



# The Beacon Online

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

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## Concordia Lutheran Church Shares Their Latvia Experience with the Congregation Macungie, PA

The missionaries from Concordia hosted a luncheon to thank those who supported the trip to Latvia and to share with the congregation their experiences during the English Summer Camp in July. Each person who participated helped prepare the meal and also spoke about their experience in Latvia. About half the group from Concordia were returning to Latvia and the other half were there for the first time. There was a display of items from Latvia, and everyone watched a slideshow showing the different activities that were held during the camp.





Pictured above are pictures from the presentation and luncheon at Concordia. Pictured below are participants in the Latvian English Summer Camp.





## Vacation Bible School at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

Here is news from St. Stephen's, Dickson City. We had a great time hosting An Epic Australian Unforgettable Journey Adventure & Journey with Jesus from Monday, July 21st - Friday, July 25th. Pastor Peter Richert and volunteers provided the VBS to children.



## Talking with Jesus — Resources for Prayer and Devotions

From learning how to get started (or re-started) with a consistent prayer life, to solid models useful for praying for our kids and grandkids, to a four-part Bible study on Prayer, and even to Devotions you can use with every member of your household, LHM continues to provide resources for modern Christians that both nurture faith and allow you and the people you serve to better navigate through challenging topics like prayer. [Click here](#) to read more about the resource pictured on the right.



## Zion Lutheran Church Holds Vacation Bible School

During the week of August 11th, Zion Lutheran Church in Clark, NJ was transformed into the Land Down Under for an Epic Australian Adventure Vacation Bible School! Nearly 60 children joined for a week packed with faith, fun, and fellowship. Throughout the week, students explored how Jesus calls, leads, teaches, saves, and sends us to share His Good News. Each day was filled with energetic music, creative crafts, and engaging Bible stories that brought the message of God's love to life. But the impact of VBS went beyond just the church walls. The children put their faith into action by supporting three local missions:

- 34 backpacks filled with school supplies were donated to Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ
- \$313.00 was raised for Concordia Gospel Outreach
- Zion's food pantry was generously replenished.

The week wrapped up with a joyful Closing Program and Picnic on Thursday evening, where families gathered to celebrate all the kids had learned and accomplished. Zion's VBS was truly a shining example of God's love in action!





## LWML-SELC Events

Save the date for the LWML SELC **Central Zone** fall rally at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Lodi, Ohio on September 27th. More details will follow.

Save the date for the LWML SELC **Eastern Zone** fall rally on Saturday September 27, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Manchester, NJ. See the flyer on the right for more information.

**LWML SELC Eastern Zone Rally**  
**Saturday September 27<sup>th</sup>** at  
**Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
 2309 Route 70, Manchester, NJ 08759

**10am – 2.30pm**

**\$5 pp** 

**Register Today:**  
 Karenannkow@hotmail.com  
 570-582-6046

*Bible Study led by Deaconess Helen DeMaio on "Women of the Bible"*

**This Rally's Charity is 'Phils Friends':**  
**In-gathering items to bring & donate as part of our Service Project for the day:**  
 Blankets (\$4 at Walmart), fuzzy socks, puzzle books, deck of cards (no casino), and small size lotion (fragrance free).



## Vocatio: Retreat set for Oct. 5–7, 2025 Prospective Students Explore Path to Ministry

College students and second-career adults who are considering future service as a pastor, deaconess, missionary or chaplain are invited to Vocatio: Retreat Oct. 5–7, 2025, at **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis**.

The three-day retreat offers an introduction to life as a seminarian. Participants will

worship in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus, spend time in God's Word, engage in conversations with Seminary faculty and students, and explore the Seminary campus. The schedule includes chapel services, class visits, panel discussions on academic programs and ministry paths, an introduction to campus ministries, and presentations from Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) missionary and military chaplain recruiters. The retreat also provides opportunities to connect with others who are discerning a similar call.

"The Lord of the harvest invites us to pray earnestly for more laborers to be sent into His harvest fields," said Rev. Jesse Kueker, director of Enrollment. "The fields are ripe, and for those discerning the possibility of serving the church as a pastor, deaconess, chaplain or missionary, Vocatio: Retreat offers the perfect opportunity to come, pray and get your questions answered. Please come! We cannot wait to welcome you, receive the Lord's gifts alongside you, and pray for you throughout all the steps ahead."

Registration is free and affordable lodging options are available, but space is limited. The registration deadline is Monday, Sept. 15. Learn more and register at [csl.edu/admissions/visit/vocatio-retreat/](https://www.csl.edu/admissions/visit/vocatio-retreat/).

College students and second-career men and women considering service as a pastor, deaconess, missionary or chaplain are invited to Vocatio: Retreat Oct. 5–7, 2025, at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. This distinctively Lutheran retreat offers an introduction to life as a seminarian, time in God's Word and the opportunity to learn from some of the church's brightest theologians. Register by Sept. 15 at [www.csl.edu/vocatio-retreat/](https://www.csl.edu/vocatio-retreat/), by scanning the QR code or by Googling "Vocatio: Retreat Concordia Seminary."



## Our Inaugural Organ Concert!

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Oviedo, FL

St. Luke's Lutheran Church would like to invite you to a special Dedicatory Concert of our new Walker Organ on September 5th, at 7:00pm.

Experience the superb skill of Bradley Hunter Welch. Mr. Welch is the resident organist of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. The concert is FREE and seating is open.

You can attend in person or you can view the concert online by [clicking here](#). The link will be available for one week following the concert.

You are invited to the Inaugural Organ Recital performed on the new Walker Organ by **Bradley Hunter Welch**  
Resident Organist of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra



Friday, September 5, 2025 at 7:00pm  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
2021 W. State Road 426, Oviedo, Florida 32765

*"Welch displayed the precision and emotion that makes him a virtuoso."  
(Matthew J. Palm, The Orlando Sentinel, October 2024)*

This concert is FREE and open to the public.  
For additional information, contact Eric Coomer at [ecoomer@slcs.org](mailto:ecoomer@slcs.org) or by calling the church at 407-365-3408.



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## Family Bible Journey Podcast

Hear how St. Paul dealt with dreaded temptation and found his victory in God's mercy in our Romans episodes of the Family Bible Journey podcast! Listen on your favorite podcast app, or at [familybiblejourney.com](http://familybiblejourney.com).



Join the journey  
of journaling through the Bible.

Find us on your favorite podcast player or  
at [familybiblejourney.com](http://familybiblejourney.com)!



## New Free Arrangement from Lutheran Summer Music by Anne Krentz Organ

Download a new free arrangement from Lutheran Summer Music 2025 by Anne Krentz Organ: *Beach Spring* for solo instrument with keyboard accompaniment. Based on the well-known shape-note hymn tune, this versatile work is this year's installment in the

LSM Hymn Tune Project and can be performed either in full or as individual movements. Listen and download for free at [LSMacademy.org/lsmprss](https://LSMacademy.org/lsmprss)

**Beach Spring**

Anne Krentz Organ  
2025

for Solo Instrument and Keyboard

LSM LUTHERAN SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL



## Resources Available from Lutheran Heritage Foundation

Does your church or school have families whose first language isn't English? Why not share a Lutheran book about Jesus with them in their heart language? Get **FREE** resources from the Lutheran Heritage Foundation, including children's Bible storybooks and Luther's *Small Catechism* in more than 180 languages! Visit [www.LHFmissions.org](http://www.LHFmissions.org) for more information.





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## Resource of the Week from Concordia Center for the Family

“Back to School” Resource of the week:  
CCF is very supportive of the work being  
done by fellow LCMS RSO, Family Shield  
Ministries. They’re especially good at  
providing family-friendly written and  
audio resources. As many children are  
heading back to school in August, you  
may find their **August  
newsletter** especially useful. Dr.  
Biermann has known the lead author,  
Laura Langhoff Arndt, since college and  
notes that she has GREAT insights!



# Planting Seeds Of Faith

With the **Young Investors StewardAccount**<sup>®</sup>, you can set your child up for financial stability while supporting LCMS ministries. They'll learn to budget, grow their money and give wisely, growing their faith and money simultaneously.



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## Prayer Requests

Please pray for all students and teachers as they begin the school year. We ask for prayers for all teachers as they begin the new school year.

**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 the Ballas' in your prayers

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

**Rev. Kevin Duff**, Hilton Head, SC, who has returned to work at Island Lutheran Church and is planning to return to full time this month. Praise the Lord for His care and healing!

**Rev. Edward Kucera**, and his wife Irene, who have moved to St. Louis, MO.

**Bev Cahill**, wife of Rev. Chris Cahill. Lodi, OH, finished her course of chemotherapy. She is now recuperating from chemotherapy and awaiting testing and a doctor's appointment in early September to determine next steps. 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 her second knee replacement and is preparing to begin physical therapy.

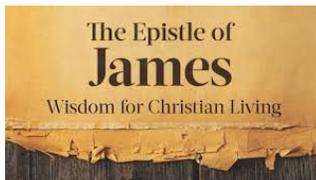
**Megan Skelton** in Oviedo, FL Please continue to pray for her and her doctors to find pain relief solutions for her jaw pain and severe headaches following her surgery.

**Laura Bergmann**, Munster, IN, please pray for her to continue to build strength in her injured knee.

**Nita Huffines**, St. Louis, MO, wife of Rev. Warren Huffines, let's praise God for bringing stage four cancer under control; then ask for more grace during a maintenance phase of treatments, that the Lord complete the healing while increasing Nita's energy and joy for each day.

**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](mailto:selc.lcms@gmail.com) or call the District Office at 610-965-3265 and press 6.*



## Closing Thoughts

### Just What the Doctor Ordered

Rev. Ken Ballas, EM

It should come as no surprise that when a trusted doctor or other health professional prescribes a certain medication (such as a diuretic), and it actually does what the pharmacist says it will do for us physically. Much the same is true concerning loving the spiritual directives in the revealed written teachings of our Heavenly Physician, Jesus Christ.

Apart from Jesus, the fundamental theological biblical teaching of Law and Gospel (especially the latter's promise of forgiveness and eternal salvation) *will likely not* properly interact with each other in facing life circumstances or be received as our blessed Triune God's final word of Gospel Good News to repentant baptized believing sinners for our ultimate good.

As part of every serious growing Christian's earthly life-long learning process, I respectfully continue strongly to suggest prayerfully reading anew not just "snippets" of Holy Scripture but all five chapters of our Lord's younger brother's **Epistle of James** which contain at least two dozen unmistakable allusions to the evangelist Matthew's inspired written account (likely written a few years *later* than that early New Testament letter!) of our Brother-Savior's "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew chapters 5-7.

Those who may be ready for yet even more "spiritual solid food" in addition to any other equally faith-nourishing "milk of the Word", may also wish to *tackle* the single chapter Letter of Jude as a proven example of the proper distinction between the closely inter-related biblical teaching of Law and Gospel.

This added suggestion is a realistically sobering warning to “contend for the faith” in the face of otherwise age-long widely assorted evils of this world as in these 20+ verses the powerful Spirit of God unmasks, vividly describes, judges and victoriously overcomes every diabolical evil no matter how vigorously defended by dangerous *false teachers* historically found especially *within* the Church.

Wise indeed was the humble giant poet seminary professor, Martin H. Franzmann, at whose feet a shrinking number of our beloved SELC District family members were privileged to sit. We got to know him personally as a vastly underrated teacher of the “strong Word of God” who also wrote, “No Christian teacher has a natural taste for controversy; he is forced into it by his concern and responsibility for our common salvation.”

(Martin Franzmann on Jude 3; other Scripture references that informed this piece include Psalm 25; 119. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 6:10; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17; Hebrews 5: 1 Peter 2:2 and 2 Peter 3:18).



## **SELC District - A District Without Borders**

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