



The Beacon Online

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

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SELC 2025 District Convention

**Deadline for Registering for the Convention is
only 1 Week Away
December 16, 2024**

SELC District Convention Checklist

- Have you sent in your Delegate Forms to Pastor John Telloni?
- Are you registered for the Convention? This is separate from sending in your delegate forms. **Deadline is December 16, 2024**
- Have you made your overnight room reservations? **Deadline is December 26, 2024**
- If you have accepted a nomination to run for a District Office, have you sent your bio and photo to the SELC District Office?
- Have you thought about what you will be giving to the In-gathering at the convention to benefit The Sharing Center? See below for items that are needed.

An evening of music and fellowship will follow the Opening Service Thursday evening at Holy Cross. The music will be provided by Pastor Adam Barcott and his band from New City Church.

On Saturday evening, we will travel to the Lutheran haven in Oviedo to tour the new buildings and have dinner and meet some of the residents at the Haven.

The 2025 SELC District Convention is being held January 16 - 19, 2025 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Lake Mary, Florida. The Convention begins with Opening Worship on Thursday evening at 7 PM, followed by a reception. Convention business will be conducted on Friday and Saturday. The Convention ends following worship on Sunday, January 19, 2025 at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

The President's reception will be held at the Lutheran Haven Saturday evening. Transportation will be provided to the Haven and back to the hotels.

The ingathering at this convention is for The Oasis, at The Sharing Center (TSC), is a respite center for individuals experiencing homelessness. This was supported by Pastor Paul Hoyer who was instrumental in the formation of The Sharing Center. His efforts began in 1986 when 17 churches of diverse denominations came together to serve those experiencing hunger and homelessness. Since then, TSC has become Seminole County, Florida's most comprehensive social services hub. We believe "actions speak louder than words."

Toiletry Items for The Oasis Clients

Travel Size: Body Wash, Lotion, Shampoo, and Sunscreen

Other items include Deodorant, Feminine Products, Lip Balm, and Razors
Financial gifts can also be given to support the work at The Sharing Center

Register for the SELC District Convention at this link on our website
- www.selc.lcms.org/convention/



Rev. Scott Coerber Accepts Call

Pastor Scott Coerber has accepted the call to St. Luke's Lutheran Church and School as an Associate Pastor. He currently resides in Colorado. Installation details will be shared when they are finalized.



Rev. Russell Peterson Accepts Call

Rev. Russell Peterson has accepted a call to Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Lake Mary, Florida. Pastor Peterson is from Kansas and will be moving to Lake Mary after the first of the year. We will announce the date of his installation as soon as it is confirmed.



Don't Forget to Submit Your District Mission Goal

Your offerings support the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ here and throughout the world. As your congregation sets its mission goal to support the work of the district and Synod, please be sure to let us know as soon as possible, but before January 11, 2025.

Here are three easy ways to do so:

- Online at [this link](#).
- Email Stewardship Committee Member Rev. Bill Hale at william.e.hale@gmail.com with the amount per month or year.
- If you can find it, mail the form sent to your congregation in October to the address indicated.

If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Bill Hale at the above email or Rev. Dr. Mark Larson, Stewardship Chair at markclarson0341@gmail.com. We value your partnership in the Gospel and look forward to another year of proclaiming the saving message of Christ to a lost and hurting world.



Applications for MinistryFocus Grants Now Online



Deadline is December 31, 2024

Applications are now available online for 2025 LCMS Rostered Church Worker financial assistance grants. The applications are available at <https://ministryfocus.org/>

These grants are available to pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education and other LCMS rostered church workers in all districts through the MinistryFocus general fund. Since 2015, MinistryFocus has awarded \$810,000 in grants to 313 rostered church workers. Applications must be submitted by December 31, 2024.

For 2025, a special opportunity for pastors named the Ministerial Excellence Fund (MEF) has been made possible by a partnership with MinistryFocus, Lilly Endowment Inc., the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), the Batterman School of Business at Concordia University Wisconsin and participating districts that are a part of LCEF. Grants are available for up to three (3) pastors from each of the participating districts.

These special grants will include a total cash grant of \$4,500 plus \$500 in tuition to participate in a 14-module online financial education curriculum developed by CUW. The curriculum includes 10 modules on personal financial education and 4 modules on organizational financial education. Grantees must complete the curriculum

to receive the full cash grant amount.

Applications for the MEF are the same as for other MinistryFocus grants and are available at [MinistryFocus.org](https://www.MinistryFocus.org) with the same December 31, 2024 due date. If there are questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rev. Ken Krueger at Ken@MinistryFocus.org.

May God continue to bless you as you continue to serve Him.



Pastor Gary Schuschke Installed at Faith Lutheran Church in Colorado

Pastor Gary Schuschke was installed as Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Woodland Park, CO on October 13, 2024. Pastor Schuschke recently served in Germany as a Missionary. Prior to that he served at St. Luke's Lutheran Church and School in Oviedo, Florida. We wish Pastor Schuschke God's blessings as he returns to his home state of Colorado.

Pictured below on the left from left to right: Pastor Scott Abel of Our Father Lutheran Church in Centennial, Colorado, Pastor Schuschke, and Pastor Mark Moreno of Our Family of Christ in Monument, CO who also formerly served in the SELC District.



Pictured above on the right is Pastor Jonathan Kern praying over Pastor Schuschke. Pastor Kern is the pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Colorado Spring, CO. He is also the Pikes Peak Circuit Visitor.



Spring 2025 Vicarage and Call documents Deadline Announced

The deadline for all **vicarage and call docs for Spring 2025** placements must be received in the District Office no later than February 28, 2025 to ensure that they are ready for submission to the Synod in time. Please contact Patti at the District office with any questions at selc.lcms@gmail.com or 610-965-3265, press 6.



Registration is Open for the 2025 Youth Gathering

**YAV (Young Adult Volunteers, age 19-25) applications are due
December 31, 2024.**

Identified by their bright orange shirts, Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs) are adults ages 19–25 who serve as role models and servant leaders throughout all corners of the Gathering.

Within the Young Adult Volunteer Team there is also an opportunity to apply to be a Squad Leader and Captain, helping to lead fellow YAVs in being fun, friendly and flexible.

Young Adult Volunteers commit to:

- Paying a \$400 volunteer registration fee
- Staying in assigned Gathering hotel accommodations covered by the Gathering (with 4 or more same-gendered volunteers)
- Attending volunteer training July 17–18, 2025 in New Orleans
- Serving the Gathering July 19–23, 2025 in New Orleans

YAVs pay a volunteer registration fee of \$400. The Gathering uses this fee to supplement hotel costs. Current plans are to house the YAVs at a hotel near the Morial Convention Center. YAVs are roomed by gender and 4 or more to a room. The Gathering covers all housing costs but YAVs pay for their own transportation and most meals.

It's a blessing for Young Adults to be encouraged to apply and also to have the financial support of local congregations as they prepare to pay for travel, registration fees, and meal expenses.

The YAV application is open until December 31, 2024. YAVs must commit to attending the Gathering and serving July 17–23, 2025 (plan to arrive midday on July 17 to attend the first night’s training). YAVs who arrive prior to July 17 or want to stay later than July 23 will need to make their own arrangements.

Registration is open for the National youth Gathering being held July 19 - 23, 2025 in New Orleans, LA. To register click on this link - [Youth Gathering Registration](#)

The theme Endure is based on this Hebrews passage from Hebrews 12:1-3

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted."



Concordia Lutheran Preschool Thanksgiving Chapel Services

Concordia Preschool in Macungie, PA held their Thanksgiving Chapel services which were well attended by preschool families. Each class sang a Thanksgiving song and participated in the Chapel services led by Pastor Vinovskis. Each class made their own accessories to wear when they sang their songs.





MERRY
Christmas
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. -JOHN 1:14 (ESV)

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





Prayer Requests

Rev. Brian Roberts, St. Luke's in Oviedo, FL is back on Florida. Please pray for him to regain the weight he has lost and to regain his strength.

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. Tom Soltis, Parma, OH for God's loving care.

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 and her doctors to find pain relief solutions for her jaw pain and severe headaches following her surgery.

Laura Bergmann, Munster, IN, please pray for her as she injured her knee and is receiving inpatient treatment to help with her recovery.

Nita Huffines, St. Louis, MO, wife of Rev. Warren Huffines who is five-year survivor of colon cancer, has begun a new round of treatments. Please pray for her as she receives her treatment.

Rev. Hosea Ekong, Youngstown, OH, who is recovering at home after a hospitalization.

Rev. John Milligan, Newburgh Heights, OH, who injured his knee. Please pray for his healing.

Rev. John Mashek, Akron, OH who is home and is being evaluated by his physicians. Please pray that his physicians diagnose his condition and that He brings comfort and care to Pastor Mashek.

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.



Closing Thoughts Everyone Has a Story to Tell Including God!

Rev. Ken Ballas, EM

Normally nobody chooses to be “preached” to. Most of us likely prefer to keep our ideas about God or degree of personal piety to ourselves. However, “sweet” or “proper” such sentiments may seem and try as we may to justify them, such thoughts often tend to put *us* at the center of the universe or common good.

In the meantime (and without claiming to give the impression of being an astute judge of even one's own human character), we all rather easily find ourselves existing with an occasionally unsettling mixture of emotions including abject loneliness. Actuarial statistics indicate that this may *well* be one of our last earthly Christmases (with emphasis on “well”) as there is a sense in which God's very best gifts are yet to come making it possible for each of us to be part of His forever family someday never again to have to feel alone.

My Lois and I are privileged to reside on a rather quiet suburban street inhabited by many fellow-retirees but also happily by at least one much younger couple blessed earlier this year with a precious newborn baby. The very word Christmas calls to our minds us that our Heavenly Father also had (and sacrificially also temporarily lost!) a special human Baby in His own immediate family. (Forgive my reverting to my earlier calling as a pastor/teacher and, yes, “preaching!”).

With a relatively few strokes of the pen the evangelist Luke informs us about the very first people privileged to hear the telling of the Christmas story being representatives of the equivalent of a rough and tumble “night shift” of ancient union local guild of also ground-hugging **shepherds**. Briefly scared out of their wits at the dazzling appearance of just one of an eventual multitude of heavenly angelic messengers, **Bethlehem's shepherds** were given reason not to remain filled with fear for very long.

Motivated more by love than fear, hopefully that same **divine love** that came down to our planet earth that first Christmas will hopefully continue to resonate within the hearts and minds of each of us also. For if anyone has a better story to share especially in today's hectic divided world, we have yet to hear it!



SELC District - A District Without Borders

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

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