



The Beacon Online

October 1, 2021 / Vol. 2 / No. 36

The Beacon Online is the communication source for the SELC District.

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The SELC District Convention is being held from May 12 - 15, 2022 in St. Louis at St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church. Watch for more information in future issues of the Beacon Online.



Emilie Stoller-Prozenko Installed at Ascension Lutheran Church

Deaconess Emilie Stoller-Prozenko was commissioned and installed on September 18, 2021 in Montreal, Canada. SELC District President Waldemar Vinovskis commissioned Emilie and then installed her as the Deaconess at Ascension. Emilie completed her Deaconess Internship at Ascension.



From left to right: Pastor Charles St. Onge, Emilie Stoller-Prozenko, and President Wally Vinovskis



Deaconess Kristin Wassilak attended the commissioning and installation. Deaconess Wassilak is the Deaconess Program Director at Concordia University Chicago



From left to right: Emilie's sister Jaimee Stoller and her father Roger Stoller joined Emilie and her husband Avery for the service. Jaimee and Roger are members of Zion Lutheran Church in Norridge, IL, a SELC congregation.

On God's Time – theCross Lutheran Church

ON GOD'S TIME

"The biggest shift for us, especially on Sundays, is that now we can focus on people and worship."

Rev. Jacob Baumann
Executive Pastor at theCross

VISIT [INTERESTTIME.ORG](https://interesttime.org) TO READ THE FULL STORY!



Lutheran Church Extension Fund
> where investments build ministry

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Timing is everything - when it's God's timing and not ours, of course. Such was the experience of The Cross Lutheran Church (branded as theCross), a growing SELC District church that was planted in Mount Dora, Fla., in 2010. The church held its first worship service in a rental space in a retail plaza in 2011. Since then, they've managed without a permanent location. Over the years, theCross held office and meeting space across six units in the strip mall, while worship services took place in a high school auditorium. That meant setting up and taking down, week after week.

Read the complete article and see the pictures at Interest Time here:
<https://interesttime.org/on-gods-time-the-cross-lutheran-church/>.



New Online Leader Training Helps Churches Begin or Expand Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministries St. Louis is now training caring ministry leaders through a live, interactive online training experience called the Bridge Leader's Training Course (BLTC). This event fully trains Stephen Leaders—the pastors, church staff, and lay leaders who begin and lead Stephen Ministry in their congregation.

The BLTC draws on newly redesigned and updated Stephen Ministry resources to equip participants with the skills and know-how to lead all aspects of their congregation's Stephen Ministry. This includes training a team of congregation

members as lay caregivers (called Stephen Ministers), matching them with hurting people in the congregation and community, and offering ongoing guidance and support to Stephen Ministers as they provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people experiencing a wide range of life difficulties.

Established in 1975, Stephen Ministry is a lay caring ministry being used by thousands of congregations of all types, sizes, and settings—across the US, Canada, and 30 other countries. Stephen Leaders in these congregations have equipped more than 600,000 people as Stephen Ministers, who in turn have cared for millions of people in need. The new training and resources carry this ministry into the future, preparing congregations to meet the ministry challenges of an ever-changing world.

“We’ve seen a huge increase of interest in Stephen Ministry over the past year and a half,” says Joel Bretscher, Program Director at Stephen Ministries St. Louis. “Pastors have always had an incredible caregiving load, tending to more needs than they could ever meet alone, and the pandemic has brought even more of those needs to the surface. It’s underscored the importance of having a team of well-trained caregivers, which is why so many churches have been relying on their Stephen Ministry and so many more are getting it started. The Bridge Leader’s Training Course, the new training resources, and the updated system have made it quicker and easier for congregations to begin Stephen Ministry or strengthen an existing Stephen Ministry.”

The Bridge Leader’s Training Course is delivered via Zoom to cohorts of twenty people, led by two members of Stephen Ministries’ teaching faculty. Each session uses a variety of teaching methods—presentation, small- and whole-group discussions, skill practice, video, and more. The course consists of ten sessions held twice weekly for five weeks or once weekly for ten weeks.

The Bridge Leader’s Training Course has welcomed participants from churches across the United States and Canada, as well as from other countries including Australia, China, Germany, and Switzerland. Since the initial cohort in July 2020, more than a thousand individuals representing hundreds of congregations have completed the training from the convenience of their own home or office and are now serving as Stephen Leaders.

“Our church was just starting Stephen Ministry when I attended the Bridge Leader’s Training Course,” said Jan McCanless from Saint Paul’s Lutheran Church in Salisbury, North Carolina, which began Stephen Ministry in July 2020. “It was a truly life-changing experience I’ll always remember fondly. Most importantly, it sharpened all the skills I need for leading Stephen Ministry.”

“I’ve been a Stephen Minister for years,” said Jim Smith, a member of Timothy Lutheran Church in Saint Louis, Missouri. “The Bridge Leader’s Training Course gave me a new appreciation for how Stephen Ministry supports the mission of our church. It was a real blessing.”

To learn more about Stephen Ministry, visit www.stephenministries.org or call (314) 428-2600. Additional information about the Bridge Leader’s Training Course is available at www.stephenministries.org/bridge.



Rev. Paul Visoky Memorial



There will be a memorial service for the Rev. Paul Visoky on Saturday, November 6 at 1:30 PM at St. Matthew, 667 N. Main Street, Wilkes Barre, PA.

Any and all are welcome to attend. Should you desire to attend the (free) reception after the service, please contact Rev. Peter Haenftling (330-314-6075) (goosey424@gmail.com) with the number of attendees by Saturday, October 23.



FORO meets in Montreal, Canada

Ascension, Montreal hosted its third annual FORO, or mission partners, meeting September 17 and 18. Although COVID made travel difficult for many, seventeen individuals attended from Ascension and partners such as the SELC District, the English District, and LCMS congregations in Tennessee and Texas either in-person or via Zoom.

Pastor Charles St-Onge led an opening service and gave up an update on the mission's strategic plan. Emilie Stoller-Prozenko presented on her work as a missionary deaconess, and lay missionary Ruth Stone talked about her and her husband Lyman's work in campus and immigrant outreach. The FORO concluded with a worship service on Saturday morning which included the consecration of Emilie and her formal installation as deaconess at Ascension.

The LCMS Office of International mission encourages each mission country or field to develop a circle of mission supporters. These FORO partners provide advice, volunteer assistance, financial support and prayer for the work the missionaries intend to undertake. Ascension is happy to count the SELC District as an important partner in our intentional and expanding outreach to the thousands of immigrants in the Parc-Extension neighborhood and across Montreal.

You can learn more about LCMS FOROs at this link (<https://international.lcms.org/events-foros/>).

If you would like to participate in our Montreal FORO, our next meeting will be in mid-September 2022 with exact dates to be determined by the end of 2021. Simply email pastor@ascensionlutheran.ca with your interest and questions.



Rev. Charles St. Onge and Deaconess Emilie Stoller-Prozenko



Left photo: Members attending the FORO meeting. Photo on right: Rev. Charles St. Onge and his wife Deborah



How the real estate market has churches considering “best-uses” for their real-estate

A good friend and great partner for LCEF, Matt Messier is featured in this article, which talks about churches considering how to use their real estate for the kingdom. The pandemic, dwindling membership and hot real estate market all have combined to give churches real good reason to reconsider how they use their space.

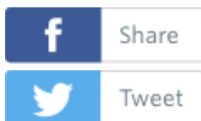
<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/2021-05-28/florida-churches-consider-creative-uses-of-real-estate-during-pandemic>

If you would like to hear how LCEF can help your congregation make best use of it's real estate, let's talk! I'm only a call, email or text message away!

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