

/ SEPTEMBER 2023

TEXAS MESSENGER

From the president

LONGING FOR THE GOSPEL

By Rev. Michael Newman
President,
LCMS Texas District
txlcms.org
mnewman.org



What do you long for?

Is it a favorite food? How about time with your loved ones? Perhaps you long for a refreshing vacation — or even cooler temperatures!

Do you long for what advertisers place before you: a new SUV, fresh-smelling clothes, a recently approved medication, or some yummy fare from a restaurant?

Do you long for relief from our broken world: peace among nations and cultures, solutions to hunger and poverty, help for the ill and disenfranchised?

Peter talked about what angels long for. As he described the Gospel preached by the prophets and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the apostle noted that these were “things into which angels long to look” (1 PETER 1:12).

Angels long to look into the Gospel — God’s revelation of grace, the sending of His only Son who, be-

cause of God’s unconditional and remarkable love, gave His life for our sins on the cross, rose from the dead and, by His Spirit through Word and Sacrament, clothes us with His righteousness, all as a complete gift with no merit or worthiness on our part. Angels long to lean into this wondrous and incomparable work of the almighty God for us fallen human beings, now called children of God.

The word used is *epithumeo*, the same word the Bible uses for “covet” or “lust.” It is a strong word of desire. The word describes deep and extraordinary longing, and it helps properly direct our longing.

As fallen sinners, our longing can so easily become misdirected. Misdirected longing can become selfish idolatry. Selfish idolatry may allow us to get our way or to gain the world or to feel good for a while, but in the process to lose our soul and to conceal the Gospel.

That’s why the angels are on the right track. Jesus directed us to the one thing we all need, the one longing that leads to life. As Martha scrambled around to put her house in order for the Son of God, Jesus directed her to Mary, who sat at His feet listening to Him. Jesus said:

“One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.” LUKE 10:42

Mary longed for the Gospel. She longed for Jesus and His Word of life.

That is the longing of Christ’s church. The psalmist declared:

Behold, I long for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life! PS. 119:40

This is the longing created by tasting and seeing the goodness of the Lord (PS. 34:8). This is the longing that gives life and shares life with all.

Think about it: the angels do not long for the golden streets of heaven or the heavenly worship anthems or their work as God’s messengers and ministering spirits. They long to look into the Gospel. As the redeemed people of God, let’s do and proclaim the same.

Questions for reflection:

Read 1 Peter 1:1-13

How do these verses describe what the angels long to see?

What tends to get in the way of you setting your hope fully on God’s grace (v. 13)?

Prayer starter: Ask God to set your heart, hope and action fully on His Good News.



"As Lutherans, that's one of the greatest things we have, is our vocation. In our vocation, we are sharing the Good News through our actions, through our words. When they ask, we give an answer for the hope that we have. And God gives us His authority to speak that. And He gives us the words to speak, and He works when He works, when and where He pleases. That's not our job"

~ Rev Ron Bogs, Senior Pastor,
St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield



GIVE NOW!
txlcms.org/tpim

EVERY DOLLAR

contributed to
Texas Partners in Mission
goes directly to
support missions in
the Texas District.

Our goal this year is:
\$400,000

Please consider joining us as a
mission partner and help more
Texans hear the Gospel.



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



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!

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





LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford



By Rev. Pete Mueller
Mission Strategist,
Area C

Out of the corner of my eye I notice a dog streaking across an open lot in the residential neighborhood where I am walking. Despite its speed, the animal abruptly skids to a stop, artfully scoops up an object and races back in the direction from which it came.

That's when a middle-aged man comes into view. The retriever plays hard-to-get with a rubber ball before dropping it near the man's feet. Without waiting for the ball to be picked up, the dog takes off in the direction that the projectile will soon be thrown. Within seconds the prize is once again claimed. The runner tirelessly heads back toward the starting gate.

As I watch several rounds of this game, I ponder what makes a good partnership and the ways in which roles change over a lifetime.

As a young leader I ran tireless circles around the more mature members of our church staff. I scoffed at strategies for conserving or channeling energy. I was fast, although admittedly not always smart. I wondered why others didn't run as hard as I did. I sometimes pictured the more sedentary leaders in our city moving out of the way so those of us with youth and speed could achieve what we were created to do.

As the years have slowly advanced, I find myself relating more and more to the other side of the partnership. These days I still love the game, but I find greater pleasure in strategizing where the ball goes. I marvel at those with boundless energy and admirable speed, but I am satisfied with anchoring key partnerships with steadiness and wisdom. I sometimes find I'm needed to set boundaries for the game or make the call when it's time to put the play to rest.

Looking across our Texas District I see partnerships that thrive because of their diversity. I thank God for young pastors and directors of Christian education working alongside seasoned senior leaders. I applaud the patient coaches and trainers and network leaders who bring discipline and direction to high-energy efforts. I marvel at those who are able to run tirelessly for long stretches at a time — as I once did — starting programs, launching churches, leading classrooms and unleashing the next generation.

Don't try to be something you're not. But also don't give up. We need you.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

1 PETER 4:10 NIV



Back to school



Rev. J. Brown
Legacy
Giving
Ambassador

I opened my first of multiple businesses when I was just 18 years old. I spent my latter teen years through my 20s teaching karate, leading fitness classes and silk-screening garments in Pennsylvania and Ohio. That entrepreneurial spirit led me to believe that high school was going to be the end of my formal education.

However, the Lord had other plans in mind. I was in my 30s when God packed me up and shipped me off to Concordia University Texas to study theology and obtain my undergraduate degree. After that, I enjoyed life as a student at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., and graduated in 2008.

In my younger years, I never thought I'd be going back to school as a middle-aged man. As it turned out, my situation was not that unique. In Austin, I had a classmate who was in her 80s. About half of the seminary class at Fort Wayne consisted of second-career students, many of whom were already retired. When most people think of "back to school," their thoughts go right to yellow school buses and cartoon-clad lunch pails. But back to school isn't just for the young. Whether formally or informally, life-long learning is something that can enhance the remaining days of any child of God.

It's never too late to learn about finance. Maybe a degree in economics is for you. Maybe not. Maybe you want to become a certified financial planner. Maybe not. Maybe your continuing education will be through reading books

or listening to podcasts about personal finance. There are many ways to learn and many degrees of education. I love to visit congregations on Sunday mornings and teach about estate planning and planned giving. I almost always see the figurative eyes light up and the light-bulbs turn on among a few people in the class.

It makes me happy when God's people get excited about learning something new about how to manage the resources that our Father has entrusted into their care. Maybe that moment is the first or next step in their life-long learning adventure as they formally or informally go "back to school."

If you would like to learn more about how Legacy Deo can help you on your financial journey of good stewardship, give us a call. We have experienced, knowledgeable and friendly teachers that can sit beside you and help you along the way.



legacydeo.
org



info@
legacydeo.org



800-
880-3733



2901 Caballo Ranch Blvd.
Bldg. 4, Units C and D
Cedar Park, TX 78641



WEATHERFORD

Rev. James Burke was ordained at Trinity on June 24. Brothers participating are, from left, Revs. Troy Miklos, Dr. Phil Schielke, Tim Fraker, James Burke, Adam Steinbrenner, Jon Thomas, Corey Christians and Joshua Hahn.



LIVINGSTON

Rev. Alexander C. Garber was installed as pastor of Trinity on July 16. Pictured are, from left, Revs. Tim Dinger, Joshua Knippa, Alexander C. Garber, John Davis and Loucan Saling.



KILLEEN

On Pentecost Sunday at Grace, new parameters to be used during the celebrations of Pentecost and the Reformation were dedicated. They were donated by Dottie Kulp (pictured), a long-time member.

BRENHAM

Grace Lutheran Church welcomed these new members to its family on June 11. Shown are, from left, Matthew and Jessica Zettel, Andrew and Mimi Wied and their children, Fynn and Lulu, and Jason Osborn.



DEVINE



Six children became children of God through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at Divine Savior on June 11. They are (from oldest to youngest) Abigail, Thomas, Madeline, Miriam, Isaiah and Delilah, who are pictured with their parents, Jonathan and Robin Shields, and Rev. Randall Wehmeyer.



On Holy Trinity Sunday, June 4, Dawn Ochoa confessed the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity and became a communicant member of Divine Savior.

HOUSTON

At Gethsemane Lutheran Church:

Raelyn Smith is pictured with her mother, Chelsea Bay, and Rev. Jerry McNamara after her Baptism on May 21.



Noah Vasquez (held by Pastor McNamara) is pictured with his parents, Luis and Stephanie Vasquez on the day of his Baptism, May 21.



Pastor McNamara is pictured with new members Daniel and Alison Horstman, who were welcomed on June 11.

LAGO VISTA



Christ Our Savior on April 2 welcomed to its family, from left, Tom Moeller, Trilby Wilson, and Scott and Teri Harmon. They are pictured with Rev. Drew Thompson.



Dan DeCastro was baptized on April 2. He is pictured with his parents, Kip and Cait DeCastro, and Pastor Thompson.

HUFFMAN

At Our Shepherd Lutheran Church:



On May 21, youth received Christ's body and blood for the first time at Our Shepherd. Shown are, from left, Trinity Brents, Cooper Landels, Grayce Nixon, Carson Bartley and Olivia Thompson.

Also, Aidan Gene Marcus and Axel Clay O'Dell were baptized on Jan 8.



▲ On Nov. 13, Rev. John Moore baptized Jolee Pearl Miller, who is with her parents, Mark and Mandy Miller.



◀ On May 10, Pastor Moore baptized Trinity Brents, and siblings Tyler Kate and Hudson Jeffrey Ensley.

SEQUIN



On June 4, Grace Lutheran Church welcomed Elizabeth and Sean Micels and their daughter, Hannah, to its family. They are pictured with Rev. Roger Hotopp.



The Grace Dorcas Guild was asked to help with a project for Pink Warrior Advocates. Each member stuffed heart-shaped pillows, which will be given to cancer patients.



GARLAND

The Sopko family celebrated Jessa's baptism at Concordia on April 30. Parents Jared and Ashley are pictured with their daughters, Jessa (left) and Jaxie. Pastor is Rev. Ken Knippner.



FAITH LUTHERAN SCHOOL, PLANO

(Above left) Congratulations to middle-school students Amanuel Ghebremariam and Emma Mildred for their winning entries in the Texas Lutherans For Life essay contest. Emma placed first and she advances to the national contest. Amanuel placed second.

(Above right) On May 26, Faith hosted its eighth-grade commencement. Pictured are, from left, Eli Stahr, Amanuel Ghebremariam (salutatorian), Lilia Martin (valedictorian), Jackson Ottmers and Winston Tiro.



Commencement for the high school's 11th graduating class was held on May 27. Pictured are, from left, Berkete Workinhe (salutatorian), Julia Hitz (valedictorian) and Juanita Gonzales.



PALESTINE

The members of Bethlehem celebrated the 80th birthday of James J Taylor on May 28 with a surprise luncheon. James has been a faithful member of Bethlehem since 1979 and is an elder emeritus.



Mount Calvary holds music conference

On April 22, Mount Calvary Lutheran Church and Preschool, La Grange, hosted the second Church Music Beautification Conference, which focused on cultivating musicianship within our congregations.

There were 25 attendees for the 2023 conference, which began with Matins and concluded with Responsive Prayer featuring Mount Calvary's bell choir and chancel choir.

Presenters were Benjamin Kolodziej (keynote), Rev. Bernard Schey (Trinity, Old Dime Box), Rev. Jason M. Kaspar (Mount Calvary) and Ruth Meyer (St. James,

Lexington, and Holy Trinity, Fedor).

This year's presentations included "Engaging Men in Song," "Practical Online Resources for the Church Organizer," "A Brief History of Texas Lutheran Music," "Engaging the Secret Power of Vocalization," and "Engaging Creatively the Tone Chimes." The conference also included the introduction of a new Resurrection hymn with text, tune and setting by Pastor Kaspar.

In subsequent years, the conference will simply be called Cultivating Musicianship. It will continue to be held at Mount Calvary on the second Saturday after Easter.

CLEBURNE

Ascension is supporting Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT) in their efforts in translating the Bible for Cameroon. Beverlea Bons, congregational chairperson, is shown on June 4 presenting a check to Rev. Dr. Tilahun Mendedo, LBT executive development officer, while Rev. Eddie Scheler looks on.



On May 28, Lisa Waits (center) was honored with “Lisa Waits Day” at Ascension. She retired as Ascension’s Next Generation Preschool director. Lisa has led Next Generation since its founding with eight students four years ago. Today, the preschool has reached its capacity of 60 students. Lisa will be followed by Alyssa Day, one of Next Generation’s original teachers. Pictured with Lisa are Pastor Scheler and Beverlea.



COPPERAS COVE



Jeanette Jost, a long-time member of Immanuel, recently retired as organist. Jeanette played the organ and piano for more than 30 years at Immanuel, bringing beautiful music for the services and many other occasions. It is with sadness and much appreciation from the Immanuel congregation to see her retire. Jeanette was honored with a potluck dinner, cards, flowers and many gifts. She is pictured with Rev. David Reedy, Immanuel pastor.



ATHENS

On April 22, the St. John LWML hosted a spring event under the theme “Helping Hands” (based on Prov. 31:20). The guest speaker was Amanda Pruitt of Abundant Life, a non-profit organization that serves pregnant women in need. Diapers and baby wipes were donated for Abundant Life. Also, the tables were decorated with stuffed animals that the group purchased to be given to Maggie’s House, which serves women and children. It was a very uplifting day as attendees came together “in service to the Lord.”



TOMBALL

▲ The ladies of Zion celebrated Easter in style with classic and festive Easter hats.

► Austin Hargrave was confirmed at Zion on May 7. He is pictured with Rev. Chris Hull.



BREHAM



The Bethlehem LWML held a Faith, Family and Fiesta Fun Night on May 6. Ladies who have been members for more than 50 years were honored with a festive corsage. Shown are, from left, Pauline Kettler, Shirley Klussmann, Grace Kankel and Diane Jaehne. Not pictured are Billie Weidemann and Amanda Hafer.

Ready to serve

Fred Herm and Beth Lauterbach completed on-line evangelist training with Rev. Andy Whaley, and were certified to serve as Texas District lay evangelists on May 7 at Prince of Peace, Amarillo. Representing the Texas District were Deaconess Noemi Guerra, district Evangelist Development Leader, and her husband, Rev. Lincon Guerra, Area A Mission and Ministry Facilitator

For more information, visit txclms.org/lay-evangelist-training.



From left, Deaconess Noemi Guerra, Fred Herm, Rev. Joe Andrajack (Prince of Peace, Amarillo, pastor) Beth Lauterbach and Rev. Lincon Guerra.

CONGRATULATIONS!

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

Devine Savior, Devine

Glen and
Lanell Felps
51 years, July 28

Jim and Betty Barlow
54 years, Aug. 23

Andrew and Ethel Martin
54 years, Sept. 13

Henry and Nell Schmidt
59 years, Nov. 14

Trinity, San Angelo

Ken and Susan Baker
52 years, July 16



Gethsemane, Houston

Kenneth and Alice Kaspar
50 years, Aug. 11

Milton and Viola Bade
58 years, Aug. 14

George and Clarice
Aschenbeck
57 years, Aug. 20

Chuck and Beverly Greeney
61 years, Aug. 25

Ernie and Isabell Pali
57 years, Sept. 15

Lonnie and Kathy Angst
61 years, Sept. 15

Roy and Sharon Albe
66 years, Sept. 21

St. Paul, The Grove

Lloyd and Brenda Arldt
53 years, Sept. 5

Keith and Mavis Shafer
51 years, Sept. 10

Sy and Sherry Hartgrove
51 years, Sept. 15

Mount Calvary, La Grange

George and Brenda Rainosek
50 years, August

Dale and Dorothy Witt
64 years, August

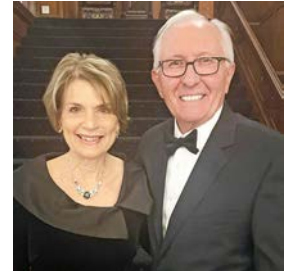
Robert and Genelda Pavlik
57 years, October

Paul and Geraldine Teinert
56 years, October

St. Matthew, Westfield

Richard and Patricia LaShomb
63 years, Aug. 13

Curtis and Sharon Gace
50 years, Aug. 25



Michael and Susan Fuchs, members of Zion, Dallas, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 30.



THE GROVE

Karmela Mendez was confirmed at St. Paul on Pentecost Sunday, May 28. She was the sole confirmand, and also the top student and valedictorian of her class. For questioning, two of her friends, who were questioned and confirmed in previous years, sat with her during questioning so that she would not have to answer all 150 questions by herself. Karmela is pictured with Rev. John Heckmann, St. Paul pastor.



The 'unique treasure'

The LCMS Texas District Spring Theological Convocation was held May 8-10 at St. Paul, Waco. The theme was "The Unique Treasure of the Gospel."

The topics were focused on our confession of original sin and the treasures of Jesus, justification,

Scripture, worship and the Sacraments. Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller, pastor of St. Paul, Austin, and Jesus Deaf Lutheran Church, Austin, led the 160 attendees in discussion and worship.

Lutheran Hour Ministries was an event sponsor and set up a display of materials.



BIG SPRING

The Parish Nurse Committee of Alive in Christ Lutheran Church hosted a blood drive on May 13. Fourteen pints of blood were donated.

Share your news!

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

► txmess@txlcms.org

► Texas Messenger,
LCMS Texas District,
1221 Satellite View
Round Rock, TX 78665



Pictured are the 2023 Texas District Administrators Conference attendees.

Sharing Christ, changing lives

By Dr. Bill Hinz
Director, School Ministry



While celebrating the blessings of a successful 2022-23 school

year, our Lutheran school administrators were busy planning for and looking forward to the beginning of another year of wonderful opportunities.

Our students and their families are living amid rapidly changing cultural norms. These are challenging times for sure, and they don't appear to be going away anytime soon. In the midst of professional and cultural challenges, however, God's Word continues to share the Truth, and to be the Truth.

In preparation for the next school year, our administrators gathered in San Antonio July 17-19 for our annual Administrators Conference, which provides opportunities for learning and collaboration.

We were challenged by our keynote speakers Jim McKenzie, market-

ing consultant for the Van Lunen Center and the Herzog Foundation; Michael Smith, attorney for the Fowler Law Firm PC, and Laura Colangelo, executive director of the Texas Private Schools Association, an advocacy organization representing the more than 800 private non-profit schools in Texas before the legislatures in Austin and Washington, D.C.

We were blessed in worship as Revs. Travis Hartjen (Crown of Life, Colleyville) and Doug Bielefeldt (emeritus) guided us through our conference theme of "Sacrificial Love," based on John 15:12-13 (NIV):

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."



God walks with our school leaders and their teams, and with their students and their families. God has walked with our school staffs and empowered them to

continue to minister to students and families and to one another. Many of our schools experienced significant enrollment increases. We thank God for more and more opportunities to share Jesus and His forgiveness and life.

There were celebrations! New buildings and ongoing building projects; weddings; births; new students, teachers and administrators; Baptisms; service projects; athletic and fine arts accomplishments; safe schools; graduations; families making positive changes; students growing in their faith — what an amazing year.

We are preparing front-line missionaries as our students are equipped with the Word by our caring and loving teachers. We thank God for teachers equipped by His power to share His love and forgiveness to students, families and to each other. In the midst of a broken world, we have the opportunity to share that true worth and value are not found in the things of this world, but in His redeeming work on the cross.

We are called to *holy work* and He has equipped our Lutheran schools. The blessed adventure continues in the 2023-24 school year.

New students 'embark!'

At its core, Embark! is more than Concordia University Texas' new student orientation. The one-and-a-half-day event is about empowering tomorrow's leaders by equipping students and their families with the tools to navigate the ins and outs of being part of the CTX community.

In preparation for the 2023 fall semester, Concordia University Texas held Embark! events that catered to both incoming transfers and first-year students. Embark! was invaluable in facilitating the process of acquainting students and their families with their new peers, the campus and faculty, and has provided a platform for spiritual connections.

Fearless exploration for all

From engaging information sessions to mock classes, Embark! provided an array of activities designed to create an immersive experience for incoming students and their families. The orientation event ensured participants found support and felt prepared for the journey ahead.

For the eager students stepping onto the campus (perhaps for the first time), Embark! offered opportunities to connect with fellow Tornados. This unique occasion enabled students to form bonds with like-minded individuals who may become their partners in fearless exploration throughout their educational journey.

Concordia University Texas embraces its role as a Lutheran institution and is committed to nurturing spiritual growth and fostering a profound connection with Christ among our students, faculty and staff. Through enriching faith talks, Embark! helped develop an inclusive and supportive CTX



Pictured are students and families that participated in Embark! Also meeting the many who attended is Dr. Don Christian, CTX president and chief executive officer (pictured in third row, at right).

community where students could explore their faith and find a sense of belonging.

Another essential component of Embark! was the chance for students to meet their new professors. CTX's inspiring faculty members were eager to share their wealth of knowledge, insights and passion for their respective fields. Students were empowered to envision a promising future with guidance and encouragement from the seasoned educators.

Students explored the nooks and crannies of the picturesque campus, nestled in the embrace of a beautiful nature preserve. Led by knowledgeable student guides, the campus tours highlighted the best spots to study, unwind and create unforgettable experiences.

And finally, Embark! did not solely focus on the student experience. Concordia University Texas recognizes the crucial role that students' families play in their children's academic journey (and success). For parents, Embark! offered critical information that granted them insights into the rigorous academic programs and the CTX classroom experience. Parents were empowered to use these tools to stay active in their child's education and help them unlock their full potential.

A journey of discovery awaits

The 2023 fall semester has begun! Our students and their loved ones are prepared to explore beyond their comfort zones, and we are ready to help them find their calling, become leaders and build meaningful careers.

Visit concordia.edu/embark for more information about the Embark! new student orientation, and to check out our academics, meet our faculty and more.



Serving the Lord in Alaska

I just returned from a month of sweet service in Alaska. The first week was spent with teenagers from remote villages. The teens are flown to Fairbanks, and then we all hop into a van and head to Camp Bingle in Salcha. (It is right on Lake Harding, so the mosquitos are ruthless!)



Camp Bingle is a gorgeous venue where the teens spend a week enjoying all the goodness of summer camp: swimming, canoeing, horse-back riding, Bible study, campfires, hiking, group games, praying, and enjoying delicious meals made by Grandma Sandra! Last year about 15 of us came down with COVID and bonded by being sick together. This year we stayed healthy, and six of the teenagers asked to be baptized. Wow! What a spiritual highlight!

Week two in Cordova was rainy. We had twice as many kids as last year and they were all excited to sing, learn memory verses, do crafts, play games, eat together, take ukulele lessons and, most im-

portantly, learn about how they are God's masterpiece! The NLT translation of Eph. 2:10 reads:

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

God has a plan to use each of us to bring Him glory and share His story.

Ps. 139:13-16 (NIV) is so beautiful!

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Did you catch that last phrase? God knew what was going to happen every day of your life, and He knew it before you were even conceived. Wow! Talk about masterful choreography!

Week three brought me back to

Hooper Bay, where I have been serving every summer since 1999 (except during the pandemic). The relationships are long and strong. As we were walking to the church to set up for VBS, Alice, a young adult who grew up going to VBS every summer, came running down the dirt road, giddy with joy. "I can't believe you're here! I'm so happy! My kids get to come to your VBS now!"

One of the participants in our women's Bible study shared how she had asked Jesus to help her sober up, and she was about to celebrate one year of sobriety. Another woman shared a story of how her two young children had drowned at the hands of some other children who were playing around, and how she chose to forgive them.

Similarly, week four was spent in the nearby village of Chevak (a 10-minute flight on a bush plane), where we have served for many years. The former teens we had in VBS are now leading the village, and helping the younger children to learn about God. How sweet it is to see God at work in people's lives! How sweet it is to be a part of serving others so they can grow in their faith!

I think Luke 10:42 sums it up pretty well:

"But one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

To donate to CAN-DO:

Call 512-313-4332 to donate via credit card

Visit thelc.ms/supporting-ctx

Send to

Concordia University Texas
ATTN: CAN-DO MISSIONS
11400 Concordia Univ. Dr.
Austin TX 78726

Starting your child's stewardship journey

By Raelyn Pracht
CEF Marketing
Specialist



Here at Texas
District
Church

Extension Fund, we believe that teaching the next generation fiscal responsibility and biblical stewardship is of vital importance. Parents and grandparents have the opportunity to walk with their children and grandchildren on their journey of saving. An option for a Custodial Investment for Minors is available for Texas District CEF's Fixed and Floating Rate Notes, as well as the Flex Savings.

To help you better understand this opportunity, we have provided you answers to some frequently asked questions. Of course, if you still have questions, please contact one of our knowledgeable Investor Services Representatives at 888-951-1233. They would be happy to serve you!

❶ Do I have to provide the Social Security number of the minor?

Yes. Interest is required to be reported to the IRS using the minor's Social Security number.

❷ When can I transfer ownership directly to the minor?

At age 18, an Investment Ownership Change Form can be filled out and the investment can be changed to their name only.

❸ Do I have to transfer ownership to the minor?

Yes. Texas Property Code (Chapter 141) requires that a Minor/Custodial Investment be changed to the ownership of the minor at age 21.



❹ Does Texas CEF automatically change the investment to the minor's name when they turn 21?

No. The custodian and minor must fill out an Investment Ownership Change Form since both signatures are required and updated contact information is needed.

❺ Can I send an email or do the transfer by phone?

No. The custodian and minor must fill out an Investment Ownership Change Form since both signatures are required and updated contact information is needed.

However, once signed you can scan the documents and email them to invest@texascef.org

❻ My grandchild has an investment, but I am not the custodian. Can I still add funds to their investment?

Definitely. You can send in a check with the grandchild's name in the memo line and their investment number, if you have it.

❼ I would like to open a Flex Savings for my child or grandchild. How do I do that?

You can visit texascef.org to download an Investment Application.

You can also call 1-888-951-1233 or email invest@texascef.org to request one.

You will fill out the Custodial Investment for Minor section in Step 1 and then proceed to fill out the following Steps 2 -5. Don't forget to sign it as the custodian! Please send a check along with the signed application to:

Texas District Church Extension Fund
1221 Satellite View
Round Rock, TX 78665

Parents and grandparents play a key role in the financial and stewardship education of the children in their lives. It takes as little as \$10 to open a Flex Savings and get them started saving today!

As parents and grandparents, we want to set children up for success. And one of the best ways to do that is through financial education and responsible stewardship. But where do you begin? With as little as \$10, you can open a Flex Savings for the minor with you as the custodian and give them a head start on their savings journey.

‘The right path for us’

Upbring helps family from **FOSTERING** to **ADOPTION**

Extending a helping hand to children has been a way of life for Courtney and Jeff Knowles. As pee-wee sports coaches, they recognized that children from single-parent families sometimes needed extra attention. At church, they worked with teenagers and helped in the nursery. Though they had two biological children, the Knowles felt called to love other children through fostering or adoption.

“I was determined that this was the right path for us,” Courtney says. She reached out to Child Protective Services. Soon afterward, a caseworker recommended Upbring. After Courtney and Jeff attended an informational meeting at Upbring’s Fort Worth office, Courtney had the thought: “This is exactly where we’re supposed to be.”

Throughout their fostering journey from 2014 to 2021, the Knowles’ opened their hearts and home to infants and toddlers with diverse needs, including those with heart conditions, autism and fetal alcohol syndrome, as well as siblings who needed a haven. Courtney fondly recalls the first child they welcomed, an adorable 6-month-old boy rescued from a drug house during a police raid. “He clung to me like a little baby koala bear to his mom,” she remembers.

The Knowles’ foster journey led them to

THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT, we have the privilege of guiding foster parents through their journey and connecting thousands of Texas children to loving families. To learn more, visit Upbring.org/FosterInTexas.



adopting three precious children, all newborns: Avery, now 7; Adrian, 6; and Stella, 2. The older children had previously been exposed to illegal drug environments. Stella, born prematurely at 35 weeks, was placed in a drug-induced coma and underwent reconstructive open-heart surgery. Today, Courtney beams with pride as she describes Stella’s personality: “She’s ridiculously intelligent and bossy as the day is long.”

Courtney’s advice to people considering fostering: have a good support system. She’s grateful for the support of her mother, who lives nearby, as well as from Upbring and Kim Caldwell, an Upbring Family Services worker who remains a friend of the family.



Upbring.org

[/UpbringOrg](https://www.facebook.com/UpbringOrg)

[@UpbringOrg](https://twitter.com/UpbringOrg)

[UpbringOrg](https://www.instagram.com/UpbringOrg)



Blessings at Pines campus

We are still reflecting on — and giving thanks to God for — all the ways that He worked through the ministry of Camp Lone Star throughout the summer. Not only did we have a wonderful summer with more than 2,000 overnight and day campers in La Grange, but we also had a busy and exciting season serving various groups at our Pines Campus in Tomball.

One of the largest events that was held this summer at the Pines was Camp Rainbow, which is sponsored by the American Diabetes Association (ADA). The camp helped the children attending develop social skills, self-respect and friendships. The goal of this camp is to give children the opportunity to meet others who have diabetes while fostering independence, building self-confidence and gaining an awareness of a healthy lifestyle through education, nutrition, exercise, emotional well-being and glucose control.

Camp Lone Star has been blessed to partner with the ADA by housing the medical staff, welcoming par-

ents for educational training sessions, and providing a unique worship experience in our chapel. We look forward to an ongoing partnership for many years to come.

Welcome Michael

As God continues to provide more and more impactful ministry opportunities at our Pines Campus, naturally our team must grow as well. In July, we welcomed a new member to our team, Michael Griedl, as the Programs director. Michael previously was an educator serving at Salem Lutheran School, Tomball, with his wife, Lisa. They have been married for 15 years and just welcomed their first child, a daughter, in July.

Michael expressed that the Lord has surely had His hand of blessing and provision on their marriage and in their lives. In addition to being a teacher, Michael has also served as director of athletics and



Michael Griedl

spiritual life. His prayer is that he can serve the Lord through loving and serving others.

From a young age, Christ put it on his heart to use his gifts and abilities to lead others to Him. For the last 15 years, this calling was fulfilled through teaching. However, he felt a stirring that God had something new for him in ministry, which is what led him to join us in this new role.

Michael, along with our entire team, believes that God has big plans in store for Camp Lone Star. We are excited to see how He uses Michael and the rest of our team to continue growing His kingdom through adventurous Christ-centered experiences.

If you have any questions about our Pines Campus, or if you would like to bring your own group to Camp Lone Star, give us a call or email us; or visit our website.



♦ 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
979-968-1657 • camplonestar.org



As God has told us, we are His adopted children. For that reason, when we suffer physically, emotionally or mentally, or have other stress in our lives, God suffers along with us. In our world, people experience all kinds of pain, hardship, agony and torment and as Christians we lift up our prayers for relief and resolution to these burdens. God hears our prayers and can offer healing and resolution.

Ps. 34:18 says:

The LORD is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

Jesus Himself endured the ultimate pain for us so we can be assured that God would never leave us alone. As believers, we have this source of comfort in our pain: God is with us. Suffering is never easy as people experience many issues of pain — and death — in their lives.

But we have hope in the spirit of the Lord to hear our pleas for help. Is. 49:13 says:

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the LORD has comforted his people

and will have compassion on his afflicted.

Project Connect from Lutheran Hour Ministries is a focused group of booklets to address social issues and suffering we experience daily. These booklets vary in topics and are written to comfort and give direction to those who are seeking answers. Here are some titles that are available:

Journey Through Addiction

This booklet helps readers understand addiction, provides useful reflection exercises, and offers a healing path to letting go and living on.

Journey Through Anxiety

God's spirit gives us the power, love, and ability to face our fears.

Journey Through the Rat Race

This booklet addresses struggles in managing time and duties, and has thoughtful approaches toward solutions.

Hope and Healing

Battling breast cancer is an all-in effort best waged by leaning on God.

Depression

This booklet covers understanding the illness and helping others cope with kindness, knowledge and compassion.

No Need to Fear

Anxiety comes in many forms. This booklet discusses how to tap into a source of hope.

Stressed but Connected

This booklet offers insight to setting healthy personal boundaries to eliminating procrastination and strategies to help you manage stress.

Several of these booklets are also available in Spanish.

The texts are written from a spiritual standpoint, highlighting how God can help us with our problems through prayer and trust in Him. Many have specific exercises to help us better understand the issues we have. We are urged to start with gratitude for the God who became man in Jesus Christ to share in our suffering. Biblical texts emphasize that even

in our deepest pain and isolation God is with us, caring for us and ever ready to help.

There are also some booklets for equipping your congregation's members to share their faith. The display holds all categories of booklets that are ideal for people to take at their convenience and discretion. When put in a church narthex or fellowship hall, these racks are available for visitors on their time, giving them resources when they need them.

For more information, visit lhm.org/projectconnect.





"Celebrating the Lord of the Nations" ...

Pictured above are some of the delegates from the Texas District during a business session at the 40th Biennial LWML Convention, held June 22-25 at the Baird Center in Milwaukee. At right, Frances Molitor (center), LWML Texas District president, is pictured with district Young Woman Representatives Amanda Nelson (left) and Laura Fisher.



Membership forms due Oct. 20

Worshipping with 3,500 of your closest friends. Sharing meals with the ladies in line around you. Participating in karaoke, cornhole and chair volleyball while gorging on popcorn at Friday Funfest. Entering into the Lutheran Ladies Lounge for an evening of laughter and entertainment.

What fun and fellowship we had together at the 40th Biennial LWML Convention in Milwaukee in June. What a mountaintop experience that was! Now that we're back to reality, the fellowship doesn't have to stop. We can all be Lutheran Women in Mission right where we are. Challenges and obstacles may arise, but remaining faithful to our calling keeps us grounded in who we are.

We turn our focus to fall, which brings cooler temperatures and changing colors — and the time to fill out membership directory information.

This membership roster will determine the eligible voting delegates for the next LWML Texas District convention, to be held in June 2024 in Corpus Christi. When you receive the membership forms, read them carefully, and return them by Oct. 20 to your zone president. Much information is gathered from these forms, so it is important not to miss the deadline.

As we gather this fall for our zone rallies let's continue to "Celebrate the Lord of the Nations" as Lutheran Women in Mission!

MISSION GRANT SPOTLIGHT

David Ricks of Lutheran Disaster Care, Inc., is presented a mission grant payment of \$5,000 by Sandi Paniello, LWML Texas District treasurer. A total mission grant award of \$16,000 will be used to purchase Bibles and gift cards to provide aid and comfort to those impacted by disaster.



Nomination forms due

The Nominating Committee needs candidates who are willing to serve as district officers. Positions open are president, vice-president of Christian Life, vice-president of Organizational Resources, financial secretary, and Nominating Committee.

All LWML groups and zones are encouraged to complete the nomi-



nation form at their fall meetings and send it to Debbie Curry, Nominating Committee chairman, at nominatingch@lwmltxdist.org. You do not need to secure the candidate's permission.

All forms and information can be found at lwmltxdist.org/nominating-committee. **The deadline is Nov. 1.**

The heart of the LWML



Pictured is the Loose Threads sewing group at Hope, Lubbock. Dayle Sillerud is in back (in apron).

Meet Dayle Sillerud, a member of Hope, Lubbock. Dayle honors God by serving others through her leadership of Loose Threads, a sewing group at Hope. She has developed relationships with several local non-profits, including Upbring, the Ronald McDonald House, Unpack Lubbock, Threads of Love, the Salvation Army, and Texas Girls and Boys Ranch. She also coordinates efforts with international organizations including Operation Smile, Little Dresses for Africa, Lutheran World Relief, and Days for Girls.

When asked why she joined LWML, Dayle said: “The LWML group at Hope is active and productive, with meaningful activities. I joined because I could see the group ‘got things done’ for the congregation, our child development center and the greater community.” She likes being with like-minded Christian women to strengthen her faith and have so many opportunities to serve the church and community.

Dayle also makes quilts for children with the South Plains Quilters’ Guild. She also helps out with various activities at church and participates in other members’ Thrivent Action Team projects.

Grant proposals due Nov. 1

Mission Grant proposals for consideration at the 2024 LWML Texas District Convention may be submitted electronically, but hard copies need to be received by Patti Samsel, vice-president of Gospel Outreach, by Nov. 1.

It is highly recommended for ministries to let Patti know of their intentions by Oct. 1 at gospeloutreach@lwmltxdist.org. Please note that the order in which the mission grant proposals are received will be the order in which they will appear on the convention ballot.

Information and mission grant proposal documents are available at lwmltxdist.org/mission-grant-proposals.

GREAT IS HIS Faithfulness!



Totals as of June 30, 2023

2022–2024 Mite Goal	\$390,000
Mites Received	\$225,745
Total Mites Still Needed	\$164,255
Mission Grants Paid	\$133,814

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

Lutheran World Relief collection dates

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

LWML Sunday materials available now

“The King is Coming” (based on Ps. 24:7-10) is the theme for LWML Sunday, which is traditionally celebrated the first Sunday in October, but it may be celebrated at any time.

Throughout human history, God pictured the coming redemptive King through various images of His promise, providence, provision and protection for His people. The King of glory comes in, with and through the Gospel, as we were buried with Him in Baptism and raised with Him to a new life!

The materials were written by Rev. Dr. Roosevelt Gray Jr., director of LCMS Black Ministry.

For more information and to download LWML Sunday materials, go to lwml.org/lwml-sunday.