



/ OCTOBER 2023

# TEXAS MESSENGER

*From the president*

## A REFORMATION REFILL

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



After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, Moses spoke to a new generation of Israelites and urged them not to forget the faithful work of God:

“Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children’s children.” DEUT. 4:9

Don’t let God’s saving and wonderful Word and work slip away. It’s always timely counsel.

Last summer, I rented a car that had a slow leak in one tire. My wife, our granddaughter and I developed a ritual as we drove the Michigan roads: check the tire monitor and refill the tire at least once a day.

That’s what Moses was saying to the people of Israel, and that’s the message each of us needs when it comes to the Gospel: Take care,

because the Gospel is not natural to us. It will seep away. We always need to be refilled.

Evidence of that can be found in the events surrounding Martin Luther’s reform of the church. The Gospel slipped away as legalism, ritualism, human self-centeredness and lovelessness began to deflate the church. That’s when Luther and his fellow reformers broke out the “air pump” of the Scriptures and Confessions. Two examples provide a refill for us today:

1. Article IV of the Augsburg Confession is the central article of the Lutheran Confessions. It states that we cannot be justified before God by our own strength, merits or works, but are freely justified for Christ’s sake through faith. The Gospel is pure gift. It excludes an “I’m better than you” spirit. It removes any claim of superiority — in knowledge, traditions, practices, personal characteristics, lineage, culture or behavior. Even though personal superiority tries to squeeze its way into our lives, our response, by grace, is, “Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed His blood for me” (LSB 611).

2. Article IV of the Smalcald Articles

notes that the Gospel gives counsel and aid against sin through the Word of God, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper and the Office of the Keys (confession and absolution) — as well as “through the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren.” Under the Gospel, mutuality, humility and community take the place of individualistic exclusiveness, disdain and isolation. We love one another (JOHN 13:34), encourage one another (1 THESS. 5:11), confess our sins to one another and pray for one another (JAMES 5:16). Though the world and our sinful flesh want us to limp along on the flat tire of being adversarial and taking sides, the Gospel refills us with life together under the grace of God.

Thanks be to God that this Gospel shapes our lives and, as Moses urged, it is what we make known to our children and our children’s children.” Explore the mission at [txlcms.org](http://txlcms.org).

### Questions for reflection:

#### Read Rom. 1:12

Smalcald Article IV cites this verse. What does it tell you about life under the Gospel?

How does your Gospel life show itself in your church, in your family and in your community?

**Prayer starter:** Thank God for His refilling Good News.



*"The Lord is bringing the people. I'm just the one who is working for, serving the community. But I pray for the Lord that He brings the community, that he brings the people, and the Lord is answering my prayers."*

~ Rev. Arturo Mendez, Associate Pastor,  
St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield



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It is our number one priority. Our goal is to have 10% of the Texas District, LCMS members praying regularly for the mission.  
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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!

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





# Can a church-plant plant a church?

By Rev. Dr. Jon Braunersreuther  
Mission and Ministry  
Facilitator, Area D

If we're talking about The Dwelling Lutheran Church, the answer is "Yes!"



The Dwelling, pastored by Rev. Seth Kunze, began six years ago and worships in the northeastern Houston exurb of Porter. It was planted by Christ the King, Kingwood, and Lamb of God, Humble — a partnership that eventually evolved into a network of northeast Houston LCMS congregations called Harvest Partnership, which is committed to an ongoing church-planting process.

From its inception, The Dwelling had in mind to plant a new congregation. That is coming to fruition in a neighboring community called Santa Fe, located near an area traditionally known as Plum Grove. The developer of the Santa Fe community has a heart for helping recent immigrants realize the American dream of owning a home.

To meet the challenges of ministering to the community, The Dwelling asked Rev. Nelson Hernandez for help. Pastor Hernandez began his



English as a Second Language classes are held at Iglesia Cristo, Mi Salvador.



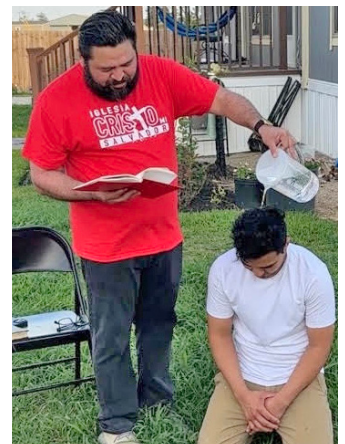
ministry there by improving his own English skills and building relationships in the Santa Fe community. This was followed by offering English-as-a-Second-Language classes and Tuesday Bible studies,

and finally a Sunday worship service this year. The congregation is known as Iglesia Cristo, Mi Salvador.

Plans call for continued penetration of the community, the acquisition of land and a church building.

This church plant is another step in our mutual mission to multiply congregations and followers of Jesus. Since 2004, when the district's church-planting initiative began, more than 160 new congregations have been planted; about half of those congregations have a predominant ethnicity other than Anglo.

And (Jesus) said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." LUKE 10:2



Rev. Nelson Hernandez is pictured above (at right) with the congregation's worship leadership team; and baptizing a young man.



Have you heard this joke recently: “How many *(fill in the blank)* does it take to change a light bulb?” It’s really not a nice joke.

I was thinking about it today and remembered this one: “How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb?” The answer: “None. Lutherans do not like change.”

We all know that no one really likes change. Just think about updates to your computer or phone. I know that I yell at these devices every time something changes on them and I have to learn a new way of doing the routines. Think about a move or going to a new school. Yes, they are exciting changes, but we may not really like them. In all these cases we adjust and move on.

When Jesus was assembling His disciples, He really asked them to change. They went from jobs such as fishing and tax collecting to preaching the Gospel. They gave up incomes, homes and families for Him. I would like to think that I would be able to do as much, but sometimes giving up the security and making the change is hard.

Yet change is all around us. Seasons and years change. We get married, have children and send them off into the world, and start



**Gretchen Kroesch**  
Controller

new lives again. Loved ones die, which probably is the hardest change for us. On one hand we are happy because they are with Jesus, and on the other we are sad because they aren’t with us.

Since joining Legacy Deo (formerly Lutheran Foundation of Texas) 25 years ago, I have seen many changes here at my job. Many

of us who work with computers had to reassure everyone that the world would not end when 1999 ended and 2000 began. The computer programs that we use were updated for the change a few years prior to the new century. Next for us was our updated Windows program, which was different from the DOS system we were using.

When I started, we had about \$23 million under management. As of the end of 2022, we had a bit over \$53 million. The number of donors and beneficiaries has increased as well. Today we have around 460 accounts and that number is growing. The change in the numbers only means that we can help many more organizations that you all support. For the most part, the job hasn’t changed that much. OK, maybe the way we do things has changed, but the overall work is the same.

As many of you may have heard, I am going to make a major change.

I am going to retire from Legacy Deo in November. But don’t worry — Legacy Deo is in great hands. Our CFO, Brian (Hamilton), and our staff accountant, Hailey (Helberg), are ready to help you with making your plans for charitable giving take place. I may be in the office from time to time to help them, and I’m willing to help you if I am in. I don’t know what God has in store for me in the future, but I am looking forward to taking the changes one day at a time. I have always tried to encourage my children with the phrases “Life is an adventure, go out and live it” and “God never gives you more than you can handle.” Now I must live by those phrases as well.

How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb? As many as are needed to get the job done. We all must remember that change is going to happen even if we don’t want it. So, I guess, we just need to embrace it.

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## BRENHAM

Rev. Ryan Ogradowicz was installed as senior pastor and Rev. Isaac Schuller was installed as associate pastor of Grace Lutheran Church on Aug. 6. From left, Revs. Tim Eden, Matthew Jacobs, Tim Engel, Richard Schuller, Ken Watson, Isaac Schuller, Dr. Scott Murray, Richard Lamb, Kory Boster, Ryan Ogradowicz, Nate Hill, J. Brown, Kelly Krieg and Bill Holzer.

## GARLAND

Rev. KC Knippa was ordained as Specific Ministry Pastor at Concordia Lutheran Church on June 24, and was installed a day later. Brothers shown are, from left, Rev. Sabir Bashir, Vicar Jeremiah Bauer, Rev. Jack Schneider, Rev. Travis Hartjen, Rev. KC Knippa, Rev. Ken Krippner, Rev. J. Brown, Rev. Will Kemp and Rev. Micah Miller.



## DALLAS

The reaffirmation of Rev. Benyam Weldtensai's ordination and installation as Zion Lutheran Church assistant pastor was held on Aug. 13. Facing a kneeling Weldtensai are Revs. Dr. Robert C. Preece (Zion pastor) and Michael Newman (Texas District president). Also participating are, from left, Revs. Solomon Yadessa, Dr. James R. Haner, H. Melvin Symmank, Benyam Weldtensai, Richard E. Kurth, Dr. Yohannes Mengsteab, Fred C. Gersch and El Reverendo Oscar Perez. Acolytes in back are Caleb Jeffcoat (left) and August Hinkel.





### WESTFIELD

Hispanic Ministries, a church plant at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, baptized one new member and confirmed 12 new members on Easter morning. Rev. Arturo Mendez, Hispanic Ministries pastor, is in back.

### DIME BOX

On Aug. 13, the Rogers and Mikulins families joined the Sains to make another three-generation family at Trinity. From left, Joyce and Glenn Mikulin; Thomas, Keaton, Rebecca and Aubrey Rogers; Kady, Emily, Kimberley and Jerry Sain; and Landon Mikulin (in front of door).



### AMARILLO

The quilting group at Trinity donated quilts to a local woman's shelter. Pictured are Sharon Ackley and Rev. Rick Black at the blessing ceremony.



### PLANO

Micah Black is now serving as Messiah's Youth Minister Intern. Shown are, from left, Rev. Dr. Victor Kollmann, Rebekah and Micah Black, Rev. Jim Otte and Rev. Matt Lee.





## DENISON

Four youth were confirmed at Grace Lutheran Church on June 11. Pictured with Rev. David Edge are, from left, Lana Coker, Kathryn Parsons, Abigail Peters and Juliana Torres.



## DEVINE

The Weathers family joined Divine Savior on July 9. Pictured with Rev. Randall Wehmeyer are parents Brian and Deborah and their children, Sienna and Cullen.

## GIDDINGS



## MEXIA

Jaleigh Nicole Hall was confirmed at Faith Lutheran Church on Aug. 6. Pastor is Rev. Joel D. Hall.



On June 25, Immanuel Lutheran Church was blessed to welcome several new member families shown in top and bottom photos. In bottom photo, pastors are Revs. Robert Tiner (left) and Joshua Hahn (right).

## LAMESA

On June 18, Ellie Wilson, a member of Grace, celebrated her 96th birthday.







## ABILENE

On May 22, Zion received 34 new members into its family. Included in this group are five adult confirmands, 15 member transfers, 12 reaffirmations of the Lutheran faith, and two infant baptisms. Pictured with the group is Rev. Clyde Kieschnick (at left).

## WEATHERFORD



Guillermo Santibañez Jr. was welcomed into the family of God through Holy Baptism at Trinity on May 28. Pictured are, from left, Nattaphon Kijnitchee, Sarah Kijnitchee, Guillermo Santibañez, Guillermo Santibañez Jr., Rev. Tim Fraker, Stephanie Santibañez and Sarah Tucker.



On March 19, Trinity welcomed Bexley Laek Woodruff into the family of God by Holy Baptism. Pictured are, from left, Pastor Fraker, Jaiden Parker (holding Bexley), Ethan Woodruff, Kara Woodruff and Chris Woodruff.

## LUBBOCK



On July 9, Rev. Charles Nemec baptized Allen McRorey at Redeemer Lutheran Church.



Barbara Satterwhite is pictured with Pastor Nemec on July 9 after being received as a new member of Redeemer.





## NACOGDOCHES

Redeemer Lutheran Church celebrated the Lord's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, beginning with a pancake breakfast hosted by the Board of Elders (above, with Rev. John Cain at right), and ending with an Easter egg hunt for the children following the worship service.



## LUBBOCK



On June 25, Redeemer Lutheran Church participated in the Heart of Lubbock Neighborhood Association's Party in the Park, held in the park directly across the street from the church. Redeemer members had the opportunity to visit with a lot of its neighbors, and give them literature and Bibles. Also, a lot of ice-cold lemonade was served on a hot day. Many people requested Bibles, in which Redeemer ran out.

## Share your news with us!

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

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







### GROVES

Peace held vacation Bible school June 11-15. The theme was “God’s Living Water, Covered in Jesus’ Grace.” Many volunteers made this possible and the children enjoyed all the Bible stories, featuring “Water from the Rock,” “Naaman is Healed,” “Jesus at the Well,” “Jesus Washes Disciples’ Feet” and “Thousands Believe in Jesus.”



### FAIRVIEW

During vacation Bible school, the children of Immanuel filled baby bottles with their offerings. The boys competed with the girls and wound up donating over \$400 to the Immanuel Life Team, which will use the funds to purchase books and Bibles for a crisis pregnancy center in McKinney.





# CONGRATULATIONS!

These Lutheran friends of yours are celebrating wedding anniversaries of **50 YEARS** or more.

## Centerville, Our Savior

Leon and Elsa Bay  
55 years, Aug. 17

Charlie and Kathy  
Cornelius  
59 years Aug. 14

## Desoto, Cross of Christ

Bennie and Joan Symank  
59 years, June 13

Elton and LaVonne Kindler  
57 years, Aug. 20

Ronnie and Patty  
McKethan  
50 years, Sept. 1

Bo and Carol Brown  
50 years, Sept. 1

Marshall and Vanice  
Schultz  
53 years, Sept. 12

Don and Linda Hinckley  
52 years, Sept. 17

Robert and Nona Flye  
66 years, Nov. 29

## San Angelo, Trinity

Bob and Nancy Budewig  
51 years, Aug. 14

Erwin and Carolyn  
Weiershausen  
69 years, Aug. 22

Monty and Dinah Stanley  
53 years, Aug. 23

Harris and Dorothy Brinson  
61 years, Aug. 26

## Hamilton, St. John

Roger and Neet Bushee  
61 years, Sept. 1

Mike and Billie Looney  
58 years, Sept. 18

Johnny and Marliessa Clark  
52 years, Oct. 1

Allen and Jane Dodson  
57 years, Oct. 1

## Abilene, Our Savior

Tom and Kathy Denslow  
53 years, Aug. 29

Irene and Daniel Geiser  
52 years, Aug. 14

Keith and Pat Kionka  
57 years, Sept. 24

Keith and Jan Bowman  
50 years, Oct. 21

Eddy and Deb Day  
51 years, Nov. 2

## Lago Vista, Christ Our Savior

Loren and Sherdel Janssen  
60 years, Oct. 11

Gary and Odilia Little  
52 years, Oct. 23

Fred and (Lois) Ann Goodin  
67 years, Oct. 27

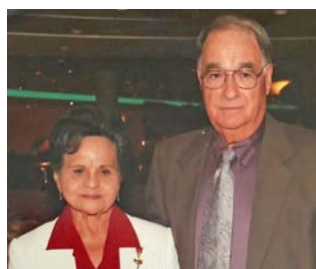
Loren and Sherdel Janssen  
60 years, Oct. 11



**Harold and Brenda Bogs**, members of Our Savior, Centerville, celebrated 55 years of marriage on Aug. 31.



**Gordon and Anita Hanson**, members of Messiah, Plano, celebrated 66 years of marriage on April 6.



**Leo and Refaela Fernandez**, members of Trinity Odem (West Sinton) celebrated 70 years of marriage on Sept. 12.



**John and Linda Beetle**, members of Epiphany, Houston, celebrated 50 years of marriage on June 16.



**Rev. Clyde and Ellen Kieschnick**, members of Zion, Abilene, celebrated 50 years of marriage on Sept. 15.



**Rev. Don and Teri Poole**, members of St. Paul, Aleman, celebrated 55 years of marriage on Aug. 10.



Zion, Alamo, celebrated the August anniversaries of four couples, totaling a combined 323 years of marriage!. Pictured are, from left, Herb and Jean Holmquist (60 years, Aug. 10), Lawrence and Lorraine Moore (50 years, Aug. 25) and Sandra and Terry Addison (60 years, Aug. 24). Not pictured are Kevin and Susan Swanson (53 years, Aug. 8).



**John and Linda Seber**, members of Zion, Tomball, celebrated 57 years of marriage on Aug. 19.





Rev. Kevin Westergren leads the Austin/San Antonio/Central Texas opening worship service, hosted by Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Austin. Westergren is Redeemer senior pastor.

# Ready (and blessed) to serve

By Dr. Bill Hinz  
Director, School Ministry

Our Lutheran school staffs gather every August to celebrate the beginning of a new school year. This year we were blessed to gather on Aug. 4 at Prince of Peace, Carrollton, with the Metroplex Lutheran schools; on Aug. 8 at St. Mark, Houston, with the Houston-area Lutheran schools; and on Aug. 9 at Redeemer, Austin, with the Austin/San Antonio/Central Texas Lutheran schools. The celebrations were inspiring, with some truly amazing singing.

Along with celebrating the new school year, several of our schools have had the privilege of welcoming new principals and teachers to their faculties. What a blessing it is to grow and enhance the teaching teams of our schools, where every day the love and forgiveness of Jesus is shared with our students.

As frontline missions of our churches, our Lutheran schools are a place where students grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ, share His love and learn about His grace and forgiveness. Our teachers are eager to serve as they nurture and encourage their students in their faith walk, building upon the rock of salvation which is a precious gift from God. These lessons will help strengthen the students in sharing the Gospel themselves.



During the Metroplex schools opening worship, Corey Moss, Prince of Peace, Carrollton; Suzanne Davis, Our Redeemer, Dallas; Jessica Bangert, Our Redeemer, Dallas; and Sarah Black (not in photo), Trinity, Amarillo, were introduced as new administrators by Dr. Hinz.

It will be a great year. There will be many celebrations and we will shine our lights:

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven.” **MATT. 5:16**



# Developing character, skills, on the court

Every summer, Concordia University Texas hosts the Concordia Boys Basketball Camp, which has evolved into an enriching experience for campers, student workers, and the community alike.

## Building character on and off the court

The camp isn't just about dribbling and shooting hoops. It is also a space where campers ages 5-14 learn about teamwork and good sportsmanship, and improve their social skills.

DeJuan Leffall, a CTX basketball player who has been involved with the camp since 2021, remembers helping a camper who was particularly shy.

"I made sure to get him involved with the other campers," Leffall says. "On the last day, his mom came up to me and let me know that I had made him more comfortable and confident in himself. We took some pictures and made some nice memories together."

Stan Bonewitz, CTX associate director of Athletics and men's basketball head coach, shares that campers get to learn the balance between competition and enjoyment through various activities.

"Most importantly, they're learning how to compete with the idea of succeeding with the help of a teammate, as opposed to at the expense of the opponent," Coach Bonewitz says.

## Leading the way in serving

The leadership lessons extend to the campers as well as to the dedicated people who run the camp,

including coaches, current players and CTX basketball program alumni. They go beyond providing valuable basketball instruction, and pride themselves as mentors and role models for the young campers.



"Organizing the camps has taught me to always lead by example," says Adam Gonzales, CTX men's basketball assistant coach. "The kids' safety and the fun they are having come first so I have to be sure to

give a 100-percent effort, make sure everybody is safe, and create a no-bullying zone. Also, always having enthusiasm with what we are doing — we cannot set a standard for those things and not display them 100 percent of the time."

During the camp, student workers can apply their practical leadership skills by overseeing large groups of campers and nurturing positive experiences.

"The camps emphasize that living a life of service means putting the needs of others ahead of our own," Leffall says. "It is about putting in the time, effort and experience to make a positive impact on our young athletes' lives."

The camp is designed to help kids learn from those who have walked the same path while also allowing student workers and alumni to give back to their alma mater and community. "When the kids see you having fun and enjoying the game, they follow suit," Gonzales says. "Kids are smarter than people think. They know when the passion is there and when it's not. If you

are genuinely passionate about other people's success and happiness, you will prepare and only act on things that fulfill the needs of their happiness and success."

## Building lasting connections

While the primary focus of the camp is to help kids develop basketball skills, its effects ripple throughout the campus and beyond. Collaborations with local partners enhance relationships and encourage further engagement. Alumni connections are reinforced, and a sense of pride in the university's accomplishments is shared.

Additionally, the camp introduces CTX to hundreds of families in the surrounding area, leaving a positive impression that could impact future enrollment and support.

Bonewitz recalls the initial modest participation in contrast with the recent success of having more than 600 attendees across three sessions. "It's great for Concordia Texas to have all those families on our campus. Maybe some of those kids end up growing here and coming to college here."

## A future of growth

The basketball camps exemplify the power of sports as a catalyst for personal growth and community connection. Beyond the skill-building drills and games, campers learn about leadership, responsibility and positive interaction. As the camp continues to flourish and attract more participants each year, the impact extends far beyond the basketball court. This solidifies CTX's commitment to fostering courageous leaders who value lifelong learning, mentorship and serving their community.

Visit [athletics.concordia.edu](https://athletics.concordia.edu) to learn more about the athletics program at Concordia University Texas.

# Little gifts



For those of you who frequent this monthly article, you know that God has been faithful to allow something meaningful to happen in my life around the 15th of each month, when this article is due! I've experienced broken bones, car fires, meaningful relationships and amazing mission trip experiences! This month I am grateful for a new "little gift!"



**By Pat Fick**  
CAN-DO  
Director

I received a text from Sophie Lee, a CTX student who found a little white puppy as she was moving into her dorm, getting ready for resident assistant training. Knowing that the dog wouldn't be allowed to stay in the dorm with her, she asked if I could help her get it to a shelter so it could find a forever home. Since I walk dogs at a local shelter, I said that would definitely be possible.

One of the reasons I like to walk dogs at the shelter is so that if I happen to see a cute dog that needs

a home, I can consider adopting it. When we adopted Sonny four years ago, we had actually talked about getting a small dog, the kind that snuggles up in your lap and lathers your face with their tiny tongue! It just so happens that the dog Sophie found fits this description perfectly. I asked Sophie if it would be OK if we took the dog inside to meet our crazy canines, Sonrisa/Sonny (which means smile) and Esperanza/Espi (which means hope).

The meeting went well, so we decided to keep this new "little gift" (Regalito) and take it to the vet the next day to see if it had a microchip. We also posted Regalito's picture on Austin's Lost and Found Pets Facebook page in case anyone was looking for him.



**Regalito**

So far, it looks like he will be staying in our home as our newest little gift from God!

What little gifts from God have you experienced lately? Forgiveness? Life? Salvation? Joy? Love? Precious people? Work? Food? Shelter? Hope?

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **COL. 1:13-15**

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? **PS. 27:1**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **GAL. 5:22-23**

And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. **PHIL. 4:19**

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **GAL. 5:5**

I am so grateful for all of these gifts from God, including my new little Regalito!

## To donate to CAN-DO:

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11400 Concordia Univ. Dr.  
Austin TX 78726



# Celebrating 140 years with Trinity, Riesel

By Raelyn Pracht  
CEF Marketing  
Specialist



This past April, I worshiped with the wonderful people at Trinity Lutheran Church, Riesel. Rev. Larry Knobloch, Trinity pastor, invited CEF to join the Bible study and present on opportunities the congregation and the members as individuals have that would fit their financial needs. This was followed by a potluck with enjoyable fellowship as we discussed the history of the congregation and its long-standing relationship with Texas CEF.

But the story — 140 years in the making — doesn't end there.

On Sunday, June 4, a grand celebration was held to commemorate 140 years of God's grace at Trinity. There was a special anniversary service with readings in German and the sermon delivered by Rev. Michael Newman, Texas District president, followed by fellowship and dinner.

"It was a wonderful day of celebration," Pastor Knobloch said. "Looking back at the past blessings of God in the proclamation of the Gospel, we are looking forward to His blessings as the Word continues to be proclaimed."

Trinity Lutheran Church began as an idea, but it took only three years to grow from that idea into a thriving congregation. We are grateful for this beautiful and wonderful congregation in our Texas District.

"It was a joy to celebrate 140 years of ministry with the dear people



Trinity, Riesel, members enjoyed looking at photos from the past.



Brothers shown on the day of celebration are, from left, Revs. Mark De Young, St. Peter, Bowie; Larry Knobloch, Trinity, Riesel; John De Young, Cross of Christ, DeSoto; Michael Newman, Texas District president; Kurt Rutz, Grace, Marlin and Mart; Robert Kitson, emeritus; and Brian Hesse, St. Paul, Waco (Bellmead).

of Trinity Lutheran Church in Riesel," Pastor Newman said. "The congregation is a living example of God's mission and His enduring faithfulness. Started by one of the original Texas missionaries, Rev. J.J. Trinklein, the congregation became one of the hubs of Texas Gospel outreach, serving as the site of the district office under district presidents Henry Studtmann and

E.A. Heckmann.

"The legacy of Trinity in Riesel continues to give hope and encouragement to every Texas District ministry as we continue to share the Gospel throughout Texas."

If you would like to know more about how your investments serve a higher purpose, please visit [texascef.org](http://texascef.org) and invest today!





# Christmas joy ... in July

Upbring's Community Engagement Team plans fun activities for the girls they serve.

Christmas comes a little early each year at Upbring New Life Children's Center — five months early, to be exact. In July, members of Upbring's Community Engagement Team travel to Canyon Lake bearing goodie bags, cookies, arts and crafts, Christmas music and games for our girls to play.

New Life provides a safe, home-like setting for girls ages 11-17 who experienced trauma earlier in life. At the children's center girls have a chance to start over, to heal and grow, often through special activities.

"This is a great event for the girls as they have a couple of weeks off before school starts," said Diane Covert, Upbring Philanthropic Advisor. "It is also a great opportunity for our team to spend time with the very girls for whom we're raising funds. And it's a good time for team building."

As part of Christmas in July, the girls spend 45 minutes at three stations. In one room, they're making arts and crafts, which includes Christmas cards and pouring

acrylic paint over canvases to make ornaments, while in another room girls decorate sugar cookies with sprinkles, frosting and gum drops. Over in the gym, another group of girls are running the Frosty the Snowman relay and playing marshmallow toss.

"I loved the games in the gym, especially the snowman," said one of the girls. "I liked the painting activity the best," said another girl. "I was able to choose and mix my own colors and get messy doing it."

Something all the girls enjoy are the goodie bags, which included pleasant-smelling hand lotion and shower gel, fluffy Christmas socks, candy, fidget bracelets, a journal, hair scrunchies and other surprises, all provided by an Upbring donor.

Thanks to the support of our donors, Upbring can purchase needed items to put smiles on faces and laughter in voices through fun activities like Christmas in July. If you'd like to become an Upbring partner, explore [Upbring.org/Get-Involved](https://Upbring.org/Get-Involved).



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

 /UpbringOrg

 @UpbringOrg

 UpbringOrg



“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

# Cultivating CHRISTIAN LEADERS

At Camp Lone Star, our mission of transforming lives through adventurous Christ-centered experiences is lived out in various ways. One is by cultivating Christian leaders throughout all aspects of our ministry. At summer camp, we get to see new leaders built up in Christ as campers discover more about themselves and who God has called them to be. We love the opportunity to be a part of all that God is doing to raise up new leaders who have a deep love for Him.

In addition to the programs we lead, we also have the chance to help develop young adults as they serve in various ministry roles at camp. Our Elevate Intern Program (formerly Ministry Impact Partners) has been growing over the last three years. The program runs from August through May and is designed for young adults to develop Christ-like character while gaining real-world, practical experiences in a hands-on environment. Our goal is that those who participate in this program learn the principles and competencies that will prepare and equip them to serve wherever God leads them next, especially if it's a professional ministry setting.

We know that life is more than simply learning new skills and building job experience. Therefore, beyond the hands-on work that the interns

do to help lead events and serve groups, they also have a comprehensive curriculum that they walk through during their time here.

We focus on four main areas of development with our interns:

**CHARACTER** that builds trust.

We want them to reflect the character of Christ in all that they do so that others view them as someone they can lean on.

**CLARITY** that instills confidence. Finding clarity in their calling and identity leads to greater confidence in who God has made them to be and boldness in living out their calling.

**COMPETENCY** that gains respect. We pursue excellence in the way that we lead and want the same for our interns.

**FAITH** that is adventurous.

God has called each of us into a lifelong journey with Him that is often unpredictable, but this shouldn't stop us from abiding in Him.

All of this is accomplished through a variety of avenues including experiential learning, group coaching, personality assessments, and discipling relationships. Interns develop regular rhythms of devotion and prayer while also engaging in group opportunities to study Scripture and put their faith into action.

This year, our Elevate Interns are Kaitlin Davis, Garrett Kaysa, Jesse Espinosa and Chase Allbritton. All four bring a great amount of camp ministry experience as campers, volunteers and staff. We are thrilled to have them on our team.



We would love for you to be in prayer for our interns this year as they are built up in Christ through their time at camp. Pray that God would give them wisdom and discernment in their learning and future direction. We thank God for the opportunity to help a new generation of Christian leaders.

Contact us for more information about our Elevate Intern Program.



♦ CAMP ♦

## LONE STAR

2016 Camp Lone Star Road  
La Grange, TX 78945

**PINES CAMPUS**

22610 Tuwa Road • Tomball, TX 77375

## 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)



# Lutheran Hour Ministries IS THERE FOR YOU

## Global support

Lutheran Hour Ministries has been active in many media platforms and has a vast selection of printed information and video programs.

The first radio broadcast of the flagship “The Lutheran Hour” was aired in 1930 with Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier as speaker. LHM has truly been bringing “Christ to the Nations” for many decades.

Today, speaker Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler’s weekly sermon is heard on more than 1,800 stations in North America and Canada. In addition, through several LHM partners, the Good News is being heard in many countries all over the world, in their native languages.

For more than 90 years, the call of Christ has been carried around the world through radio waves to share the Good News. For more information, visit [lutheranhour.org](http://lutheranhour.org).

## The work of ambassadors

Informing congregation members about LHM’s many available resources is a significant role for LHM ambassadors. LHM’s large catalog of resources gives people of all ages tools to deepen and strengthen their faith, and become equipped for outreach. Much of the materials are in various languages, and some materials have been designed especially for children and young adults.

Broadening LHM’s outreach is vital, and LHM ambassadors are especially important in seeing that resources get into the hands of those who

need them. LHM ambassadors take inspiration in their work from 2 Cor. 5:20:

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Visit [lhm.org/ambassador](http://lhm.org/ambassador).

## Hispanic outreach

LHM outreach to Hispanics in the United States continues to move forward through work with consultant Kerux Group. Working with LHM’s marketing and communications teams, LHM’s Spanish language broadcast *Para el Camino* (For the Journey) — with content on Facebook and Instagram — has had gains in new listeners and interactions.

At [paraelcamino.com](http://paraelcamino.com), users will find practical, Christ-centered information that helps Hispanics

manage their daily lives in the United States. Bible-based teaching, sermons, videos, devotionals, and more benefit Christian and non-Christian alike, providing each with help in navigating U.S. culture.

*Sentido Latino* (Latin Sense) is a weekly podcast featuring hosts Rev. Luciano Vega-Ayala of LINC Houston and Deaconess Noemi Guerra, Texas District evangelist development leader. The conversation is informed and lively as they address the cultural, social and moral challenges Hispanics face as U.S. citizens.

Visit [sentidolatino.com](http://sentidolatino.com).

## Devotions

LHM Daily Devotions will help strengthen and encourage your faith as you do the same for others. Have them delivered right to your inbox, or access them on your mobile device through the free app, or listen with Spotify, iHeart Radio, Alexa or Google Home.

Sign up for the email devotion at [lhm.org/subscribe](http://lhm.org/subscribe).



LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

# WANTED:

## Young women for district convention

By Amanda Hankemeier  
Committee on Young Women Chair

The Committee on Young Women is gearing up for the LWML Texas District 43rd Biennial Convention, to be held June 13–15 in Corpus Christi. We are issuing a challenge to all 25 Texas District zones to bring one or two young ladies to participate as YWRs at the convention, and our goal is to have 27 young women in Corpus Christi.

These ladies will learn first-hand what happens during convention gatherings, and will also have the opportunity to have fellowship with their zone president and fellow members, as well as meet young women from throughout the great state of Texas.

Nominations for YWRs should be sent to me no later than March 14. Forms can be found at [lwmltxdist.org/young-woman-representatives](http://lwmltxdist.org/young-woman-representatives). If you have questions, contact me by visiting [lwmltxdist.org](http://lwmltxdist.org). Go to the “About Us” tab and select “Contact Your Leaders” from the drop-down menu (I’m in the third row, third from left).

Help us bring 27 amazing young ladies from our 25 zones to the convention this summer. We look forward to seeing everyone and cannot wait to pin 27 God-fearing young women.



L CMS/Erik M. Lunsford

## Grant proposals DUE NOV. 1

If there is a ministry close to your heart and you want to submit a Mission Grant proposal for the 2024-26 biennium, there is very little time left. The first important step is to make sure Patti Samsel, vice-president of Gospel Outreach, is aware of the pending submission.

Mission Grant proposals are to

A caregiver reads a Bible story to a child at ACTS of Love Early Childhood Education Center in Leander, a 2022-24 district Mission Grant recipient.

be completed and submitted by Nov. 1. There are no exceptions. All information and signatures are to be included. An incomplete application will not be eligible for consideration.

Information and forms can be found at [lwmltxdist.org/mission-grant-proposals](http://lwmltxdist.org/mission-grant-proposals), or contact Patti at [gospeloutreach@lwmltxdist.org](mailto:gospeloutreach@lwmltxdist.org).

## TIME'S ALMOST UP FOR NOMINATIONS

Did your LWML group or zone submit names to the Nominating Committee for the offices of president, vice-president of Christian Life, vice-president of Organizational Resources, financial secretary, and Nominating Committee? This is a wonderful way to recognize your LWML sisters' leadership qualities.

All forms and information can be found at [lwmltxdist.org/nominating-committee](http://lwmltxdist.org/nominating-committee). The deadline for submissions is Nov. 1. For more information, contact Debbie Curry, committee chair, at [nominatingch@lwmltxdist.org](mailto:nominatingch@lwmltxdist.org).







Judie Jones has been a member of the King of Kings, San Antonio, LWML for about 25 years and has served as president and secretary. Judie likes the camaraderie of the ladies as they work together to support various missions both locally and globally. She joined LWML to be a part of a group that is reaching out to help spread the Word of God in a variety of ways and to show Christian love to others.



Judie Jones

She is busy serving on the altar guild and Family and Youth Education board and teaching Sunday school, and is always ready to provide rides to those who can't drive to church or doctor's appointments themselves. She also volunteers at King of King's food pantry and Haven for Hope homeless assistance shelter, and serves on the board of directors for LINC San Antonio. Judie can always be counted on to provide refreshments at events while prioritizing her own Christian growth by attending at least three Bible studies each week.

"Judie is truly an inspiration to me of what it means to serve others with Christ-like love," says Lori Schmidt, president of King of Kings LWML. "Her focus is always on the person and their needs and not on how hard the work might be. She does it quietly without the need to be recognized or acknowledged for any of her efforts."

Judie Jones is the Heart of the LWML.



**LWML Texas District  
43rd Biennial  
Convention**

- June 13–15
- Omni Hotel  
Corpus Christi

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

**GREAT IS HIS Faithfulness!**



Totals as of July 31, 2023

2022–2024 Mite Goal	\$390,000
Mites Received	\$230,928
Total Mites Still Needed	\$159,072
Mission Grants Paid	\$140,314

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

**It's ingathering time!**

Visit [lwmltxdist.org/mission-service](http://lwmltxdist.org/mission-service) for everything you need to know about preparing for the Lutheran World Relief (LWR) ingathering, including printing labels and reports.

Let's stuff the trucks with quilts, health kits and school kits! Remember to think like a bug and make sure no critters can get in — pack your items in sturdy boxes with no exposed holes, and tape all open edges (top, bottom and sides).



The ingathering collection schedule is:

<b>Marion (San Antonio area)</b> St. John Lutheran Church 600 S. Center St. Wednesday, Nov. 1 9 a.m.–2 p.m.	<b>Houston</b> Epiphany Lutheran Church 14423 West Road Saturday, Nov. 4 9 a.m.–4 p.m.	<b>Plano (Dallas area)</b> Messiah Lutheran Church 1801 W. Plano Parkway Saturday, Nov. 11 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
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