



The Beacon Online

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

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Spring Call Days at Concordia St. Louis and Concordia Fort Wayne



Fort Wayne Call Day Information - On Monday, April 28, at 7 p.m., second-year students will receive their vicarage and deaconess internship assignments, marking an important step in their formation. On Tuesday, April 29, at 7 p.m., graduating pastoral ministry students will learn where they have been called to serve as pastors. Both services will be live-streamed on CTSFW's Call Day service pages (buttons below), the Chapel page, on YouTube, and on our Facebook page. Following each service, a complete list of assignments and calls, along with photos of the students, will be available on the service streaming pages, accessible using the links below.

[Watch the Vicarage & Deaconess Internship Assignment Service](#)

[Watch the Candidate Call Service](#)

St. Louis Call Day Information - On Call Day, concluding students receive their first calls to ministry and second-year students receive their assignments for vicarages and deaconess internships. All calls and assignments for service are to churches or ministries within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Call Day this year is April 30, 2025. Assignments and calls will be announced and celebrated during two worship services in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus: Assignment of Vicarages at 3 p.m. (CDT) and Assignment of Calls at 7 p.m. (CDT). You can join us in-person, via [livestream](#) or on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#).



Youth Worship Night Zion Lutheran in Clark, NJ

Zion Lutheran Church, in collaboration with "The Disciples Band", hosted its first Youth Worship night on March 21, 2025. It was a joyous occasion that had a time of music, devotion, prayer, and fellowship. It was well attended consisting of Zion's Youth as well as some visitors in the community who came for the gathering. We hope to continue these gatherings in the future and will continue to offer time for many youths and young adults to come and participate as well as grow in their faith in Christ Jesus.

The Disciples Band members are – Jacob Jerry, Jonathan Jerry, Andrea Dass, Sebastian Harvey, Adrian Harvey.

Leaders of Zion Youth/Luther League- Hannah Balla, Ashley Rumzie, Jonah Balla, Noah Balla.





St. John's Joins the Easter Bunny Trail

Giving out 600 Easter treat bags to children in Hazleton at the Annual Easter Bunny Trail, St. John's Lutheran church stepped up its game once again to reach as many souls as possible in as little time as possible. As you can see from the picture, families were lined up for what seemed like a mile to come through and get some sweets as well as the sweet news of the Gospel from us!

A blessed Easter to all from St. John's!



Hispanic Church Plant St. Louis, MO Rev. Miguel Torneire

It is with great joy that I share with the SELC District community, an activity I did as part of the Hispanic Church Planting in St. Louis, MO. It has been almost five months since I have started in this new adventure as a church planter and praise and thank God, I have a group of 20 people that meets regularly around "to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:42).

Since we were in Holy Week, I planned a Via Crucis (also known as the Stations of the Cross) with the group, to meditate on the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Twenty-one people from Nicaragua 🇳🇮, the United States 🇺🇸, Venezuela 🇻🇪, Honduras 🇧🇮, Mexico 🇲🇽, Brazil 🇧🇷, Haiti 🇭🇹, Colombia 🇨🇴, and the Dominican Republic 🇩🇴 participated in this meditation.

Thank you SELC District and its congregations for your prayers and support. Without it, this church planting in St. Louis among the Hispanics would not be possible.



Lutheran Haven Mother's Day Appeal

Lutheran Haven is announcing the 2025 Mother's Day Appeal. Below is the appeal letter from Rev. Dr. Roy Maack. If you would like to mail a donation to Lutheran Haven and/or this Mother's Day campaign, you can send it to the address below.

Lutheran Haven Foundation
2041 West State Rd. 426
Oviedo, FL 32765



In honor of Mother's Day this year...

we received a wonderful gift from Lutheran Haven resident, Rev. Dr. Roy Maack who authored our Mother's Day letter. As you celebrate this special holiday, we invite you to take in his beautiful words in honor of his beloved wife and the mother of their 4 children:

"God blessed me and my 4 children with the most precious, loving, gifted, God-fearing wife and mother, Ann. Ann played the role of cheerleader, editor, mentor, tutor, sounding board, sermon critic and lover. Her encouragement, determination and gracious love are why, after God's son, Ann has been the greatest gift to me. Why she agreed to marry me is still an amazing mystery to me – and many others!

Ann taught music and directed musical programs all over Baltimore in public schools and the churches I served. Even the Mayor came to hear her programs. The teachers, administrators, students and parents loved her and her work. She was also a concert pianist. I saw her on stage at the University of Maryland playing for more than an hour without a note in front of her. Wow! What a gift; what a memory! She was also the valedictorian of her graduation class.

Ann spent endless hours with our children to help them learn and achieve, which they all did mightily – all because of Ann and the guidance of God.

In the summer of 2005, Ann experienced a stroke which kept her from playing piano and limited her activities, yet she was never down or negative and always pleasant. She was an inspiration to all at Lutheran Haven.

Ann was the greatest gift to me, to our children and to all who knew her. If it were not for Ann, I would not be in ministry, not have served large and important congregations, and certainly would not have been elected District President where she too served and ministered to numerous pastor's wives.



We were often asked what our secret was for joyfully living together for 66 years. Well, we forgave a lot, we laughed a lot, and I travelled a lot! My children and I love Ann now more than ever even though she is with Jesus. Who wouldn't with a GEM like her?

There are two things that inspired Ann and me to a life of service:

- Christ died for our sins
- Christ rose from the dead

Jesus' commitment to us inspired us to support ministries like Lutheran Haven, which Ann loved dearly. I do as well and have lived at Lutheran Haven since 2007. We support this great ministry God has given to all of us, and I humbly ask you to join me in supporting the ministry of Lutheran Haven that supports so many."

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Roy A. Maack

Rev. Dr. Roy Maack
Resident, Lutheran Haven

Mary Ann

Mary Ann McCunn
Development Coordinator
Lutheran Haven Foundation

A brief biography of Rev. Dr. Roy Maack:

Pastor Maack grew up homeschooled on the road because his father was a tent preacher throughout the US starting churches. He preached his first sermon at age 10. He served congregations in the DC area and in Maryland and received people from various countries and cultures. It was in college at St. John's, Winfield in Kansas where he met his beloved Ann. When Pastor Maack says his children achieved mightily with the help of the Lord and Ann, he is very accurate. All 4 of their children are doctors; 2 medical doctors and 2 in ministry.

Pastor Maack received his Honorary Doctorate in Ministry at Concordia College in Bronxville, NY and went on to serve as District President for over 200 congregations and 350 pastors in the mid-Atlantic states. He also served as the summer replacement speaker on the "National Lutheran Hour" radio show which broadcasts around the world.

In "retirement," Pastor Maack has led world tours which included 45 countries, and in addition, helps various congregations with fundraising and stewardship. Currently, he is working for "Food for the Poor" which is an interdenominational ministry that helps the poorest of the poor in the Western hemisphere. He states, "I would go back to being a parish pastor but who wants a 93-year-old pastor!"

Thank you, Pastor Maack. We at Lutheran Haven are so blessed and inspired by you and your beloved, Ann. We are honored that you are a part of our Lutheran Haven family!



happy
Mother's Day

Thank you for your kindness.



**LUTHERAN
HAVEN
FOUNDATION**
Generations of caring - Caring for generations

I have already included Lutheran Haven In My Estate Plan.

I would like more Information on the following:

- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Including Lutheran Haven in my Estate Plan

For your privacy, Lutheran Haven Foundation does not release personal information to third parties.

Happy Mother's Day

The mission of Lutheran Haven is to provide a quality, Christ-centered haven of care for older adults.

Out of thanks to God for His many blessings, I/we enclose a gift to
The Lutheran Haven Foundation for:

Benevolent Care General

Name (s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Church Affiliation _____

Payment: My check payable to LHF is enclosed

Please return this card with your gift in the enclosed envelope.

Credit card donations can be made directly through our website by visiting
lutheranhaven.org. Just click on the Faithful giving tab on the menu bar.
You can also scan our QR Code and it will take you directly to Faithful Giving.




SELC District Servant Event Youth Gathering Register Now!

Below is the Google Form link to register your group for the SELC District Servant Event for the Youth Gathering this July! We are still working with the Youth Office to finalize what we will be doing for our service. The cost for this event will be \$35.00 and will include the event, transportation to and from the event, lunch, and a SELC District T-shirt. If others who are at the Gathering (YAVs, Team Flex, etc.) from your church would like a T-shirt can also be added to the Google Form as additional shirts and not in the event total. Even if you are not planning to attend the District Event (I hope to see all of you at the event!), you may still order District shirts for your church. **All payments go to the District Office and are needed ASAP. Please complete this form** so I can order the t-shirts and have them shipped to your churches before the Gathering! (This is only for churches attending and registered for the Youth Gathering in New Orleans). Link for the Gathering Event and T-shirts:

<https://forms.gle/giQtGXesmJULnA4e7>

Please mail your payments to:
SELC District Office
2623 Brookside Road
Macungie, PA 18062

Rachel Larson, SELC Youth Chair, rachel.larson@stlucaslcms.org



Registration Opens for Fall Online Greek Course

Registration is now open for **Online Greek: Part I** for the 2025 fall semester at **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis** (CSL). The dates for the fall semester are Aug. 25-Dec. 12. Tuition is \$1,200 and the registration deadline is Aug. 1. The class size is limited to 15 students.

This noncredit course primarily serves three groups of prospective students: Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program graduates continuing to the General Pastor Certification (GPC) track, applicants to the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Program and applicants to the Residential Alternate Route (RAR) Program. The course prepares students for the Entry Level Competency Exam (ELCE) in Greek, a prerequisite for admission to these programs.

If space remains after SMP-GPC, M.Div. and RAR students have enrolled, others interested in learning Greek may register. While the course has no prerequisites and is not for credit, a solid understanding of English grammar is essential.

Dr. John Genter, assistant professor of theology at Concordia University, Nebraska (CUNE), Seward, Neb., will lead the course. Dr. Genter currently teaches Greek at CUNE and previously served as a visiting professor at CSL in 2021. He earned his Ph.D. from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, where he also taught and contributed to four volumes of the "Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament" series and a recent Bible translation project.

Dr. Genter will shepherd students through the course using the textbook and videos developed by former instructor **Dr. James Voelz**, graduate professor of Exegetical Theology. Students will receive instruction, correction and insights as they prepare for the ELCE and build a foundation for reading the New Testament in Greek.

The course includes live online tutoring sessions from 4-5 p.m. (CT) Mondays and Thursdays, beginning Aug. 25. Students should expect to dedicate eight hours per week to study. Registration for Online Greek: Part II, offered in spring 2026, will open in October.

Required textbooks:

- **"Fundamental Greek Grammar", 4th rev. ed.** (Concordia Publishing House, 2019)
- **"Novum Testamentum Graece", 28th ed.** (German Bible Society, 2012)



Family Bible Journey Podcast The Story of Esther

Holy Week devotional reading can be found on the Family Bible Podcast. Read about the redemption story of Esther. You can also hear John's version of the resurrection on the Family Bible Journey podcast!

www.familybiblejourney.com



Join the journey
of journaling through the Bible.

He is Risen!

Alleluia!

The tomb is empty. The victory is won.
Jesus has conquered sin and death—for you!

Happy Easter!

John Hoover
District Vice President
English & SELC Districts
314-276-3370 | john.hoover@lcef.org



"He is not here; He has risen! Remember how He told you while He was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and, on the third day, be raised again.'"

Luke 24:6-7



Prayer Requests

Rev. Brian Roberts, Orlando, FL. Please pray for him as he is regaining the weight he has lost and works to regain his strength and stamina.

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.

Rev. Kevin Duff, Hilton Head, SC, who has finished his low dose radiation treatments, and his healing is continuing from those treatments. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

Rev. Edward Kucera, Hermitage, PA, who is receiving long-term healthcare at home. Please keep him and his wife Irene in your prayers.

Bev Cahill, wife of Rev. Chris Cahill. Lodi, OH, as she begins a season of chemotherapy following cancer surgery. The Cahills are posting updates on "Caring

Bridge" at <https://tinyurl.com/Bridge4Bev>.

Anna Bocklage, Bel Air, MD, wife of Rev. Steve Bocklage, who is recovering from knee replacement surgery. Please pray for her healing and recovery.

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 wrote, Praise God for His healing graces: 5-year remission of colon cancer, then successful removal of a new tumor. Thank Him now for the improvement in blood tests. Pray boldly for complete healing from His mercy, yet desiring His will.

Daniel McLean, Oviedo, FL, who has stage 4 cancer and is receiving treatment. Please keep him his wife Emily, Deaconess at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Oviedo, and their children in your prayers.

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
"My Lord and My God!"
(Easter 2 or "Thomas Sunday")
Rev. Kenneth Ballas, EM

Now Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book. But these are written in order that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the messianic Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have life everlasting in His Name (John 20:30-31).

The foregoing most clearly stated purpose of the Holy Scriptures in general, and New Testament Fourth Gospel in particular, refers not only to faith in an unquestionably much to be desired understanding of a *cognitive concept* of eternity and God's gracious gift of forgiveness and life after death but also undying faith in the **Person of one historic Jesus of Nazareth**, who alone has already made all such most blessed realities possible!

For soundly textual reasons the octave of Resurrection Sunday (informally known as "Thomas Sunday") is thankfully another **LORD'S DAY JESUS SUNDAY** with John 20:19-31 as the expected Gospel lesson also annually heard by those who follow a 3-year cycle of readings. Due in part to generations of preachers who if even only occasionally use our Lord's disciples or perhaps pharisees as convenient "pulpit whipping boys," this particular apostle of our risen Savior has widely yet arguably *unfairly* come to be known almost exclusively negatively as "**doubting Thomas.**"

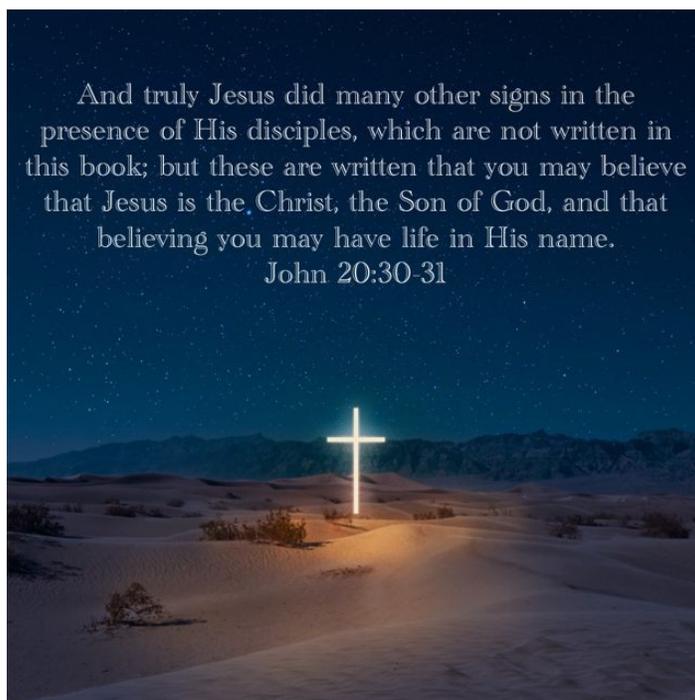
Without wishing to *glorify* our fallen condition's natural inclination to question the ways of our just and merciful God, there is a very real sense in which Thomas' temporary expressions of rational doubt may have also been borne of an essential underlying *theological reason* for his wishing to see or even *touch* his once mortally wounded Lord as only a few years later an inspired 1st Century New Testament writer to Hebrew-

speaking Jewish Christians taught that "without the innocent shedding of blood, there could be no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22b; cf. also 1 John 1:1ff.).

Suffice it to say, in no way were Thomas's fellow-Jewish kinsmen huddled many days behind securely locked doors a problem. Our Lord failed to address as it appeared that he, Thomas, may have been the only one of their number courageous enough to be "out and about" without being paralyzed with fear – the very least of the Master's concerns being any thought of having His recently holy mutilated now glorified body suddenly entering the assembled conclave of frightened follower's place of hiding by being further penetrated by a bunch of wooden splinters!

In addition to Simon Peter's eventual reinstatement to the team of faithful Spirit-emboldened living apostolic witnessing martyrs, of possible significance in evangelist John's extended passion/resurrection narrative is repeated reference to a *charcoal fire*, an otherwise seemingly inconsequential detail in conjunction with our loving Lord's preparation of a welcome beach breakfast after a fruitless night of fishing by Thomas and six others (see John 18:18; 21:9ff.). Also, regarding Thomas, patristic church historians record that after his becoming patron saint of the Christian Church in India that revered apostle, too, faithfully died a martyr's death.

Finally, be sure not to miss the all-encompassing reaction of our blessed Lord throughout any and all of these historic events. Instead of berating His redeemed people of all ages for their littleness of faith and lesser failings, hear a compassionately loving three-fold greeting of "**Shalom!**" or God's comforting **EASTER PEACE** for us all including a one-time disciple of two opinions become apostle named Thomas!



SELC District - A District Without Borders

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

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