



The Beacon Online

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

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Rev. Paul Hoyer Honored at Longwood Shepherd's Free Health Clinic

On February 13th, the Longwood Shepherd's Hope free health clinic, renamed and dedicated their Center as the Pastor Paul Hoyer Health Center. Pastor Hoyer was instrumental in getting the center established, helping to secure funding and volunteers. The Hoyer family was very honored by this event. Below are the remarks given by Pastor and Mrs. Hoyer's daughter Sara on behalf of the family.

I am happy to represent my family today and first want to say how thankful and grateful we are for this honor. What an incredible legacy the renaming of this clinic is for my father and for our family.

This clinic is a tangible example of the way my dad lived his life through the lens of his faith believing wholeheartedly that we love and help our neighbors whenever and however we can.

When the need was identified at an Envision Seminole conference years ago that our community wasn't meeting the needs of the under and uninsured, he became passionate about creating a solution.

He identified Shepherd's Hope as an existing organization that already handled this problem well and sought to bring them to Seminole County. He took the idea back to his congregation and added the clinic to their capital campaign. Holy Cross was not just raising funds to improve their own grounds, but to build something new: a clinic for people in need.

In the year since my father passed away, my mother, brothers, sister and myself continue to be approached by people who want to let us know how much Pastor Paul meant to them.

Hearing all of these stories, I can say that my Dad was known in life and is now remembered for his generosity, influence and integrity. By generosity, I'm not suggesting He is remembered for the large financial contributions he made – although if you looked at the percentage of their income he and my mother gave away, many of us would be humbled. He was extremely generous with his time. He answered the phone when you called. He showed up for a volunteer workday. He used all his extra time helping others. (just ask his wife or children)

His influence allowed him to multiply his impact. This clinic is a perfect example. He brought together the financial donations of his congregation, the talents of the members he had with medical backgrounds to volunteer, the construction contacts he made through leadership Seminole to donate in-kind services, his existing work with Sharing Center to negotiate rent.... His years of building relationships in this community allowed him to ask for help when it was needed.

In most of these stories about Pastor Paul, people want us to know that he had integrity. that when he said he would do something, he followed through. I would definitely describe my dad as an 'idea guy' or a 'big vision' person, but he also made sure it got done.

While he would never ask to have his name or even the name of his church on something like this, I know he is so proud that this is how we all remember him: Showing up, giving back, and making a real difference in people's lives.



Pictured above is Sara Russell (nee Hoyer) with her Mom, Betty Hoyer

Pictured below on the left is the Longwood Shepherd Health Clinic
Pictured below right is Sara speaking about her Father and his support of the clinic and his community.



Pictured below from left to right: Liza Denton, Sara Russell, Betty Hoyer, and Cathy and Dave Lundberg. Liza, Cathy and Dave are members of Holy Cross who helped to get the clinic built and operating.



Annual Congregational Statistics due March 31, 2024

It is time to submit your congregation's end-of-year statistics and update your current list of lay leaders. Up-to-date statistical information is essential for the Synod as it plans current and future ministry efforts. Such information is also critical for determining proper voting representation at conventions.

The lay leader list is used to send copies of the *REPORTER* and other LCMS ministry related mailings to congregation leaders. The *REPORTER* is sent, free of charge, to all

Congregational Chairmen and Board of Elders Chairmen each month and will be sent to the other congregation leaders as funding permits. **Emails for lay leaders will be increasingly important as channels for critical convention communications.**

The **deadline for congregation statistics and lay leaders** is **March 31, 2024**, you may also review your congregation's profile and lay leader information anytime throughout the year to make sure your contact information, service times, and other important data are current.



National Youth Gathering Volunteer Opportunities Available

Deadline is March 15, 2024

The 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering is 18 months away, but plans are already underway to make this event successful. The Gathering will provide thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to be encouraged in their walk with Jesus Christ and learn about the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity.

A major part of Gathering's success is the thousands of volunteers—including Gathering Ambassadors—who dedicate their time and energy pouring into the youth participants and adult leaders attending. Gathering Ambassadors are humble servant leaders, age 26 and older, who are joyful, energetic, quick to listen, and safety-minded. They are fun, friendly, and flexible! Most of all, Gathering Ambassadors love Jesus and shine His light in all circumstances.

If you or someone you know would love to serve as a Gathering Ambassador, applications are open through **March 15**. To apply to become a Gathering Ambassador, visit www.lcmsgathering.com/volunteer. For more information, please contact the Gathering Ambassador Leadership team at gatheringambassador@gmail.com.

Thank you for considering serving in this way!



Time to Plan Easter

Part 1

It's time to have Easter outreach planned and ready to go. The message that Christ is risen, and all believers will live forever through Him, powerfully impacts our communities and world.

What is your congregation doing to invite your community to your Easter and Holy Week services?

Here are some basically free promotions. Next week, we'll share some that require some investment.

FREE OR NEARLY FREE

1. *E-Invitations*—Get your database ready to invite people with whom your congregation has been in contact. (You have a database, right?) These e-invitations can a colorful and powerful way to share the joy experienced at Easter worship.
2. *Social Media Posts*—Don't forget to begin posting your Holy Week and Easter worship schedule at least three weeks in advance. Encourage your members to "like" and comment, which accelerates the promotion of your posts by social media platforms.
3. *Send texts*—Let's face it. Email is for the 35+ crowd (maybe even older). Texts are often the preferred medium of communication for younger folks.
4. *Printed invitations (In-house)*—Everyone can still read paper, and it tends to hang around the house. For a minimal cost print attractive invitation, maybe with color. Consider business card size. Encourage members to share them with family and friends.
5. *Website*—Your website should have holiday service times posted 3-4 weeks in advance.
6. *Church answering machine*—Who calls for information anymore? Honestly, probably not many but a few may call in the days or hours before the big events. It's worth updating the message; don't forget to change it back afterwards.

SOME COST, Part II – Check back next week for these ideas

NOTE: The impact of your outreach increases when you have the same look (graphics, fonts, colors) on all your communications. Folks recognize that it's from you. (Your kids knew it was McDonald's long before they could read!)

Need some \$\$ help? The district has a limited number of Evangelism Grants available up to \$500. Complete a [simple application](#) by **March 10** and email to Rev. Dr. Mark Larson at markclarson0341@gmail.com.



Disaster Relief Training Day

Join your fellow Disaster Relief volunteers for a day of training and fellowship on Saturday, March 9 at Camp Cedarkirk in Lithia FL. This day will include the basic LERT training class as well as chainsaw training, Bobcat skid steer training and disaster relief medical training. Visit LCMS-LERT.org or FGLER.org to register or for more information.



This is the last week!
Vicarage and Seminary Student Call Documents deadline is Set
Deadline to submit to the District Office is February 23, 2024

The deadline for all **vicarage and call docs for Spring 2024** placements must be sent to the District Office no later than **February 23, 2024** so we can be sure to meet the Synod deadlines. If you need assistance or access to complete the call documents for a Vicar or Seminary graduate, please contact the District Office at selc.lcms@gmail.com or 610-965-3265, press 6. Please email the documents to the SELC District Office before sending the packet so we can make sure everything is in order before you mail us the packet - *thank you!*

If you are planning to send in a Vicarage or Seminary graduate application, please let the District Office know.



Family Bible Journey Daily Podcasts

If you'd like to listen to the podcasts, check out familybiblejourney.com or scan the QR code on the right.

Thanks for listening!



Join the journey
of journaling through the Bible.



Two Visitation Events set for Spring, Summer

Prospective students encouraged to attend

Discerning the tug to ministry and making the decision to attend seminary can be challenging. **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis** aims to help prospective students contemplate these important decisions with two visitation events set for this spring and summer: **Vocatio: Retreat** and **Vocatio: High School**.

College students and second-career men and women can learn more about the path to full-time service as a pastor, deaconess, missionary or chaplain during **Vocatio: Retreat** scheduled for April 14-16. **Registration** closes March 29. The event is free. Visit csl.edu/vocation-retreat to learn more.

"Vocatio: Retreat is a great opportunity for those who are interested in ministry to rest

in God's Word, enjoy the fellowship of others and see what life as a member of the Seminary community is like," said **Rev. Tom Schlund**, admissions officer. "Participants worship in chapel, visit class, learn about the process of becoming a student and have the time to ask questions."

High school men and women entering grades ninth through 12th can explore God's calling and direction for them during **Vocatio: High School**, slated for June 22-29. **Registration** closes May 24. The registration fee is \$100 per participant. Learn more at csl.edu/vocatio.

"We look forward to building relationships with our young brothers and sisters in Christ this summer during Vocatio: High School," said **Rev. Micah Glenn**, director of recruitment. "We thank God for the opportunity to show them how they are a much-needed part of the church."

In addition to Vocatio: High School and Vocatio: Retreat, individual visits also can be scheduled and are highly encouraged for those considering attending the Seminary. For more information, call 800-822-9545, write to admit@csl.edu or visit csl.edu/admissions.



Prayer Requests

Rev. Brian Roberts, St. Luke's in Oviedo, FL is experiencing some challenges gaining weight. Please pray for him and his caregivers as they formulate a plan of care.

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

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

Rev. Tom Soltis, Parma, OH

Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Ballas, Parma, OH. Please keep them in your prayers.

Rev. Alan Mercer in Galloway, NJ for his ongoing health struggles.

Megan Skelton in Oviedo, FL Please continue to pray for her healing, pain relief, and recovery from her surgery.

Rev. Dennis Rhoads in Virginia who is serving as the Vacancy Pastor for St. John Lutheran Church in Emporia, VA. He is recovering from surgery and cannot put weight on his leg yet. Please pray for his continued healing and recovery.

Amanda Baumann in Mount Dora, FL, is Pastor Jacob Baumann's wife. She is pregnant with their fourth child. Please pray for a healthy and safe pregnancy.

Laura Bergmann, in Munster, IN, please pray for relief of her pain in her hands, feet, back, and legs.

Rev. Carl Krueger, currently in Florida for the winter, has been released from the

hospital and is recovering in Florida. Please continue to pray for his recovery.

If you have people you would like to be included in the prayer list, please send the information to selc.lcms@gmail.com or call the District Office at 610-965-3265 and press 6.



**LCMS LUTHERANS
YESTERDAY. TODAY. ALWAYS.**

 **Lutheran Church Extension Fund**
> where investments build ministry

LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks.



Mark Your Calendars

March 9, 2024 - Disaster Training Day Lithia, FL

March 10th - SELC Evangelism Grant applications are due

March 15th - Deadline to volunteer for the National Youth Gathering

May 3 - 5, 2024 - LWML Convention - Concordia Lutheran Church in Macungie, PA



Closing Thoughts

Following Our Lenten Lord to Jerusalem and His Cross

Rev. Ken Ballas, EM

Ever since the transfiguration of our Lord on Sunday before Ash Wednesday, a day which begins a 46-day penitential season (technically the six Sundays *in* Lent designed to serve as “stepping stones” leading up to an increasingly meaningful Easter are not part of the 40 days *of* Lent) are followed by a forward-looking 40 days of celebration culminating in the feast of the bodily ascension of our exalted Christ into heaven. This is followed by an additional 10-day “waiting period” prior to the promised special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Christian Day of Pentecost – ample “fodder” indeed for us straying blood-bought sheep to **worship** our supremely Good Shepherd and His spotless paschal Lamb throughout the remaining “non-festival half” of the Christian year and all the days of our earthly pilgrimage (see Luke 24:44-53 and Revelation 7:9-17).

Lest we become overwhelmed by the wealth of reasons for doing so, it is meet, right and salutary that we live to the glory of our Triune God and well-being of His global Church *one day at a time*. To that end, this piece only purports to list a few representative largely obvious observations regarding the self-giving redemptive **passion** of our messianic Savior Jesus Christ. For any of us ever to *completely ignore the obvious* is most unfortunate especially when one is privileged to be dealing with the revealed written or spoken Word of Truth and **eternal verities** of our blessed Creator-Redeemer God!

Although all four New Testament evangelists record our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, two of these also briefly mention His *temporarily leaving town* for suburban Bethany during the early part of Holy Week (Matthew 21:17; Mark 11:11ff.). Jesus made a special point to institute for His Church on earth the precious sacrament of His body and blood, but a few hours later during His final Passover meal with His disciples. That very same day on the Jewish calendar, our sinless Brother-Savior was already then well on His way to experiencing a totally sleepless, agonizingly pain-filled night given His unimaginably intense spiritual anguish of soul in the Garden of Gethsemane. This is prior to His tragically equally sad betrayal and blatant denial by two of His chosen student-disciples and cowardice of His remaining followers all of whom forsook Him and fled (Matthew 26:56; Mark 14:50).

The world's greatest Lover (Romans 8:32) and only perfect Savior allowed Himself to be batted about like a ping-pong ball throughout the wee hours of that fateful morning that even the unbelieving secular world continues to acknowledge as “Good” (Slovak “Vel'ky Piatok” or “Big”) Friday. An obviously unhappy and however unenviable Roman governor Pontius Pilate, was involved in an insoluble religious dispute, during and even after Christ's humiliating yet paradoxically glorious God-ordained crucifixion are some, but not all, of the inhumane indignities endured by God's incarnate Son and world's only completely innocently flawless Savior from sin and eternal death (see Hebrews 12:1ff.).

Though as you can hear the preached Word of God one's own chosen house of worship, you can also read the written Word for yourself in the comfort of your own home. From near the end of the four New Testament gospels, the inspired narrative of Christ's Holy Week passion and death prior to His predicted promised resurrection. You will also find

it well worth your while, especially during this solemn season, to prayerfully reflect on the 53rd chapter of Isaiah as well as both Petrine epistles during these coming LEN(T)gthening spring days in our Northern Hemisphere.



SELC District - A District Without Borders

Showing Everyone Life in Christ, by Showing Everyone Love in Christ

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