



The Beacon Online

March 1, 2024 / Vol. 5 / No. 9

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

If you are a first time visitor to the Beacon Online, we invite you to subscribe by emailing the District Office at selc.lcms@gmail.com. Please feel free to share the Beacon Online and encourage others to subscribe. Please send your articles, announcements, news, and pictures to selc.lcms@gmail.com. Please submit your articles in Word format and by Thursdays for inclusion in the next Beacon Online. We look forward to sharing your submissions! A [printable version](#) of the newsletter is available on our website at selc.lcms.org/beacon. Please use the printed version from our website to post and/or share the newsletter with others.



Call Day at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis April 23, 2024

Anticipation is building for **Call Day 2024**, set for April 23, when concluding **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis** students will receive their first pastoral or diaconal ministry placements, and second-year students will receive their vicarage or internship assignments in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus. All calls and assignments for service are to churches or ministries within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Students who will serve a year as vicars or deaconess interns will receive their assignments at a worship service starting at 3 p.m. (CDT). Rev. Michael Mohr, president of the LCMS Central Illinois District, will preach.

"As the new director of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships, I'm just as excited as the students and their families to see them out among Christ's church continuing their formation during a year of vicarages and internships," said **Rev. Joel P. Fritsche**, assistant professor of Exegetical Theology.

At 7 p.m. (CDT), candidates for the pastoral and diaconal ministry will receive their first calls to serve as pastors, deaconesses, chaplains or missionaries in the LCMS. Dr. Brian Saunders, president of the LCMS Iowa District East, will preach.

"The faculty and staff of Concordia Seminary welcome students to campus at the beginning of their Seminary studies. We watch them grow and mature into servants for the church. Now we look at our candidates with thankfulness as they are ready to serve," said Director of Placement **Dr. Glenn Nielsen**. "In April, the faculty will certify them for the pastoral and diaconal offices, and we will sing a high doxology to our God for the gifts He will give to the church with their placements."

A livestream of Call Day services will be available at csl.edu/call-day, **Facebook** and

YouTube. Calls and assignments will be shared on Twitter in real time during both services. Everyone is encouraged to share their celebratory comments and photos with the hashtag #callday2024 on social media.



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 Two

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

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

Here are some outreach ideas involving some cost. See last week's Beacon for free or nearly free outreach ideas.

SOME COST, Part II –

1. *Printed Material* — Create postcards or flyers to invite your community. These pieces can be mailed or hand delivered to the prospective members on your database or to your neighborhood. Most churches have bulk mailing accounts to make this affordable. Attractive material is a must. A cost-effective approach is to use a local printer, who can often complete your order in a few days. Online vendors, like Outreach.com, provide services to design your mailer, upload your data and even mail it.
2. *Social Media Ads* — Social media platforms allow you to buy advertising to increase the views of your posts. Normally, you can choose the amount you want to invest from a few dollars to a substantial investment. You can also choose your target audience.
3. *Gifts for First-Time Guests* — Your publicity can offer a gift for those attending, perhaps a Bible or a booklet winsomely explaining our hope in Christ. One of our SELC district churches offers to make a donation to a short list of charities in the name of first-time guests.
4. *Lawn Signs* — Print lawn signs for your members to display at their homes and throughout the community. Save them for future years as long as worship times stay the same and you do not include changeable dates.
5. *Newspaper Ads* — This is old school for sure. You probably wouldn't buy ads in big city papers, but there may be local papers or mailed advertising flyers (such as come with your grocery flyers) that may be a good investment.

NOTE:

1. 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!)
2. Keep track of which publicity activities worked. Ask your guests how they found out about your Holy Week and Easter Services.

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.



Ysleta Lutheran Mission

Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care (YLM) is a faith-based, 501c(3), non-profit organization that provides relief and human care services while planting and nurturing missions on the U.S./Mexico border (El Paso/Juarez region). YLM provides aid and ministry services that benefit the lives of thousands of people every year. YLM began its work in El Paso and Northern Mexico in 1982 and was formally incorporated in 2005. YLM is a Recognized Service Organization of the LCMS.

Ysleta focuses on eight areas in their ministry and they are incorporated in their 2024 goals. their first two goals are

1. Foster spiritual growth and discipleship in our missions to nurture and thriving and impactful faith community.
2. Impactful Community Outreach initiatives extending love and support to more individuals and families in need.

Come back next week to see more information about the work Ysleta is doing as an RSO of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

VISION

We labor to see on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border..

God's people working together,
providing relief to the suffering,
encouraging and equipping missions,
instilling health and opportunity,
and reaching the spiritually lost with
the Good News of Jesus Christ.

MISSION

"Changing lives every day through simple acts of kindness"

<https://ylm.org/>



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.



Nominate Young Musicians for Lutheran Summer Music!

Lutheran Summer Music Academy & Festival (LSM) is a residential academy for high school musicians. Students study with nationally recognized faculty, and are immersed in musical experiences through large ensembles (Choir, Band and Symphony Orchestra), chamber music, private lessons, elective classes, ongoing recitals and concerts. Students also experience a welcoming and joyful community that worships together daily, offering musical gifts through Lutheran liturgy and hymnody. LSM 2024 takes place at **Valparaiso University** in Indiana from **June 30-July 28** and is open to students who have completed **grades 8-12**. Spots for LSM 2024 are filling fast! Nominate a student today at LSMacademy.org/nominate.



Family Bible Journey Daily Podcasts

You are a treasure! Learn more about the special love you've received from God in Christ by listening to this lesson from Matthew 13.

<https://familybiblejourney.podbean.com/e/you-are-a-treasure-matthew-1334-58-nt-s1e21/>



Join the journey
of journaling through the Bible.

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

Thanks for listening!



St. Luke's Concert Series "A Night at the Opera" Friday, March 1, 2024

The St. Luke's Concert Series presents "A Night at the Opera" Friday, March 1st beginning at 7:00 PM. You can access the online concert by [clicking here](#). This concert features the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra.



Concordia Seminary Press Publishes New Book for Lay People

Focuses on biblical interpretation theory, practice

A new book written by Concordia Seminary's Graduate Professor of Exegetical Theology **Dr. James W. Voelz** and now available from Concordia Seminary Press takes readers into the text of the Bible and helps them to understand the important factors that go into interpreting it.

Principles of Biblical Interpretation for Everyone by Voelz, the Dr. Jack Dean Kingsbury Professor of New Testament Theology, is available **online** and in the Seminary's Campus Store. Concordia Seminary Press is the publishing arm of the Seminary.

"Biblical interpretation is a complicated matter. The fact that there are so many disagreements about the meaning of Bible passages among various people and various denominations is proof of that," Voelz said. "I want everyone who studies God's Word to understand that complexity, to appreciate why competing interpretations arise, and to develop a real confidence in the ability to 'read, mark, learn and inwardly digest' the sacred Scriptures, and to receive God's gracious promises of life."

The new volume is designed especially for lay people who are interested in extensive biblical interpretation. Readers will encounter everything from the manuscripts that stand behind various English Bible translations, to matters of language and meaning, to a consideration of the canon of sacred Scripture, to issues that a person must consider when applying the Bible to Christian life today. The book also includes a section called "Deeper Dives" for readers who want a closer examination of the material presented in each chapter.

"Any serious student of the Christian Bible will benefit from this superb presentation of the issues and principles involved in the sacred, blessed task of interpreting the Holy Scriptures," said Dr. James Fickenscher, adjunct professor of biblical studies at Concordia University, Irvine, Calif.

Voelz has taught at the Seminary level for more than 48 years and has been a member of Concordia Seminary's faculty since 1989. His areas of expertise include hermeneutics, Greek language and the synoptic Gospels.



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. Panzigrau, 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. We give thanks to God that Pastor Rhoads leg has healed and he is back to the ministry two days a week at St. John.

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.

SHARED INTEREST PROGRAM

Donate your Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) investment interest to a ministry close to your heart.

Your investment in LCEF is already helping ministries through low-cost loans and ministry solution programs for LCMS organizations and Rostered Church Workers (RCWs).

Now take your investments one step further by donating your interest to the ministry of your choice.

Ready to donate?

Call our friendly Customer Relations Team at **800-843-5233** or scan the QR code.

Want to learn about more ways to give? Visit lcef.org/shared.



Lutheran Church Extension Fund
where investments build ministry

800-843-5233 | fax: 314-996-1131 | lcef.org



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 1, 2024 - St. Luke's Concert Series - tonight at 7 PM

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

April 23, 2024 - Call day at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis

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



Closing Thoughts

My Current Smallest Small Catechism

Rev. Ken Ballas, EM

Here for all ages of inquiring Christians or non-Christians alike is a loosely integrated amalgam of biblical teaching. When it comes to our dealing properly with the preparatory purpose and inseparable unity of God's good and holy Law, it's all or nothing (James 2:10). We all desperately need our sinless Brother-Savior Jesus who, though severely tempted, alone was necessarily perfectly obedient to His (and our) Heavenly Father's will in our behalf even unto death on Calvary's cross (Philippians 2:8).

Moreover, from eternity our powerfully loving Triune God not only created and redeemed us, but in sending His Son in human flesh innocently to *die* for our eternal salvation before predictably rising and ascending into heaven with the promise to return as Judge (but judge His forever forgiven family of believers *in mercy* solely because of the merits of Jesus Christ!).

Though, strictly speaking, the privilege of prayer is not a biblical sacrament, impatient and lacking in faith as we often are, there can be little doubt that "Prayer changes things!" That this is so, however, is not due to anyone being a more gifted or "*better pray-er*" than someone else as, ultimately, it is not our praying that changes things but rather our gracious Lord's compassionately proven hearing and healing grace (cf. Psalm 50:15).

Truth be known, having all entered this earthly life as rebellious sinners with a limited gift of human reason, the Spirit of God powerfully uses His seemingly simple gift of the washing of regeneration or required "new birth". This results from Jesus' loving command regarding His sacrament of Holy Baptism and ongoing teaching intended to reconnect us today to the sinless messianic Christ's historically completed mission 2000 years ago.

Baptized believers are also now free to confess their countless sins of commission and omission directly to our holy and loving God as they thankfully rejoice daily to receive God's gift of undeserved forgiveness also in His preached and written words of absolution (1 John 1:7--2:2).

Finally, the sacramental mystery of His eucharistic Supper strategically instituted for His blood-bought Church on earth is unquestionably one, if not finest, most "spiritual nutritious" or meaningful instrument in the Holy Spirit's "toolbox". If for no other

reason that unless our blessed one crucified and now also resurrected and ascended Lord of Lords and King of Kings does not return first, "we have here no lasting city but fervently seek one to come" as we also seek to help one another to believe and share these eternal blessings with countless others (Hebrews 13:14-21).

Soli DEO Gloria! Slava Bohu! To God alone belongs all the Glory! **AMEN!**



SELC District - A District Without Borders

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

Share This Email

SELC District of LCMS

2623 Brookside Road
Macungie, PA 18062
610-965-3265

Contact Us
selc.lcms@gmail.com

Share This Email

Share This Email

SELC District of LCMS | 2623 Brookside Road, Macungie, PA 18062

[Unsubscribe dennis@hclm.org](mailto:dennis@hclm.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by selcoffice@selcdistrictoflcms.ccsend.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!