

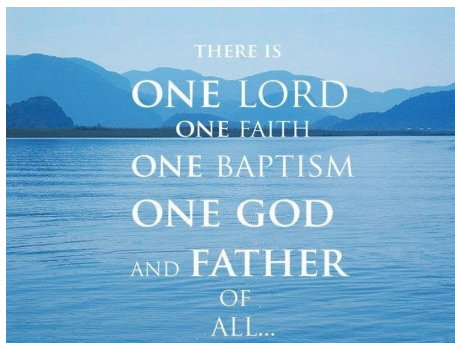


The Beacon Online

September 1, 2023 / Vol. 4 / No. 34

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

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SELC Professional Church Workers Conference

September 27 - 29, 2023

The 2023 SELC Professional Church Workers Conference will be held September 27 - 29, 2023 at Lake Williamson Christian Retreat Center in Carlinville, IL. The theme is "**One in Christ**".

You can register for the Professional Church Workers Conference when you [Click here](#) You must register by [September 14, 2023](#)

View the complete PCWC schedule here - [Conference schedule click here](#)

"The Royal Priesthood Identity and Mission" ***Rev. Dr. Larry Vogel, CTCR***

This presentation shares the title of a recent CTCR report. Rev. Vogel will summarize the report, discussing the biblical idea and historical development of a royal priesthood while distinguishing the royal priesthood from the office of the ministry. In addition, he will share his perspective on the importance of the royal priesthood today.

Family Discipleship Session Series
Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

Session 1: "Family Discipleship" – Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

Session 2: – "Family Discipleship: Reformative Power"
Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann

Session 3: "CCF & The Life in God's Way Series"
Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann



Zion Lutheran Church, Clark, NJ
Vacation Bible School

God's Living Water

The week of August 14th, Zion Lutheran Church in Clark welcomed over 30 children and 10 youth volunteers to "God's Living Waters" Vacation Bible School. The students learned about the soul-quenching grace that surrounds us in Jesus. All five of our Bible stories featured water in some way, but our focus this week was on Jesus, the Living Water. Our small groups started together in the Opening, where they sang and watched a video. Then, the Teams and their Team Leaders went to four sites: Storytelling, Music, Snacks, and Crafts. During the week, the children also participated in Mission Projects. Our Tuesday Mission Project was collecting school supplies and backpacks for Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey. We were able to fill 23 backpacks for the children who are part of Lutheran Home for Children and Project Home.

On Wednesday, we collected over \$280.00 in coins as our VBS Mission project to support Concordia Gospel Outreach, a project that aims to send English-based children's resources about Jesus' grace to kids in communities all over the United States. The focus is reaching children and families in our own country who have not heard the Gospel or do not have any books about Jesus. Children's ministry resources include a new outreach Bible geared toward children. These resources help us put God's Living Word into communities. Our Thursday Mission Project was donating items to Zion's Food Pantry. Together we were able to donate food items for some local families struggling with earthly hunger. Thursday evening, we held our Closing Picnic and Program where the children showed off everything they learned at VBS that week. Our older "oceans" class shared God's Love through signing "Jesus Loves Me" with the help of our Zion's ASL Interpreter, Dianne. We had an awesome time at God's Living Waters. Jesus worked in and through the servant hearts of many people to share His saving love!



Photos above: Left - Collection for the Food Bank Right: Backpack collection

Photos below: Left - Counting coins Right: the closing program





Welcome to the District!

We welcome Rev. Paul Deterding, EM to the SELC District. He has transferred from the Missouri District. He is a member at Faith Viera in Rockledge, FL.



Christ the King Lutheran in Lodi, OH



On Sunday, August 20, members of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Lodi, Ohio, celebrated several milestones in the faith for four of our friends:

They received into membership Carmen Wissmiller-Ethington and her son Clayton as they both received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism (and the Lord's Supper for the first time for both);

They also received Carmen's husband Kevin Kellermann by transfer of membership from their church in Illinois;

There was a celebration of the Confirmation and first Holy Communion of Parker DeZarn.

Left: At Christ the King Lutheran Church on August 20 - (left to right): Newly baptized members Clayton Ethington and his mom Carmen Wissmiller-Ethington; Carmen's husband Kevin Kellermann (received by transfer); Parker DeZarn, acknowledged as a communicant member through the Rite of Confirmation; and Christ the King Pastor Chris Cahill

See more photos on the next page.

Pictured below is the family of Kevin, Carmen and Clayton.



Pictured below is Parker's family



Concordia Lutheran Church in Macungie, PA Welcomes New Members

At Concordia, Macungie, Pastor Vinovskis has been teaching his "Introduction to Lutheranism" class this summer. Concordia welcomed 15 new members on August 20, 2023. "Go, make disciples of all nations teaching them..."





Prayer Requests

Rev. Brian Roberts, St. Luke's in Oviedo, FL is continuing to gain weight and has more energy. We give thanks to God that he is gaining weight and growing stronger.

Rev. John Telloni, St. John in Massillon, OH is continuing his recovery and is working on regaining his strength as he has returned to work.

Rev. and Mrs. Panzigrau, John Huss in Arnold, PA

Rev. and Mrs. Edgar Anthony, Sts. Peter and Paul in Lorain, OH

Rev. George Plvan, Emporia, VA

Rev. Tom Soltis, Parma, OH

Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Ballas, Parma, OH

Rev. Carl Krueger, Cudahy WI who is recovering from surgery at home.

Rev. and Mrs. Edgar Anthony and son George for their health needs, Lorain, OH. They give thanks for all the prayers as their son George met with his doctor who discussed healing options for his medical issue.

Thank you to everyone for all of your prayers!



SELC Students Receive Financial Assistance for their Education

The following full-time church work students have received grants from the SELC District Student Aid Committee for the 2023-2024 academic year. Please keep these and all students in your prayers as they prepare to serve the Lord wherever and however He has called them to serve.

Rachael McCloskey - Resurrection, Malvern, Ohio
Deaconess Student - Concordia Seminary St Louis

Kenneth Estes - Faith, Viera, Florida
Pastoral Ministry Student - Concordia Seminary St Louis

Christina Shaffer - St. Luke's, Oviedo, Florida
Deaconess Student - Concordia Seminary St Louis

Tyler Decker - Hope, Melbourne (Viera), Florida
Pastoral Ministry Student - Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne

We are also happy to announce that Mr. John Glanzer, who is a teacher at Saint Luke's Lutheran School in Oviedo, Florida, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the District's Student Aid Committee. He replaces Pastor John Telloni of Massillon, Ohio, who has served on this committee since 1978. The other member of the committee is Pastor Kevin McLeod of Malvern, Ohio.

All students from our district congregations who are preparing for full-time church work at our LC-MS colleges, universities, and seminaries are eligible for financial assistance from our district.



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Lutheran Haven Receives a Gift from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Greenwich, CT

The congregation of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Greenwich, CT recently elected to give away a large portion of the proceeds of the sale of merged properties to Lutheran ministries outside of Greenwich, selecting the Lutheran Haven Foundation as one of nine worthy recipients. Pastor Evan Scamman states, "Many of the Slovak members of St. Paul have a deep and personal connection to Lutheran Haven, and our gift seemed

a fitting way to honor the long history of mission and care for God's people that St. Paul of Greenwich and Lutheran Haven have shared together for so many years."

With heartfelt gratitude, Lutheran Haven, CEO, Jerry Griffing states, "Lutheran Haven is so very honored to have been selected as one of the recipients of this tithe which is a tangible reminder of these two churches that have been so loved and served by so many over the years. Truly, there are hardly words for the depth of our gratitude for this gift of love for the Haven and the many people we serve. The blessings of this gift will live on in the lives of our seniors, not only immediately, but for years to come." Both Lutheran Haven and St. Paul Lutheran Church have a long, rich history of serving God's people.

Pastor Ken Ballas faithfully served this congregation for 27 years, and he served on the Haven Board of Trustees for 23 years and he is deeply loved by both! St. Paul Church was founded by Slovak immigrants in 1902. Roughly forty years later (1944), First Lutheran Church (LCMS) was founded just across town by German immigrants. From the beginning the two Lutheran churches shared a connection, since Pastor Heck, first pastor of First Lutheran, was the son-in-law of Pastor Bella, St. Paul's founding pastor. The connection became stronger still when the SELC merged with the LCMS in 1971, and again when the two churches formally entered into a dual parish (and dual district) arrangement in 2018.

Closing Thoughts **Our Use of God's Gift of Mammon or Money** Rev. Kenneth Ballas, EM

Apparently only four of the Savior's original 12 student-disciples were fishermen. Well-acquainted with handling money, the apostle (and eventual New Testament evangelist) St. Matthew, was a widely hated Jewish Roman government tax-collector. Not surprisingly, viewers of the TV movie series, "The Chosen" notice the other disciples' reluctance to accept our Lord's choice of Matthew-Levi into their select group. Matthew 9:9 may be regarded as the evangelist's modestly brief "signature" to his artfully crafted Gospel (as may well be true of a longstanding interpretation of Mark 14:51-52 regarding the possible human authorship of that poignantly inspired canonical scriptural writing).

In His "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew chapters 5-7), our Lord Jesus says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal" but lay up treasures for the eternal security of God's heaven. . . you cannot serve God and money (Matt. 6:19-24)

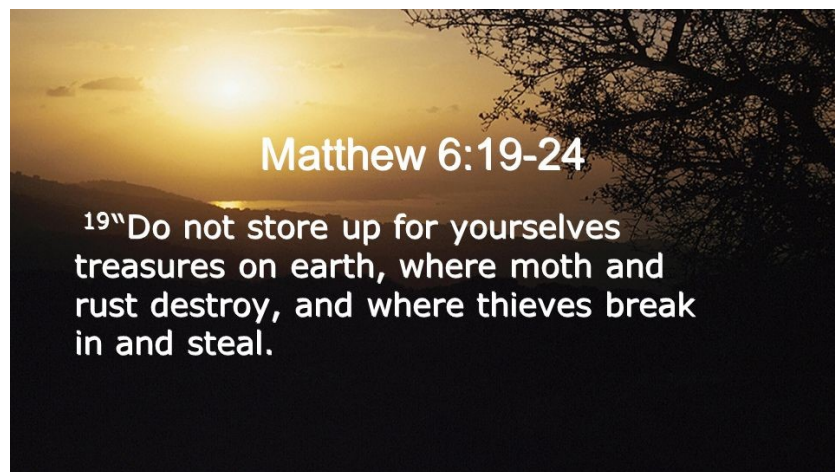
This side of heaven we may find ourselves disliking or even "second guessing" these (or other) words of our blessed Savior. Earthbound creatures that we all tend to be, who among us hasn't been consumed by faithless worry over the transitory material things of this fleeting world?

Perhaps you also have heard the obviously questionable, *commonly insinuated reaction* to the oft misquoted words of our ascended Lord's apostle Paul to young pastor Timothy regarding *money itself* being "**the root of all evil**" as an ostensibly humorous yet unfortunately thoughtless, "**Give me some of that root!**" Whoops! 1Timothy 6:10 is better translated, "**The inordinate love of silver** (or things money may buy) **is the root of every sort of evil.**"

Lest we be guilty of only "confessing sins (real or imagined) of *others*," we dare

venture to wonder it were a misapplication of God's holy Law (including the very first commandment) to see a possible tie-in between those words of St. Paul and a brawny Roman soldier's driving more deeply rusty metal spikes of crucifixion into the long-suffering already battered body of our recently scourged Savior's wrists and ankles due in part to the willful, highly irrational *future habits* not only of multi-addicted Christians but also of potential first-time purchasers of a single lottery ticket. (Insane fixation with money may also be seen in the tragic case of Judas Iscariot's yielding to the diabolical temptation of betraying his Lord for the equivalent of 30 pieces of silver (or price of a good strong slave).

Thanks to our wonderfully just and generously merciful Triune God, the sinless Son of God has already paid in full the price of *our forgiveness and eternal salvation* as St. Peter (and Luther) remind us "not with gold or silver but with His holy, precious blood, *innocent* suffering, death and resurrection from the dead" (Matthew 20:28; 27:39-44; Mark 10:45; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Peter 1) – something we could neither begin to buy nor Satan or others prevent!



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