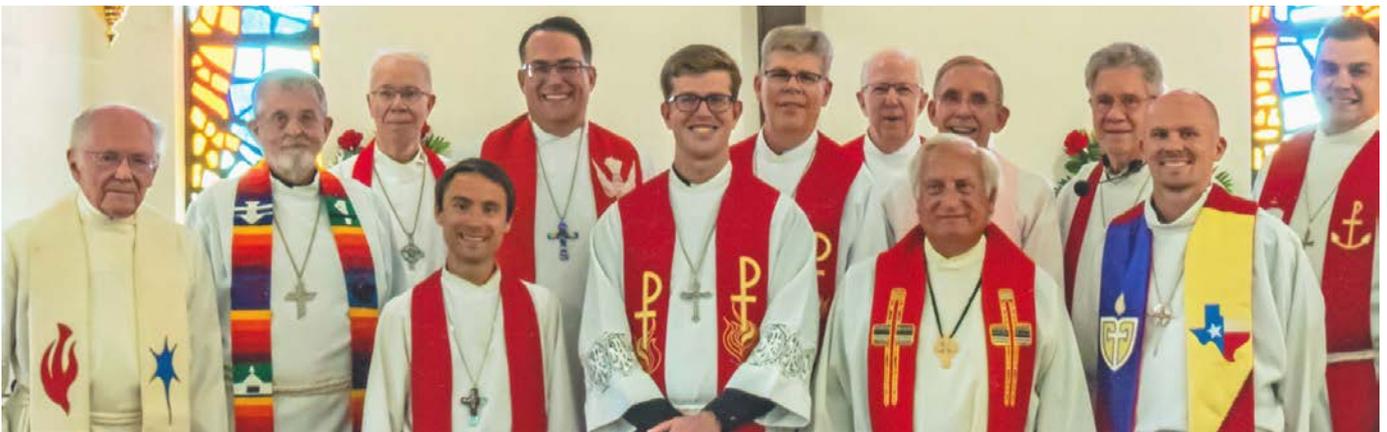
Have a happy and blessed Thanksgiving!

Legacy  
Deo  
God's Gifts.  
Your Legacy.



## SAN ANTONIO

On Aug. 28, Rev. Dr. Brian Kachelmeier was installed as senior pastor of Mount Calvary. Pictured are, from left, (front row) Revs. Al Loeschman, Ken Mitschke, Carlos Boerger, Mike Middaugh, Bryan Wolfmueller, Brian Kachelmeier, Craig Meissler, David Brockhouse, Elder McCants, Thomas Petersen, Mark Barz; (back row) Mark Harris, Neldo Schmidt, Don Fraker, Nathan Wendorf, Garrett Buvinghausen and Doug Bielefeldt.



## LAGO VISTA

On July 24, Rev. Drew Thompson was installed as pastor of Christ Our Savior. Brothers participating are, from left, Revs. Thomas Petersen, Dr. David Kluth, James Kretzmann, Dr. James Marriott, Nathan Wendorf, Drew Thompson, David Thompson, John Selle, Dr. Mark Dankis, Dr. Mike Coppersmith, David Hintze, Jacob Boessling and Chris Brynestad.

## SERBIN

Members of the St. Paul confirmation class of 1972 gathered for their 50th anniversary on May 29. Shown are, from left, (front row) Karen Schmidt, Kathy Kalbas, Beverly Malke; (back row) Robin Buscha, Raymond Arldt, Billy Krause and Leroy Kalbas.





## BELLMEAD (WACO)

On July 24, Rev. Dr. Brian J. Hesse was installed as senior pastor of St. Paul. Guests are, from left, (front row) Rev. Kevin Lentz, Rev. Gerry Harrow, Rev. J. Brown, Rev. Dr. Brian Hesse, Rev. David Bergman, Rev. Robert Kobler, Rev. Kurt Rutz; (back row) Rev. Larry Knobloch, DCE Charessa Koontz, Rev. Larry Krueger, Rev. Michael Albrecht and Rev. Donnie Poole.



## SEGUIN

Jack David Reams was baptized on June 19 at Grace Lutheran Church. Pictured along with Jack are his parents, Josh and Rebecca Reams, and Rev. Roger Hotopp, Grace pastor.



## FREDERICKSBURG

Ruth Ann Carrell (right) was baptized on Sept. 4 at Resurrection Lutheran Church. Pictured with Ruth Ann are her parents, Chris and Bonnie Claire Carrell, and her older sister, Elliott.

**HOUSTON**



On Sept. 11, Gethsemane Lutheran Church and Preschool held an accreditation celebration, with certificates presented by Debbie Baacke of the Texas District Lutheran School Accreditation Commission. Pictured with Rev. Jerry McNamara are those who were involved with the certification process, including teachers, parents and Gethsemane members, (front row) Monirah Bacnik, Vickie Ballard Thompson, Anne Kieschnik, George Aschenbeck, Hayley Soto, Timothy Soto and Gabriella Soto; (middle row) Debbie Baacke, Kim Perry (preschool director), Miriam Velazquez, Lizeth Vega, Georgina Hernandez, Amy Garner, Ashley Martinez, Marcia Williams-Potts and Laura Molitor.



Gethsemane volunteers loaded a truck with donations for Ukrainians in need, which will be delivered by Orphan Grain Train. Pictured are, from left (front row) George Menghi, Andrew Chelsea, Dorothy Krohn, Lisa Sitz, Mary Ann Caton, Edda Ertunca; (back row) Curtis Sitz and Charles Johnson.



**CLEVELAND**

On June 12, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church welcomed James Collins as a new member by acclamation of faith. Pastor is Rev. Craig Whitson.



## CANYON

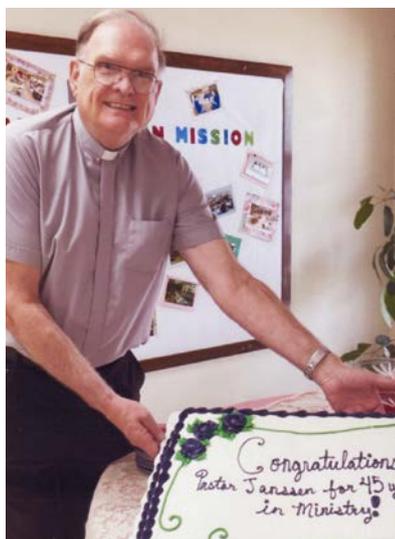
On Sept. 10, members of the LWML Panhandle Zone gathered at St. Paul for a “Defeating the Enemy” self-defense workshop. The session, led by Rev. J. Brown, an eighth-degree black belt, was about three hours and concluded with a fellowship lunch. Pastor Brown, who serves as Legacy Giving Ambassador with Legacy Deo, has 45 years of experience in the martial arts. However, this self-defense workshop wasn’t just about guarding from physical assailants. Holy Scripture was central to the gathering as participants learned how Jesus defends us from the devil, the world and our own flesh. Although we cannot always be secure about our physical safety, we can rely on God’s promises that, when in the fold of Jesus, our spiritual health will always be free from danger.

## COPPERAS COVE

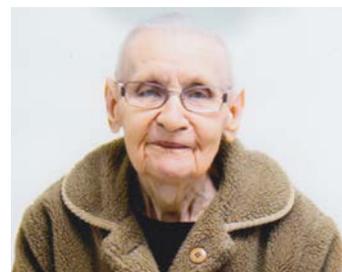


Jeanette Jost was recognized for her devotion to Immanuel Lutheran Church by volunteering as organist for many years. She spends many hours practicing and perfecting music for every occasion. The congregation cannot appreciate her enough for her commitment as its organist. Bill Wessels, congregation president, is pictured presenting a gift to Jeanette as an expression of the congregation’s appreciation.

## ABILENE



The members of Our Savior helped Rev. LaVerne Janssen celebrate his 45th anniversary in the pastoral ministry. Pastor Janssen has served Our Savior since 1992.



Rosa Lee Fletcher, a member of Our Savior, celebrated her 99th birthday on Sept. 3.



On Sept. 18, Rev. Jeff Jenkins, pastor of Texas Tech Lutheran Student Center, was the keynote speaker for the Our Savior Mission Festival.

# Zion, Walburg, welcomes new teachers

There was great rejoicing at Zion Lutheran Church and School, Walburg, as the school year began with three new rostered teachers. Additional first-, third- and fourth grade-classes has brought to Zion the opportunity to serve more children with the Gospel. Please join us in welcoming Kari Strehlow (first grade), Dawn Mueller (fourth grade) and Kristin Stuewe (third grade).

Kari previously served Faith Lutheran School, Marietta, Ga., and is a graduate of Concordia University Chicago. Dawn previously served Upbring in Austin and is a graduate of Concordia University Nebraska. Kristin is an alum of Zion and a Concordia University Texas graduate. She comes to us from Redeemer, Austin.

We thank God for these wonderful servants among us!

**Thomas W. Wrege, Zion principal**



Newly installed teachers are, from left, Kari Strehlow, Dawn Mueller and Kristin Stuewe.

## WALLER

► Members of Cross of Christ show one of the quilts they prepared to be donated for missions

▼ Rev. David Cecil confirmed Austin Reeves on Aug. 21.



## FAIRVIEW

Members of Immanuel assembled gift bags for Hope Women's Clinic, a crisis pregnancy center. An LCMS grant enabled the Immanuel Life Team to fill the bags with an adult Bible, children's Bible and women's devotion book.



# Praying for a harvest in North Houston

It was 10:02 a.m. Alarms were buzzing. A group of leaders from across North Houston paused to pray, remembering Jesus' words:

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (LUKE 10:2)

Then they resumed their conversation. It was about how the Lord has been, and might soon be, answering their 10:02 prayers.

This was no ordinary table. It was a Harvest Table, an incarnational manifestation of the Harvest Partnership. There were pastors of sending churches, church planters and pastors of planted churches emerging as sending churches. Their vision is for multiplication of churches because more churches reach more people, new churches reach new people, and different churches reach different people.

And they have realized that they can do more together. No church planter goes it alone. Their stewardship involves more than finances. Each one brings something to the table, beginning with spiritual capital.

If you have read this far, consider it your invitation to start praying the 10:02 prayer. You'll be investing spiritual capital in the harvest. If the idea of a Harvest Table in your area sounds like fun (and it is), reach out to Al Doering at [ald@christqu.net](mailto:ald@christqu.net) or Steve Sohns at [stephensohns@gmail.com](mailto:stephensohns@gmail.com).



The North Houston Harvest Table of the Harvest Partnership are, from left (seated) Jim Menke, emeritus; Seth Kunze, The Dwelling, New Caney; Nelson Hernandez, Immanuel, Houston, and planting in Plum Grove; Paul Korabandi, Ignite church plant, Spring, for Telegu-speaking people; Mark Brunette, Joy, Houston; John Moore, Good Shepherd, Huffman; Doyle Theimer, Christ the King, Kingwood; Laura and Mark Pulliam, Lazarus, Spring; (standing) Trey Sansom, Project 242 micro-church plant in Conroe; David Bailes, Living Savior, Montgomery; Stephen Sohns, Resurrection, Spring; and Al Doering, Christ the King, Kingwood.



Nelson Hernandez is pictured with the Fall 2022 ESL class in Plum Grove.



## BIG SPRING

Alive in Christ Lutheran Church hosted a blood drive on Aug. 13. Twenty products were donated.

## Share your news with us!

Send photos, stories and newsletters for *The Lutheran Witness* to:

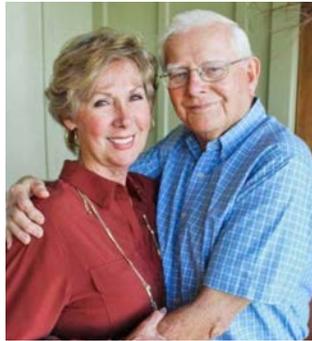
- ▶ [txmess@txlcms.org](mailto:txmess@txlcms.org)
- ▶ Texas Messenger, LCMS Texas District, 7900 E. Highway 290 Austin, TX 78724-2499



Please ensure photos sent electronically are high resolution. Send the largest size from your phone.

# CONGRATS!

These Lutheran friends of yours celebrated or will celebrate wedding anniversaries of **50 YEARS** or more.



**David and Virginia Free**, members of Our Savior, Centerville, celebrated 55 years of marriage on Sept. 30.



**Bud and Doris Hammond**, members of Redeemer, Odessa, celebrated 70 years of marriage on Sept. 27.



**Dick and Vera Hemingway**, members of Lord of Life, Plano, celebrated 75 years of marriage on Sept. 12.

**San Angelo, Trinity**  
Don and Susan Barnhart  
50 years, Sept. 2

Gene and Doris Wendland  
55 years, Sept. 30

**Manheim, Ebenezer**  
Dorothy and Raymond Thoene  
61 years, Nov. 23

**Houston, Gethsemane**  
James and Darlene Ellison  
55 years, Nov. 25

**The Grove, St. Paul**  
Jerry and Betty Sohns  
60 years, Nov. 3

**Abilene, Our Savior**  
Walter and Pat Kionka  
56 years, Sept. 24

**La Grange, Mount Calvary**  
Paul and Geraldine Teinert  
55 years, Oct.

Robert and Genelda Pavlik  
56 years, Oct.

Weldon and Carol Von Minden  
62 years, Oct.



**Ron and Sandy Underwood**, members of Lamb of God, Flower Mound, celebrated 50 years of marriage with a renewal of vows at Immanuel, Harrold, where they were married on Aug. 5, 1972. Rev. Gil Franke, emeritus, officiated at their wedding and led them in the renewal service.

From left, Rev. Gil Franke, Ron and Sandy Underwood and Rev. Steve Brummet, who is currently serving as vacancy pastor at Immanuel. He also serves as pastor of Zion, Lockett (Vernon).

Ron and Sandy are the first couple Pastor Franke married. In 1997, he led them in the renewal of vows for their 25th anniversary, also at Immanuel. Ron arranged both renewals as surprise anniversary presents for Sandy.



On Sept. 18, Zion of Mission Valley, Victoria, gave thanks to God for those who have celebrated 50 or more years of marriage. From left are Ronny and Seda Weaver (56), Ken and Darla Sifford (50), Edward and Iris Heller (56), Wayne and Peggy Polster (50), Marvin and Pauline Janak (60), John and Barbara Schmidt (58), Jimmy and Eva Cooke (50), David and Bettye Pribyl (57), Calton and Sherilyn Arnecke (54), Ray and Sheron Alex (57), Don and Shelyv Schneider (64), Paul and Judy Faulkner (51), Kern and Pat Harper (54) and Mark and Priscilla Dornburg (51).

# The joy of SERVING

By Dr. Bill Hinz  
Director, School  
Ministry



Every day in our Lutheran schools and early childhood centers, our students learn about the love and forgiveness of Jesus, and they learn the Word of God!

Our Lutheran early childhood centers are a wonderful gift. We have the tremendous privilege of sharing with the children examples of what it means to love and serve others.

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

PROV. 22:6

Here is a precious example of the lesson of servanthood shared with us from Kathy Entzenberger, who serves as early childhood director of Lutheran Education Association of Houston (LEAH) Downtown Academy:

“Not long ago, I asked a student what it meant to be a servant. The three-year-old exclaimed, ‘To wash peoples’ feet!’ Obviously, he has been impacted by Christian education. At chapel, as we honored one of our custodians who is retiring, we talked about how she has been a servant for many years, helping to keep our school clean and healthy for us — not for herself. Some days, she took out our stinky trash. Other days, she wiped up our painting spills. Serving is something we do for others. It is not something we do to benefit ourselves.

“A few children volunteered to wash the feet of other children even



▲ Children at LEAH Downtown Academy, Houston, helped Francis Pless celebrate her retirement.

◀ Students attended a chapel service that highlighted being a servant. They responded by washing each other's feet.

though sometimes feet are ‘stinky.’ Acts of service are a child’s way and our way of being the hands and feet of Jesus to the world.”

Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. 1 JOHN 3:18

I am thankful for our all our Lutheran schools! They are daily blessings, daily gifts from God for our students and their families.

As our students experience the love and forgiveness of Jesus, they learn to love one another, serve, extend grace and honor God by their actions.

Thank you, dear Lord, for the gift of servanthood that allows us to share your love with others. May God bless us, and may all the ends of the earth worship Him.

# Gather, Grow, Go

At new approach to campus ministry this fall will bring development to students' faith and expression to life throughout their years at Concordia University Texas.

"The vision of Concordia Texas Campus Ministry is for the students, faculty and staff to **gather** to worship, **grow** in a life group and **go** on a mission trip locally and globally," said Rev. Jake Boessling, campus pastor and program director.

The 2022-23 school year theme centers around the question: "What is life?" The answer comes from John 10:10, which focuses on the hope that many will find the abundant life that only Jesus can give.

"Campus ministry has grown me in so many ways — in loving people, spreading the wonderful, Good News of



**Rev. Jake Boessling**

God, genuinely listening to people and knowing people," said Angel Hart, a sophomore from Katy. "Campus ministry has impacted me in ways that will affect the rest of my life. I am delighted and excited to see how God works through me and all of us to proclaim the good news of Jesus at Concordia."

Student leaders and staff launch life-group Bible studies, lead groups, disciple with new believers, craft student-led worship services and pray daily for many who do not yet know Jesus.

Pastor Boessling adds, "I have witnessed faculty and staff showing the love of Jesus to students by building relationships outside the classroom through fun and play, sharing the Gospel message and praying over them through tough situations."



## GATHER TO WORSHIP

Jesus invites us to gather in a community of friends to meet His presence to worship God. Gather experiences strengthen our relationship with God by forming habits of hearing the Word of God, praying, generosity, baptismal remembrance, showing hospitality and confessing our sins. The two main GATHER experiences are the weekly chapel and refuge worship.



## GROW IN A LIFE GROUP

Jesus invites us to grow in our relationship with God and other people by being disciplined by others. The primary experience in campus ministry to grow in your faith is by joining a life group. A life group is a small group of people who read God's Word and practice what it says.



## GO ON A MISSION TRIP

Jesus invites us to go into our daily life to join Him on His mission to help others meet, know and follow Him. Campus ministry offers short-term and long-term experiences in our local Austin community and worldwide.

### About Concordia University Texas

Concordia University Texas (CTX) is Austin's leading Christian university, offering a range of dynamic and dialogue-centered liberal arts undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs in a caring and personalized learning environment. CTX is located in thriving and growing Austin and offers courses online and on its scenic, 400-plus acre nature-preserve campus. Concordia is committed to providing higher education opportunities to students of all backgrounds and being a place where the adventure of faith, learning and life-changing experiences leads to meaningful work. Visit [concordia.edu](http://concordia.edu).

# His love for us

**By Pat Fick**  
CAN-DO Director

This past summer I had the opportunity to backpack in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park with my friend Susan Fluegge. Seeing majestic rock walls, giant sequoia trees, glistening lakes, star-filled skies and an American black bear were a few of the spectacular sights to behold. Being in nature brings peace and joy and can encourage people to constructively connect to their Creator. As John Muir says, “Keep close to nature’s heart ... and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean.”

On the last day of our adventure we decided to do the tourist thing and hike over to General Sherman. It is actually the world’s largest tree, measured by volume. It is 275 feet tall and more than 36 feet in diameter at the base. That’s a big tree! In order to help people fathom how tall it is, you get to walk the height of the tree as you travel from the parking lot to the base of the tree — 275 feet!

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. ... When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? **PS. 8:1, 3-4**

When we arrived at General Sherman’s tree, there were lots of people from all over the world taking pictures and admiring the stately sequoia. Two delightful young women from Germany took our photo and then we gladly returned the favor. (Since the tree is so tall, they had to teach me how to do a vertical panoramic picture.)

There is another famous tree that had a big impact on humanity. It is the tree that carried the Savior of the world as He freely sacrificed His life so that we could be forgiven. Jesus died on a tree to wash our spirits clean! It wasn’t the nails that held Him to the tree. It was His overwhelming, unflinching love for us!

But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **ROM. 5:8**

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. **1 PETER 2:24**

Thank God for the big tree that proves God’s big love for us. This is the message we get to share with the world as we serve others with big love.



Pat Fick and Susan Fluegge pose for a photo in front of General Sherman, a giant sequoia tree.

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **GAL. 2:20**

That big tree was for you and me. Thank you Jesus!

## Donations for CAN-DO Missions are welcome!

**Send to:**  
Concordia University Texas  
ATTN: CAN-DO MISSIONS  
11400 Concordia University Dr.  
Austin TX 78726

**Call** 512-313-4332 to donate via credit card.  
**Visit** [can-do.concordia.edu](http://can-do.concordia.edu)



## Ministry driven, people focused

The headline describes what Texas District Church Extension Fund has been focusing on this year and moving forward. However, it is a vision we cannot accomplish alone. It is made possible by faithful partners in ministry like you. Our Scripture focus continues to be 1 Cor. 3:9 (NIV):

For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

We are co-workers, and with each and every investor and borrower — past, present, and future — we can continue to partner together, creating spaces and places for worship and helping build His Kingdom.

**YOU** are God's field — God's building, along with Texas CEF and the LCMS Texas District. By joining our fields together, along with Texas Partners in Mission (TPIM), we can build upon each other's field to help start new mission congregations. With the help of more co-work-



**Raelyn Pracht**  
CEF Marketing Specialist

ers, our investors and those who donate to TPIM, the Texas District can continue to grow.

You can take steps today to share Jesus across Texas by participating in the Texas Two-Step Program. It's a simple way to increase your investment in Texas CEF and have your donation to TPIM doubled (see page 2).

There are only two steps:

**STEP ONE:**

An investor opens a new fixed-rate investment of \$5,000 or more and gives a gift of at least 10% of the initial investment amount to Texas Partners in Mission.

**STEP TWO:**

Texas District Church Extension Fund will match the gift 100 percent to Texas Partners in Mission *and* will pay a bonus 1 percent interest rate for the initial term of the investment.

You can participate today! For more information and to watch a video, visit [texascef.org/texastwostep](https://texascef.org/texastwostep).

Download an application today at [texascef.org](https://texascef.org).

### Texas District Church Extension Fund

7900 E. Highway 290, Austin, TX 78724

888-951-1233 • 512-646-1233

[Rpracht@texascef.org](mailto:Rpracht@texascef.org)

[texascef.org](https://texascef.org)



Getty Images

# Making problems 'seem smaller'

## *Telescope gives girls different view of life*

For girls at New Life Children's Center, nights spent looking through a telescope have been eye-opening. Getting a glimpse of the solar system thousands of miles away has given the girls a new perspective on life and their relationships.

New Life Program Manager Edward Smith, whom the girls lovingly nicknamed "Mr. Ed," was the brainchild behind the telescope activity that started in 2019.

After Edward and his family attended an astronomy night at Tye Preston Memorial Library in Canyon Lake, he approached the library's astronomy club and they agreed to loan him their thousand-dollar Orion 10-inch telescope.

New Life provides a safe, home-like setting for girls ages 11-17 who experienced trauma earlier in life. At

our children's center girls have a chance to start over, to heal and grow, often through special activities.

Upon first seeing the rings of Saturn or the moon 240,000 miles away, the girls were shocked, Mr. Ed recalled. "That looks like a rock," a girl observed. "That is a rock," he replied. "There are rocks on the moon." Another girl said, "This is real, right?" Edward reminds the girls that what they're seeing is not a television show or a movie.

After reflecting on what she'd seen through the telescope, one girl said, "It makes me feel better knowing that I'm so small." When asked to elaborate, she said, "Sometimes my problems seem so big and there's nothing else, so my whole world is these problems. But seeing the stars and realizing how big space is makes my problems seem smaller."

Everyone can play a role in breaking the cycle of child abuse and neglect. For more information on becoming an Upbring partner, please visit [Upbring.org/Get-Involved](http://Upbring.org/Get-Involved).



[Upbring.org](http://Upbring.org)

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# Meet our ministry impact partners

**THE MINISTRY IMPACT PARTNER** is intended for college-aged students who are sincerely considering outdoors ministry as a full-time career. The position can be filled by someone who opted for a gap year in school or to get a year of experience in outdoors ministry.

The responsibilities include hosting guests, running camp activities and cleaning all around the campsite. Ministry impact partner is a five-to-nine month seasonal position that follows the school-year calendar. Ministry impact partners receive valuable training and skills that can be used not only in outdoors ministry, but also to just about any career. Benefits of the position include proficiency and practice in public speaking, leadership, program development, scheduling, service, hospitality and many other skill sets.

This year, Camp Lone Star has the privilege of working alongside three ministry impact partners. Ainsley Fibiger, Brooklyn Krenz and Phoebe Bergt are excited for this season and are eagerly anticipating the growth and experience they will gain from this opportunity.

Ainsley is from Fort Worth and has been studying child development at Weatherford Community College. She has been a camper for eight years, worked on junior staff for three years and served on summer staff in 2021 and 2022. She is looking forward to helping out camp however she can.

Brooklyn is from Tulsa, Okla., and is working on getting a degree in business administration. She worked at Camp Lutherhoma from 2019 to 2022. She is excited to learn more about camp ministry and help serve alongside her peers.



Pictured are, from left, Brooklyn Krenz, Aubrie Stromberg and Ainsley Fibiger. Brooklyn and Ainsley are serving as ministry impact partners while Aubrie is serving as a marketing intern.

Phoebe is from Belleville, Ill., and has been to Camp Lone Star for a number of years and is excited to serve in this role.

Additionally, Aubrie Stromberg has joined the team as a marketing intern. Aubrie is from Taylor and is studying visualization at Texas A&M University. She started coming to Camp Lone Star as a camper in 2008 and served on summer staff in 2021 and 2022.

Ainsley, Brooklyn, Phoebe and Aubrie have already been an abundant blessing to Camp Lone Star this retreat season. Camp is always seeking to add more ministry impact partners who are eager to serve and grow in their relationship with Christ.

For more information, visit [camplonestar.org/employment](http://camplonestar.org/employment).



♦ CAMP ♦

# LONE STAR

2016 Camp Lone Star Road  
La Grange, TX 78945

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Jan. 20-22**  
Junior Staff  
Workshop

**Feb. 3-5**  
Womens  
Renewal Retreat

## CONTACT US

**Lutheran Outdoors  
Ministry of Texas**

P.O. Box 457; La Grange, TX 78945  
[info@camplonestar.org](mailto:info@camplonestar.org)  
979-968-1657 • [camplonestar.org](http://camplonestar.org)



# Thankful prayers

As we celebrate Thanksgiving this month, we are reminded to be thankful for our harvests and food, and also for *all* of our many blessings from God. We take time to remember where our blessings come from and look forward to worshipping with our church family.

Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!

PS. 105:1

Why not begin your day by thanking the Lord? Why not combine your time with family with some time together with the Lord? How can we practice thanksgiving every day and speak to God in prayer and praise?

Unfortunately, it's not our nature to be content or thankful. We think we don't have much to be thankful for. Instead, we think about high taxes, excess traffic, terrorism, the pandemic and many other troublesome issues. For most of the world, there is no contentment and no thanksgiving.

But as Christians, we are God's people and should have a thankful spirit. We who have heard the angels tell of God's Good News of great joy ought to be rejoicing. We who have been delivered from the fires of hell should continuously praise the God who sent His Son to give His life so we might live in eternal bliss with Him. Contentment and thanksgiving ought to be our regular fare, every day.

Our daily regimen should include prayer, which should begin with thanking God for His many blessings in our lives. A good way to structure prayer is to think of three categories to be thankful for — our faith, our family and our earthly treasurers (such as home, lifestyle and successes).

## Faith

Be thankful as a Christian that you are a Christian, that God has given you this gift of faith. Continue to ask God to strengthen your faith each day.

## Family

Many thoughts come to mind, including love, respect, honor, responsibility, care, support, encouragement and teaching. Above all the others is love.

## Earthly treasurers

God has blessed each of us with adequate resources of food, shelter and the ability to succeed. He has given us rewarding days of accomplishments, our guaranteed right of freedom, our intelligence and all the opportunities we have. We have been blessed with more material goods, more wealth and more conveniences than any other nation in our world's history. God gives us these blessings and expects us to share them with others in service to Him.

True thanksgiving only comes when our hearts are secure. As Christians, we should see the world differently. Our fears should be muffled. Our priorities should not be the world's.

Believe in Jesus, who alone can give a secure heart and soul filled with thanksgiving. Pray that our hearts will be filled with thanksgiving.

*Certain phrases are reprinted from various Bible studies and Lutheran Hour sermons on Thanksgiving.*



# A beautiful sight

By Dayna Dinan

Legacy Deo Administrative/  
Marketing Coordinator

In June, I was blessed to attend and represent Legacy Deo at the LWML Texas District convention. I enjoyed my time with these special ladies immensely. Throughout the days I became so inspired by what I witnessed. LWML conventions bring women from all demographics. What I loved most was the immediate acceptance these ladies had for each other and the camaraderie.

I said to someone after a few days, “The secret sauce that makes the LWML so special is community! They love each other so well.” Some were from small towns while others were from large cities. Some were old(er) and some were young(er). There are all walks of life, but one commonality — their love for the Lord and their hearts to further His kingdom. I could not help but think how pleased the Lord must have been. Watching the church be the church is simply stunning.

The mission of the LWML Texas District is to joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions and equip women to honor God by serving others. They also work closely with Legacy Deo through three endowments:

- ▶ The **Mission Goal Endowment** provides funds for the mission goal of the LWML Texas District. The mission goal includes mission grants and district expenses to accomplish its mission.
- ▶ The **Mission Inreach Endowment** provides funds for spiritual enrichment, member development and leadership training opportunities for members of the LWML Texas District.

▶ The **Scholarship Endowment** provides financial aid for Texas women pursuing a full-time church work career at an LCMS university.

For those who would like to give to these endowments, please follow these instructions:

1. To give electronically, go to [legacydeo.org](http://legacydeo.org). Go to "Give" at the top of the page and select "Donate" from the drop-down menu. Use the description box to enter the endowment you wish to support. More information can be entered, including contact information for an honorarium or memorial.
2. Send checks payable to:  
Legacy Deo, 7900 East Highway 290, Austin, TX 78724  
**or** to the LWML Texas District, designating your gift to the endowment(s) of your choice:  
Attn: Kathy Walther,  
Financial Secretary  
P.O. Box 124, Giddings, TX 78942

There is a remittance form for memorials and honorariums on the website to submit with the gift, if needed. Visit [lwmltxdistrict.org](http://lwmltxdistrict.org), go to “Giving” and select “Endowments” from the drop-down menu. The donation will be recorded and the funds will be sent to Legacy Deo.

If you are interested or have questions on how Legacy Deo can help, contact us directly at 800-880-3733 or [info@legacydeo.org](mailto:info@legacydeo.org).

Debbie Curry, Legacy Deo ambassador, is available for estate planning and charitable-giving presentations to LWML groups, zones and members upon request. Contact her at [debbie.legacydeo@gmail.com](mailto:debbie.legacydeo@gmail.com) to schedule a group or individual presentation.



## WHAT'S YOUR 80?

1942–2022 — 80 Years of God's Grace

District LWML groups continued acts of service in celebration of the LWML's 80th anniversary.

### Faith, Stephenville

80 items for Restoration Advocate

### Panhandle Zone

Say Yes to Less Stress event

### Zion, Anderson

80 canned goods for a food pantry

### Zion, Walburg

80 canned goods for the Jarrell food pantry

### Trinity, Navasota

Filled 80 baby bottles with money for Hope Pregnancy Center

### Memorial, Katy

Mens and boys socks and underwear

### Our Redeemer, Wichita Falls

80 canned goods for Interfaith Ministries

### Our Savior, Centerville

Money for Rock Bottom Ranch

### Houston, Epiphany

80 boxes of cereal

### Grace, Brenham

Items for the local nursing home, VBS and Brenham Hospice

### Faith, Plano

80 sets of sheets for Gracewood

### St. Paul, Denton

188 pounds of food for First Refuge Ministries

### Coastal Bend Zone

80 final exam care packages for students at TAMU Kingsville

## Stay Connected

Send LWML news and photos to the

District News editor at

[districtnews@lwmltxdist.org](mailto:districtnews@lwmltxdist.org)

• [lwmltxdist.org](http://lwmltxdist.org)

• [facebook.com/LWMLTexas](https://facebook.com/LWMLTexas)



## Providing a Gospel-driven education

**Faith Lutheran High School (FLHS), Warda**, was established to provide a Christ-centered secondary education. Everything that FLHS does, in academics and extra-curricular activities, is intended to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with students and their families.

High school is a critical time in a young person's life. As our world and culture become increasingly indifferent and even hostile toward Christianity, it is all the more important that high school students have the opportunity to receive an education in an environment that is saturated with the Good News that Jesus loves them and gave His life for them.

Because of the distant rural communities that FLHS serves, transportation options to and from school and extra-curricular activities are often limited and can serve as a barrier to student attendance and participation. School-provided transportation will help to remove that barrier and allow more students to consider, choose and thrive in the Gospel-centered environment of FLHS.

LWML Texas District has awarded a \$20,000 mission grant to purchase a large passenger van (or minibus) to provide transportation for students.

As pastor of two FLHS families and an FLHS board member, Rev. Tim

Appel has seen firsthand the blessing that the school has been to the students' faith and their whole lives. With distance being a factor in the decision about which high school to attend, he is convinced that the LWML Texas District support of school-sponsored transportation will further spread the Gospel in their community.

Magdalena Obersat, FLHS Class of 2021 valedictorian, shared how she was blessed to be part of the school. "I could not imagine a more needed education, especially in today's society, than the Christ-centeredness of Faith Lutheran High School."

FLHS thanks the ladies of the LWML Texas District for funding this mission grant with your mites and prayers.

### From the president

## Visit us online!

Our website is in the process of being updated, visibly and with other necessary changes. Please be patient with us as Kelly Bernhardt, our new vice-president of Communication, and her committee members continue working with the webhost and the webmaster. Some of the changes will be subtle while others will be



Frances Molitor

more noticeable. If you have not been on the website in a while, please visit [lwmltxdist.org](http://lwmltxdist.org) for all the latest news and happenings.

A new feature is on the Christian Life page. You will find some Bible studies along with weekly meditations for you to use on your own or with groups. The author's information is on the page. We are thrilled to be introducing a new writer into the LWML fold.

Also, if you have not signed up to receive the district's email news releases, please visit our homepage and sign up now! We will share much more information through the email blasts than before. Just

remember, you will not receive emails from the district every day. This email is also different than the eNews that is distributed via email by LWML. Help us keep you updated, informed and connected. Be on the lookout!

### 2022-24 Mite Goal: \$390,000

Mites received through Aug. 31: \$68,307 (\$321,693 still needed)

Mission Grants paid through Aug. 31: \$23,000

**Send your mite offerings** along with a remittance form to: LWML Texas District Attn: Kathy Walther, Financial Secretary, P.O. Box 124, Giddings, TX 78942