



# The Beacon Online

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

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A printed version of the newsletter is available on our website at [selc.lcms.org](http://selc.lcms.org) Please use the printed version from our website to post and/or share the newsletter with others.



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.



This is an aerial picture of St. Lucas Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri where the SELC District Convention will be held. This was taken during an Easter Egg hunt. Watch every few weeks for another picture from St. Lucas!



## Welcome to the SELC District

We welcome Rev. Steve Holtman and his wife Kathy to the SELC District. They moved to Florida from Colorado Springs and have joined Faith Viera in Rockledge, FL. We are blessed to have Pastor and Mrs. Holtman in the SELC District.



## Setting Your 2022 SELC Budget Goal

*And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8*

Christ calls us to be witnesses of the Gospel throughout the whole world. One way we do this together is through our partnership with district and Synod missions. These offerings are given in joyful response to the Gospel of Christ, trusting in its power with the prayer that new believers will be brought to saving faith in Christ.

Due to inflationary pressures in our economy, the Board of Directors at its September meeting recommended congregations to increase their contributions by four percent for 2022.

Your congregation should have received a letter (or should soon) for you to indicate your plans to support district and Synod missions. As your congregations completes its budgeting process, please return this information by mail or email (preferred) by January 15 to:

Rev. Dr. Mark Larson, Stewardship Chair  
7100 Morganford Rd, St. Louis, MO 63116  
markclarson0341@gmail.com

Note that checks should be sent directly to the District Financial Secretary:  
Larry Schultz, 1566 Bushkill Center Rd, Bath, PA 18014



## Maximize Your Singing or Playing

Pastor Ken Ballas, EM

### **Key Thought:**

Becoming a better singer or player has more to do with one's mind and ears than with one's voice or instrument.

Making music together for maximum enjoyment of others (including our God!) involves awareness of one's whole being including our God-given reason, heart and ears.

It was St. Augustine who wisely first observed, "To sing is to praise twice!" as singing involves simultaneous use of both poetic verse and God's gift of music which

Luther regarded as “second only to theology.”

To those believing they cannot sing at all (or as well as they once did), brother Martin used the analogy of a donkey braying over the back fence as nevertheless also praising its Creator by “doing the best that it can.” God loves you including *your* voice!

Sung prayer expresses the joy of the human heart and happiness resulting from one who has been led by the Spirit of God to encounter Jesus Christ as living Lord and experience His forgiving, redeeming love.

Instead of merely focusing on individual words or notes, musicians worthy of the name always looks *ahead* and focus on a composer or poet's entire musical phrase!

Envision perhaps a *beautifully balanced* string quartet in which players and audience alike learn to appreciate the ensemble's *inner voices* (“second fiddle” and viola). Unless one is singing or playing a solo, being only concerned about hearing one's own voice may often mean he or she is likely singing or playing too loudly!

Should you miss a note (or word) or two, rather than dwell on such common “*boobos*,” just keep going as “the train has already left the station” with the result that it is too late to try to correct what all of us may on occasion miss along the way.

The importance of meaningful repetition in rehearsal ideally includes prior prayerful preparation to familiarize oneself with the words, which are ultimately more important even than individual musical notes. To use a team sport analogy perhaps, as you play your position, be acutely aware of all the other players around you!

P. S. Though most hymn texts have a *context*, it has happened (ostensibly to “save time or space”) that only the *first* stanza of Luther's battle hymn of the Reformation “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” is sometimes printed or sung even though Jesus Christ is not mentioned until stanza 2.

Do not allow the devil to steal God's glory in these or other ways during congregational worship of His most holy Name!



## **New Advent Sermon Series available for download**

*'The Bible, Our Book of Advents' looks to Old Testament texts*

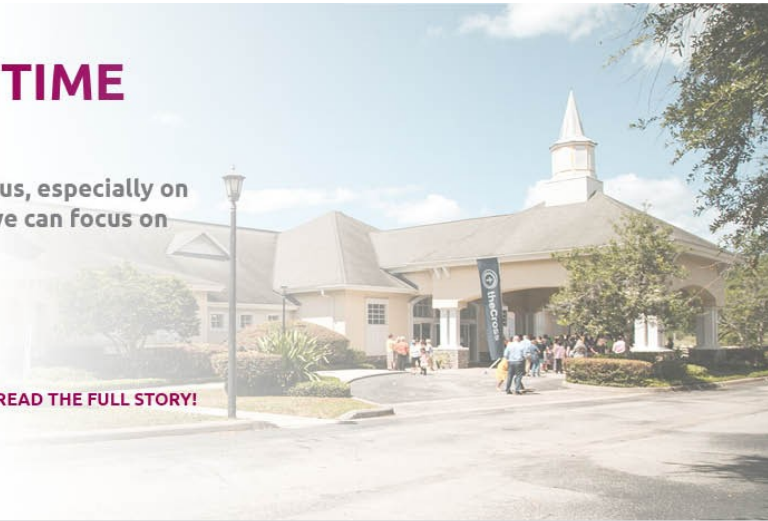
Finding Christ in the Old Testament is the focus of the 2021 Advent Sermon Series, “**The Bible, Our Book of Advents**,” from Concordia Seminary Press, the publishing arm of **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis**. The series, now available as a downloadable PDF, includes four sermons drawing from Old Testament texts that prefigure the advents of Christ.

“True Advent challenges us, but there is much in our surrounding culture that subtly wears down messages of Christ's advents,” said the series author, **President Emeritus Dr. Dale A. Meyer**, in the series' introduction. “Advent is about anticipation, less of the manger and more about the final revelation of Christ when He leads His ransomed to the inheritance reserved in heaven.”

The sermons in “The Bible, Our Book of Advents” invite listeners to consider biblical narratives that are not always the focus of the Advent season. Instead, Meyer contemplates anew the stories of Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Joshua with an eye toward the advent and arrival of God among His people, then and now. In each sermon, Meyer encourages pastors to adapt the content and rhetoric to their own style and pastoral needs. After each sermon, a “Supplemental Thought” section provides suggested hymns, Scripture and prayers.

“I pray these Advent sermons will enlarge our appreciation for the devotional richness of the entire Bible. In the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, the Bible is a book of advents, of God’s patient persistence to send us a Savior,” said Meyer. “Preparing these sermons has blessed me. I hope they’ll do the same for you.”

The **downloadable PDF** is available for \$14.95 in the Seminary’s online store. A sample of the Advent sermon series also is **available**.




## 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](http://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/>.



## Basin and Towel Podcast

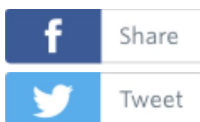
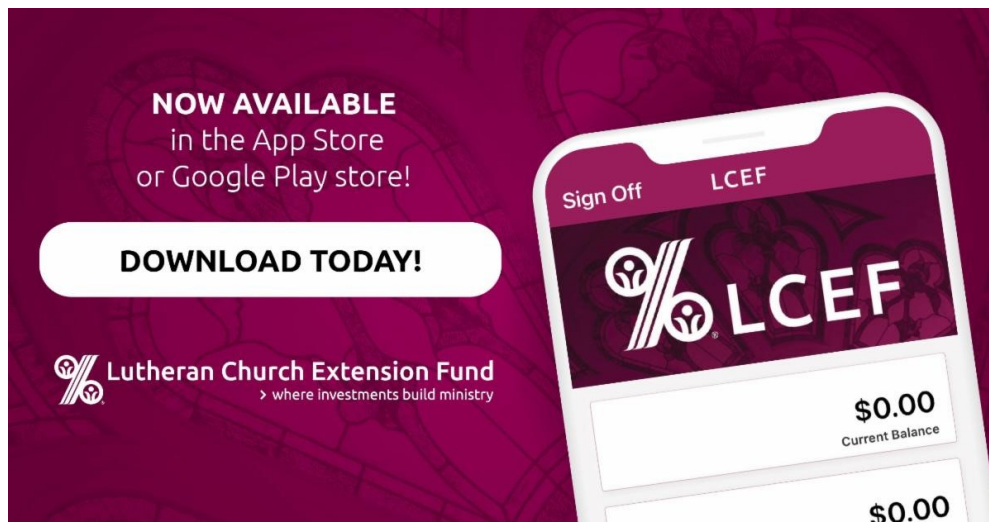
From SELC District Ministerial Care Coordinator Rev. Chris Cahill:

- Listen to a NEW episode of "The Basin and Towel Podcast" titled "Behind the Veil (or Collar)" at <https://thebasinandtowel.buzzsprout.com/>
- Check out this page <https://www.basinandtowel.org/the-basin-and-towel.html> for a new list of downloadable mental health resources, compiled by The Lutheran Foundation of Fort Wayne



## The LCEF Mobile App Is Here!

LCEF now has a mobile app! Available exclusively for MyAccount users, LCEF's free mobile app allows you to make transfers, pay bills and stay up to date with your balance—all from the convenience of your phone or tablet. The new mobile app is a great example of LCEF growing and evolving with today's tech-savvy Lutherans. If you are an LCEF MyAccount user, download the free app today from the [Apple Store](#) or [Google Play](#) store.



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