



The Beacon Online

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

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Raising Up the Next Generation of Future Leaders

by Vicar Eddie Krez:
St. Luke's Lutheran Church
Oviedo, FL

The next generation of Christian leaders isn't just on the horizon, but they're already here. They're the high school students showing up to youth group on nights when they could be playing video games or at home relaxing, they're asking thoughtful questions in Bible study, and discovering what it means to follow Jesus in their everyday lives. One of the most meaningful lessons I've learned during my vicarage is just how important it is to take these students seriously and not just as future leaders of the Church, but as present, vital members of it right now. When we see our youth through the eyes of Jesus, we begin to recognize the unique gifts, voices, and perspectives they bring.

What today's young people are looking for isn't flashy programs or perfect leaders, but instead they're looking for real relationships. When we are willing to be vulnerable, to admit our own struggles and point to the grace of Christ, we invite them into something deeper than performance or pretending. We invite them into the Gospel. I've seen how much it means when a teenager realizes they can bring their questions, doubts, and wounds to the church and be met with love, not judgment.

One of the most powerful ways youth grow in faith is through service. Whether it's helping with a food pantry, joining a community clean-up, or just having a conversation with someone about the Gospel, I've seen high school students come alive when they understand that God is working through them to make a difference. These service moments aren't just "something nice" for them to do, but they are formative experiences that shape their identity as followers of Jesus. When students serve, they start to see how the love of Christ moves beyond the church walls into the places where it's most needed.

Throughout my vicarage, I've been deeply moved by how important it is to create a church environment where youth feel not only welcome but wanted. They need to know that their presence matters, that their questions matter, and that their gifts can be used by God right now. This means listening to them, encouraging them, and trusting them with real opportunities to lead and serve.

If we want to see young people grow into confident, compassionate Christian leaders, we have to walk with them, not just talk at them. We have to model grace and truth. We have to let them see that the church isn't a place for perfect people, but it's a place for forgiven people. That's the kind of church young people want to be part of, and it's the kind of church they can help shape.

The Holy Spirit is already working in our youth. Our calling is to support, encourage, and remind them that they belong to Christ, to the Church, and to a mission bigger than themselves. The future of the Church is bright, not because of programs or strategies, but because Jesus is alive and raising up young leaders who are learning to trust Him, serve others, and share His love with the world. I'm thankful to serve at St. Luke's and within the SELC to see and hear so many stories of faith from younger people and am so excited to see where God leads this next generation of leaders!

In Christ Alone, Eddie Krez





On Pentecost Sunday, Zion Lutheran Church in Clark, New Jersey was able to Share God's Word in Nine Different Languages!

Acts 2:1-4 "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

During this special celebration, the message of God's love and truth was spoken in English, German, Yoruba, American Sign Language, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Italian, and Hindi — a beautiful reflection of the unity and diversity of the Body of Christ.

Enjoy this inspiring video from Zion's worship service on Sunday, June 8th, and experience the joy of Pentecost in many tongues by [clicking here](#).



St. Louis Hispanic Mission at St. Lucas

What a wonderful celebration this past Sunday at St. Lucas as they observed the Day of Pentecost. They were joined by the St. Louis Hispanic Mission. The celebration included three baptisms, a smattering of seven languages: English, Spanish, French, Creole, Amharic (Ethiopian), Portuguese, and Slovak. A highlight, of course, was the mariachi music (photo below on left) provided by the Heimer family, led by Rev. Stephen Heimer, Director of All Nations ministries for the Synod.



Besides Rev. Dr. Mark Larson, pastor at St. Lucas, and Rev. Heimer, participants in the service included Rev. Miguel Torneide, SELC district missionary, who was called last fall, Rev. Idjon Regnier, a native of Haiti coming to us via the Dominican Republic, and Biruk Chiksa, serving as vicar at St. Louis. The Hispanic mission is currently building relationships in the community and has begun a Bible class attended by 20 people each week. Come, Holy Spirit!



Ascension Lutheran Church Celebrates Pentecost with Baptisms and Confirmations

It seems good and right, at Pentecost, to thank our SELC District for its support of Ascension's mission in Montreal. We have striven to intentionally demonstrate the mercy of Christ in our neighbourhood, in open houses, English classes and community involvement. The Lord has blessed that work and brought many to his font and altar to receive Christ's gifts.

Since September 2024 we have celebrated nine baptisms (none of them infants!) and six confirmations (none of them middle-schoolers!). The most recent baptisms were Jeremy's on April 27, and Priscilla, Caleb, Channah and Charles's baptisms this Pentecost Sunday. Jeremy also confirmed his faith after his baptism. Priscilla's sister and the children's mom, Jennifer, confirmed her faith on Pentecost along with Jorge, who has been attending worship with us for a couple of years.



Jeremy was a native Montrealer who, in his thirties, was drawn to God and began specifically seeking out a Lutheran church. Jorge was baptized at a Lutheran congregation in Columbia and came to Ascension after several years at a Baptist congregation in Montreal. Jennifer's husband is Muslim, but she was determined to find a church where she could bring her children, and a young sister, to Jesus.

We had several guests attend our Pentecost service. One was an English-speaking Quebecer looking for a Protestant church with sound worship and theology. She was thrilled to find us and will be returning. Two others from India, who had attended a few studies and worship services, approached me after worship and said they were both ready to receive Jesus' gift of baptism as well.

None of this would be possible without the prayers and faithful support of the SELC District. We thank you for being partners with us in announcing the Good News in Montreal and providing a place where people can find Jesus and his gifts.





SELC District Eastern Circuit Pastors Meet June 9th and 10th

The pastors of the Eastern Circuit met June 9-10 for their regular Winkel, graciously and generously hosted by Pastor Gordon Naumann and the good folks of St. John's in Hazleton, PA. Our special guest was Rev. David Fleming, the Executive Director of Doxology, who presented to the group on a number of topics of pastoral importance, including Spiritual Care of Broken Families, the Importance of Listening for Preaching, Caring for One Another, and Supporting Families of LGBT children. *Thank you, Pastor Fleming!* What a privilege it was to have you with us!

Pictured below from left to right back row: Pastors Charles St-Onge, Gordon Naumann, and Circuit Visit James Douthwaite. Front row from left to right: Pastors Raymond Malec, Peter Haenftling, SELC President Wally Vinovskis, our speaker Rev. David Fleming, and Pastors Allen Dass and Daniel Berteau.





How the Family Discipleship Model Especially Influences Generation Alpha

Concordia Center for the Family Executive Director Rev. Dr. Todd Biermann engaged in a conversation about how the family discipleship model especially influences Generation Alpha (children born between 2010 and 2024), and how parents, grandparents, and the congregation can partner together in passing down faith to this younger generation. It all begins with listening and finding ways to cross the generational barriers.

God has given us humans a special gift to really listen to one another, understand each other and understand feelings and thoughts, and to communicate with each other. A first big step that I've seen churches trying to do is to just listen to what's going on in the newer younger generations — what are their wants, their needs, their fears, their hopes— and then connect with them in a way that helps them really see that they are valued in the body of Christ, that they are valued in their home, to have parents express to their children, I hear you. I'm not always going to give you what you want, because that's not necessarily what's good for you, but I want to give you what's best and what God has taught us is best. And so I will listen to you, and try to understand you, and then try to relate God's gifts to you. We do that by also connecting with the broader body of Christ to connect with the whole generations of Christ.

A big part of what churches are doing today is connecting our younger generations with the older generations so that they aren't just a silo. One of the big problems in the church is this silo ministry mentality — you take care of youth ministry, you take care of adults, you take care of seniors, you take care of the day school, etcetera — each does their own thing, and they don't interact well. If we are truly going to grow as disciples, we have to see every way we can to integrate all of those and get them working together. That way, the wealth of knowledge and faith of the older ones can be passed along to the younger ones by teaching, but also by modeling, by example, by inter-connectivity of interest. Where you have older members of the body of Christ who show interest in the younger members of the body of Christ, where you have senior citizens who kind of adopt all the kids of the church as their grandkids, and they show interest in them. They ask them, How's it going in school? What's going on? That means a lot to this younger generation because they see a world that doesn't care about them. They're lonely.

A lot of people are walking in the midst of thousands, but feeling all alone because we're so disjointed, so disconnected — especially in the technological era where these devices connect us, but they also separate us... We don't even see the world around us. And so it's trying to get those children connected to others in a very real way. Churches are doing more of that and finding ways to cross those barriers of generations.

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Rev. Dr. Christopher Cahill Retirement Celebration

You are invited to help us to honor the ministry and observe the retirement of Pastor Chris Cahill on the weekend of June 28-29, 2025. Weekend events at Christ the King include an Open House, 11 am - 5 pm on Saturday, June 28th, including light refreshments, conversations, along with some fun and games.

AND

Pastor Cahill's final worship service as Pastor of Christ the King at 9:30 am on Sunday, June 29 Holy Communion included!

PLEASE NOTE - ONLY ONE WORSHIP SERVICE ON JUNE 29th at 9:30 AM.

RSVP your intention to attend either or both of these to ctklutheranlodi@gmail.com by Sunday June 15 (please tell us how many others will come with you).



LWML-SELC Monthly Bible Study Please note new monthly link

The LWML-SELC Monthly Bible study is on the 3rd Thursday of June. Free to Serve" the third one in the Spring edition of the LWQ on pages 20. You can join in person at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Lodi, Ohio or you can participate on Zoom at this link -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85956712410?pwd=2C5DTxh2rez6SD4sbfWeUCQU0tXCM4.1>

Meeting ID: 859 5671 2410
 Passcode: 504061

The monthly Bible study begins at 10:30 AM Eastern time.



Nominations Open for Election at the 2026 Synod Convention

The Committee for Convention Nominations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) requests nominations of qualified members from Synod member congregations for officer, board, and commission positions to be elected by the Synod convention, which will meet July 18–23, 2026.

Officers, agencies, ordained and commissioned ministers, and member congregations of the Synod and their lay members are all invited to submit nominations, to be received preferably before August 18, 2025, and no later than October 18, 2025. Please urge the members of your congregation to participate in the nomination process by identifying those individuals with the gifts and abilities to serve the Synod in one of the roles listed below. Download a bulletin insert to print and include in your worship folders and newsletters.

Nominees are sought for:

- Secretary of the Synod
- LCMS Board of Directors (at-large and regional)
- LCMS Boards for National and International Mission (regional)
- Commission on Theology and Church Relations
- Concordia Historical Institute Board of Governors
- Concordia Publishing House Board of Directors
- Lutheran Church Extension Fund Board of Directors
- LCMS Foundation Board of Trustees
- Concordia University System Board of Directors
- Synod University and Seminary Boards of Regents

Important information — including an explanatory memorandum, a detailed description of the offices to be filled (with present terms and incumbents), and instructions for use of the new online nomination system — is available at lcms.org/nominate. Any member of a member congregation with a valid email address may establish an account and submit a nomination.

To complete a nomination, visit forms.lcms.org and log in via a LISN ID (for rostered church workers and a few others) or an email address you control. If you need assistance logging into the system, please refer to the following documentation:

- [Instructions for logging in using an email address](#)
- [Instructions for logging in using a LISN ID](#)

If you have already created an account, you can follow this [direct link to the Nomination Form](#).

Please distribute this call widely and urge participation.

Sincerely in Christ's service,
John W. Sias
Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



Do You have a Church Member who is Preparing for Full-time Churchwork?

The Student Financial Aid Committee was organized by the SELC District to assist young men and women preparing for full-time professional ministry or church work within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This includes deaconess, lay ministry programs, as well as clergy preparation. Professional church workers who are working toward advanced degrees are not eligible for aid from the SELC District Student Aid Committee.

Please see the SELC website for an application and more information - <https://selc.lcms.org/mdocs-posts/financial-aid-form/>

A watercolor illustration of a mountain range with several evergreen trees in the foreground.

Want your church to grow?

Watch this video to see how we helped a church raise over \$500,000 in four weeks!

A square QR code.

The logo for Genysys Group, featuring a stylized green 'g' with a leaf-like shape inside a circle.**genysys group**
Discovering New Life in Ministry

www.genysys-group.com



Family Bible Journey Podcast

Is God talking about dragons or dinosaurs? Listen as God speaks to Job and his friends in the closing chapters of Job.

Find us on your favorite podcast player or at familybiblejourney.com.



Join the journey
of journaling through the Bible.



Together In Faith

God's blessings to all attending the LCMS Youth Gathering from the English & SELC Districts this July!

Lutheran Church Extension Fund is a proud sponsor of the 2025 LCMS Youth Gathering.



LUTHERAN CHURCH
EXTENSION FUND
FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS. TOGETHER IN FAITH.

ENDURE
HEBREWS 12:1-3



Prayer Requests

Rev. Brian Roberts, Orlando, FL. Please pray for him as he is gaining weight and 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.

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 continues 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 Another Highly Plausible Name for the Holy Spirit?

Rev. Ken Ballas, EM

Four times in evangelist St. John's original Holy Week so-called Farewell Discourses" in John chapters 14-16 is the word *Paraclete*. Various translations "Comforter," "Counselor," "Encourager," "Guide," "Helper," "Intercessor," "Teacher," or "Advocate" (think "defense attorney" as in 1 John 2:1-2). This same word is perhaps surprisingly also used with reference to our Lord Jesus! Etymologically speaking, this very interesting Greek word also may well call to mind yet another "C-word," namely, the best imaginable firm but deeply loving "**Coach.**"

Resonating not only with avid fans of the world of sports including Summer (or Winter!) Olympics distance endurance events, say, in track and field or swimming competitions, we see extremely well-conditioned athletes on the verge of exhaustion, lungs bursting for lack of oxygen, miraculously energized or rejuvenated by carefully timed shouts of encouragement from poolside or the sidelines of "**Go!**" "**Go!**" "**Go!**"

Try (if only temporarily) to forget about otherwise unrealistically extreme marathon-length races. Many of us presently need the Lord's help and encouragement just getting out of bed or a chair to greet a long-awaited welcome visitor or to endure most challenging daily physical, spiritual or emotional struggles of various descriptions common on occasion to us all.

This coming Trinity Sunday weekend is an ideal time to reflect on how *all three persons* of the blessed Trinity interact together in our eternal behalf often in very similar, overlapping ways – *God the Father also* being our perfect, non-competitive Master-Teacher. Take time prayerfully to read especially perhaps any number of highly instructive Old Testament psalms like Psalm 25, 90 and, yes, even 119!

***GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE
HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD, NOW AND FOREVER! AMEN.***



SELC District - A District Without Borders

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

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