



The Beacon Online

October 17, 2025/ Vol. 6 / No. 41

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.



Annual Forum Held at Ascension Lutheran Church in Montreal

Ascension, Montreal held their annual forum on September 25-26. Local attendees included Pastor Charles and Deborah St-Onge, lay worker Grace Sugg of the Mission of Christ Network, and Veronica Sangster, Jason Huang, and Kathryn Kollar of Ascension. Pastor James Douthwaite of St. Athanasius, Vienna, VA represented the SELC; Linda Patel represented the Mission of Christ Network leadership; and Pastor Philip Gai of St. Mark, Mississauga, ON and Pastor Gery Luck, Circuit Visitor for Canada-East, represented the English District.

Pastor St-Onge and Grace presented on the last year of work at Ascension, including our English class outreach, open houses, student ministry, building renovations as well as baptisms and confirmations. Linda Patel spoke to the group about ministry to Hindus and shared some of her experience as a convert to Christianity. After a walk through the neighbourhood, the attendees brainstormed an action plan for work in the next year.

After a few years with several workers and spouses, Ascension's team is a little leaner right now. We have chosen to move our Beginners' English outreach to Sunday afternoons, and Deb St-Onge is now serving as our main teacher with Grace Sugg working with the smaller group of very beginner English students. This fall we welcomed almost three dozen students to our first beginners' class. Grace is also leading an advanced English class online on Thursday evenings. Volunteers for that class come from across Canada and the United States - an advantage of online work. Our first fall open house was led by local NGO Promis-Quebec who provide support to refugees and immigrants, especially vulnerable women.

One new project for this coming year is a second site winter worship service. Parking around Ascension is becoming increasingly difficult to find; in winter, even what few

spots are available, disappear under the snowbanks. We are therefore planning to offer a Sunday evening service at a church with a parking lot in addition to Sunday morning worship at Ascension's building.

Work in Quebec remains challenging. Our National Assembly is proposing a law that would ban any prayer or services outside of religious buildings. Tensions between Montreal's Jewish and Muslim communities remain very high. The election next year will focus, again, on whether Quebec should seek independence from Canada.

We thank the SELC District for their support of our little outpost in Canada's largest French-speaking city. We also thank the English District who supported us as one of their 1-1-1 mission projects this year. Thank you too to MCN for their partnership, as well as our friends at Memorial, Houston, TX.

Pictured: Back row: Jason Huang, Rev. Gery Luck, Rev. Philip Gai, Rev. James Douthwaite
Front row: Kathryn Kollar, Veronica Sangster, Rev. Charles St-Onge, Deborah St-Onge, Grace Sugg, Linda Patel.





Peace Lutheran Church Welcomes Pastor Hoerlle Galloway, New Jersey

We rejoice that Pastor Renato Hoerlle has accepted the call to serve as pastor at Peace Lutheran Church, Galloway, NJ. He is in the process of moving to the US from Brazil. He recently shared this note:

My daughter Ellen, my son-in-law Thiago, and I arrived in the United States last week and we felt truly welcomed. I led the service on Sunday, October 12th and everyone was so kind, friendly, and warm in their conversations with us. Our time of fellowship after the service was also very special.

I sincerely thank you for your hospitality and kindness. Little by little, I'm getting familiar with the congregation's work and learning where each of you lives, as I hope to visit you regularly. Please know that I am here—by the grace of our good Lord—to serve you in the best way I can.

This Wednesday, I'll be traveling to Newark Airport to fly to Brazil, where I'll meet my wife Raquel, and gather the rest of our belongings. If God wills, by this time next Monday, October 20th, Raquel and I will already be back in New Jersey. We look forward to my installation on November 15th. More details on the installation service will follow.



Pictured above are the members following the service and at fellowship following the service.

Pictured below left, from left to right, is Pastor Hoerlle, Deaconess Helen DeMaio, Pastor Hoerlle's daughter Ellen and her husband Thiago. On the right is Pastor Hoerlle at the welcome sign from the preschool.



Disaster Response Update

There is still a need for help in North Carolina from the 2024 hurricanes! Sign up for one of the November events sponsored by SED Disaster Response in partnership with Mt. Pisgah, Hendersonville, NC, and Resurrection Mission, Spartanburg, SC.

The purpose of this event is to give participants an opportunity to serve their neighbor with the love of Christ by caring for their physical needs and helping with tree work, debris removal and rebuilding projects. Visit LCMS-LERT.org/need for more information.

Don't worry if you are not LERT trained!! There is training available at most sites on the first work day! Please sign up and notify the contact person about training.



"Basin and Towel"

Rev. Chris Cahill has been revising and expanding his online "Basin and Towel" offerings for ministerial care on various platforms. While some of these are still works in progress, you can find them at these links; we'll do a deeper dive into each of these in future Beacons:

- NEW **Basin and Towel 2025** website at bit.ly/bnt2025
- Read or subscribe to **Basin and Towel 2025** on Substack at bit.ly/bnt2025substack
- Listen to **Basin and Towel podcast** episodes at bit.ly/3INLfzF or on YouTube at bit.ly/ctcbntsermons



Sloka Lutheran Church Choir Concert October 25, 2025

THE SLOKA Lutheran Church Choir *Concert*

Saturday

**OCT
25**

Time: 3p

Where: St. Luke's Lutheran Church



Experience the Soul of Latvia in Song!

Join us for an unforgettable evening as the passionate voices of the singing nation of Latvia rise in powerful worship.

Let their harmonies move your spirit and uplift your heart.

The concert will be available on St. Luke's YouTube channel at this link - [St. Luke's You Tube Channel](#)

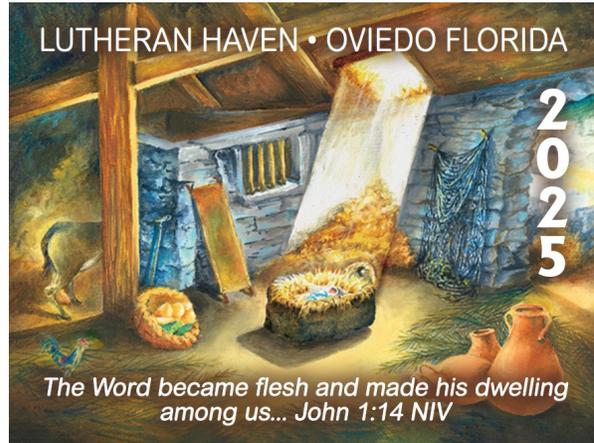


Our Elves at Lutheran Haven are Preparing Your Christmas Seals!

Each year, the Lutheran Haven Foundation hosts Christmas Seal Stuffing Day to help get this beautiful mailing to you! This is our 79th annual Christmas Seal outreach and 37 of our wonderful residents spent hours stuffing thousands of envelopes!

As you know, our Christmas Seal campaign is our largest outreach for the year and we hope you will prayerfully consider how you might support the mission and ministry of Lutheran Haven: **To provide a quality, Christ-centered haven of care for older adults.**

Our Benevolent Care Fund is critical in assisting retired Lutheran pastors, rostered church workers, retired Lutherans and others in need of our healthcare services. We also assist with things like Advanced Fees and Monthly Maintenance Fees along with assisting residents with emergency needs such as temporary healthcare assistance or even meals. It is only through the generosity of people like you who support the Haven that we can continue to come alongside these faithful servants.



Chances are that you know first-hand how Lutheran Haven's mission has touched someone's life. By supporting our Christmas Seals outreach, you become a vital part of Lutheran Haven's mission! **Your prayers and gifts are crucial to someone greatly in need who cannot help themselves in their elder years.**

Our residents are AMAZING as you can see! The recipients of benevolent care funding are kept private; however, our residents know your support goes directly to help their

friends and neighbors in need. That's why we always have such an enthusiastic response when it comes to our annual stuffing day! This is a big job, and they got it done in record time!



We are so thankful for our incredible residents and 2 very special Christmas Elves who kept this operation running smoothly, Jennifer Bonczyk, our Community Liaison and resident, Karen Hill! We also thank Vince Farina, our Health & Wellness Coordinator who led us in a short exercise break, along with our own Chef Eddy who prepared a wonderful lunch as a thank you to our volunteers. Our maintenance guys were also a huge blessing for moving a ton of boxes! What a team!

By assembling this cavalcade of flying paper and busy hands, all the hard work by our amazing volunteers saves the Haven a great deal of money on production costs. Now, you know when you receive this lovely appeal for help, it came to you through the love of one neighbor **for** another at Lutheran Haven!





Celebrate Reformation at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Dickson City, PA

A Reformation Service will be held at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Dickson, PA on November 2, 2025. The schedule is the Fellowship begins at 4 pm. The Divine Service begins at 5:00 PM and then we will continue fellowship following the service at 6:30 PM

In addition, St. Stephen's is celebrating their 100th Anniversary on October 18th. Please keep them in your prayers as they enter their second century.

St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Reformation, All Saints & 100th Anniversary Celebration of Dickson City Mission & Ministry October 18, 1925 – October 18, 2025

Divine Service

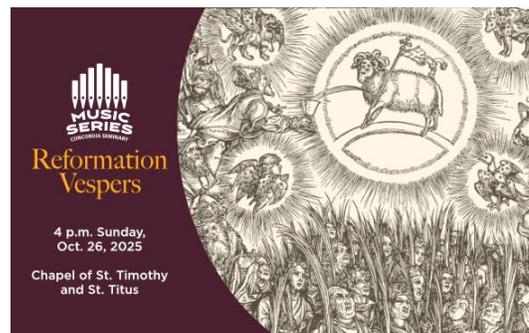
Sunday, November 2nd at 5 pm
Fellowship & Light Refreshments before & after worship beginning at 4 pm

Rev. Peter A. Richert, Vacancy Pastor
Karen Muir & Sharon Laskosky, Organists



Join us for Reformation Vespers! 4 p.m. (CT) Sunday, Oct. 26, 2025 Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus

This Service of Sacred Music will feature music performed by Laudamus, St. Louis Lutheran Chorale, Concordia Seminary Children's Choir, Concordia Seminary Youth Choir and talented instrumentalists! A reception will follow in Koburg Hall. This service is part of the **Concordia Seminary Music Series**, which is free and open to the public. Reformation Vespers will be livestreamed at [csl.edu/live](https://www.csl.edu/live). We hope to see you there!





LCMS Council of Presidents Record Hymns for 'Worship Anew' Service on October 26th

The Worship Anew studio boomed from the awe-inspiring praise coming from the voices of the Council of Presidents of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

On Oct. 26 during Reformation Sunday, you will be able to hear those voices for the first time on "Worship Anew." You can watch at this link - WorshipAnew.org

This group of men, the Council of Presidents, are the presidents and vice presidents of the 35 LCMS districts across the country as well as the International Office in St. Louis, Mo. The Council of Presidents meets four times per year for "mutual counsel regarding the doctrine and administration of the Synod and to edify and support one another in the work that they share, those responsibilities found throughout the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod," according to the LCMS website. For their April meeting, they were at the Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, which provided an opportunity to record at Worship Anew.

"I want to express our heartfelt gratitude for the visit to Worship Anew by members of the Council of Presidents. It was truly an honor to host the group, and their presence was a tremendous blessing to our ministry," said Matthew Leighty, Executive Director of Worship Anew. "The support and encouragement from the Council of Presidents means a great deal to us. The hymns sung by the Council of Presidents Choir will be a great blessing to our viewers."

They recorded two hymns, "The Church's One Foundation" and "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word," and both will be shown on the Oct. 26 program of "Worship Anew."

To learn more about Worship Anew and other ministries, including the care ministry and Hope-Full Living daily devotions, please visit WorshipAnew.org.



Hispanic Mission of Metro St. Louis Holds English as a Second Language Classes

Missionary Miguel Torneire is not only reaching out to the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ but also building the capacity of new Americans among us. Our good works do not save us, but they empower others to be better citizens and servants in their vocations. This is why he is holding English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church in St. Louis. So far, we have 12 students, and all of them are in the process of becoming part of the new Hispanic Lutheran church being planted in St. Louis. Thank you, SELC District, for your prayers, support, and encouragement.





Call for Nominations to Serve on Synod Boards and a Commission Nominations Due Tomorrow

Call for Nominations: National Synod Officer, Board, and Commission Positions

The **Committee for Convention Nominations** requests nominations of qualified members of Synod member congregations for the following positions to be filled by the Synod convention meeting 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**. 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

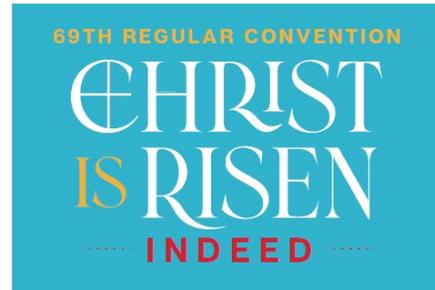
Important information, including an explanatory memorandum, a detailed description of the offices to be filled (with present terms and incumbents), and instructions for use of the **new online nomination system**, is available at lcms.org/nominate. Any member of a member congregation with a valid email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

Please distribute this call widely and urge participation.

John W. Sias, LCMS Secretary



For general information on the upcoming convention, see lcms.org/convention/timeline. Congregation administrators, please make sure your leader emails are up to date at lclcms.org so that important convention-related announcements will be received. Congregations will receive nomination ballots for the President and regional vice-presidents of the Synod in the fall of 2025.



Call for Nominations:
National Synod Officer,
Board, and Commission
Positions



SELC District Pastor Authors Book

Grace and Life Studies in the Pastoral Letters

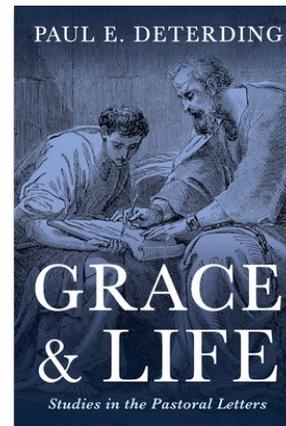
“Often the Pastoral Letters have not received the attention they deserve. In addition to being indispensable for understanding the pastoral office, these letters are rich in teaching regarding many of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith: Christology, soteriology, eschatology, ethics, and the church's worship life. In *Grace and Life*, Paul Deterding explores these topics through careful exegesis of these texts and a number

of essays on the major subjects of these letters. His work will be of interest to pastors looking for help for preaching and teaching. It will also aid lay readers in understanding the responsibilities of the pastoral office and the divine authority that enables them to carry out their ministry.”

Rev. Dr. Paul E. Deterding is a distinguished Lutheran pastor, scholar, and educator known for his contributions to New Testament studies. He earned his M.Div., S.T.M., and Th.D. degrees from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, where he studied under Dr. Martin Scharlemann. Dr. Deterding has taught as an adjunct lecturer at both Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and has served as Dean of Chapel and Chairman of the Religion Department at Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Missouri. A respected author, he wrote the Colossians volume in the Concordia Commentary series and several Bible studies published by Concordia Publishing House, widely used in Lutheran education and pastoral formation. He also served as associate editor and consultant for The Lutheran Study Bible. This, his latest volume “Grace and Life: Studies in the Pastoral Letters” (2025) gathers his reflections on pastoral-epistle theology. An active member of Faith Viera Lutheran Church, he sings in the choir and teaches Bible Class.

You can order the book here:

[https://wipfandstock.com/
search-results/?
contributor=paul-e-deterding](https://wipfandstock.com/search-results/?contributor=paul-e-deterding)



LCMS Worker Wellness God's Mission Here Podcast

LCMS National Mission has just released a new season of God's Mission podcast. Please click on the link below to access the podcast.

[**Season 10 of the God's Mission Here podcast**](#)

These episodes are all about Worker Wellness. Listen in and find great insights on how to support and care for our church workers.



Want your church to grow?

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



genysys group
Discovering New Life in Ministry

www.genysys-group.com



Family Bible Journey Podcast

Did you know that Psalm 88 gives us a window into the mind of Jesus on Maundy **Thursday** when He was locked in a dungeon? Want to hear how crystal clear this psalm of prophecy, penned 900 years before Jesus' arrest and imprisonment really is? Listen to our episode, "Darkness of Death," on the Family Bible Journey podcast!

<https://www.podbean.com/eas/pb-takfc-197afe3>

familybiblejourney.com



Join the journey
of journaling through the Bible.



- Independent Living
- Assisted Living *(new apartments)*
- Memory Care

Visit our Community to experience the difference
Call **407-542-1637** to find out more

AL Lic. #12811



Dates to Remember

October 25, 2025 - Worship Anew Worship Service online featuring hymns sung by the LCMS Council of Presidents [WorshipAnew.org](https://www.worshipanew.org)

October 25, 2025 at 3 PM - Latvian Choir Concert live and available on the St. Luke's YouTube channel.

October 26, 2025 at 4 PM CT - Concordia Seminary St. Louis Reformation Vespers Service livestreamed at [csl.edu/live](https://www.csl.edu/live)

November 2, 2025 - Divine Service at 5 PM celebrating Reformation, All Saints & 100th Anniversary Celebration of Ministry at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Dickson City, PA.

November 20, 2025 at 10:30 AM - Monthly LWML Bible Study via zoom

Invest with Purpose

Serve with Peace

A Church Worker StewardAccount® makes it simple to invest and manage your funds at your own pace and on your own time. If you work for an LCMS church, school or organization, you are eligible to open an account. **Start earning 3% on your investment today!**



\$100 MINIMUM



INTEREST COMPOUNDED
AND PAID MONTHLY



UNLIMITED
CHECKS



OPTIONAL VISA®
DEBIT CARD



ONLINE ACCESS
AND MOBILE APP



LUTHERAN CHURCH
EXTENSION FUND

lcef.org/cwsa

LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF Investments are not FDIC insured, are not a federally insured savings or deposit account or insured by any state or federal agency. 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. StewardAccount products are not available to investors in South Carolina. StewardAccount access features are offered through UMB Bank n.a. Rates as of March 2025. Balance restrictions apply. Rates subject to change. Visit lcef.org for details.



Prayer Requests

Please pray for all the congregations in the Southern Circuit of the SELC District.

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 for their health challenges.

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

Rev. Kevin Duff, Hilton Head, SC, who continues his recovery from surgery. Please keep him and his family in your prayers as from this surgery.

Rev. Edward Kucera, and his wife Irene, St. Louis, MO.

Bev Cahill, wife of Rev. Chris Cahill. Lodi, OH, received good news from her doctor. The CT scan showed no cancer and that she will be monitored every three months. The

Cahills are grateful for all the prayers for Bev. 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 in physical therapy and will return to work in October.

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.

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, praising God for a year of scans clear of tumors, we ask for strength during immunotherapy maintenance; may the Lord complete His healing, adding joy and thanks to each of Nita's days.

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 How Patients May Help Their Doctors

Rev. Ken Ballas, EM

While all respectable occupations and life situations entail decision making, ailing medical patients often seem incapable of appreciating the sometime instantaneous flood of daily challenges doctors, nurses, technicians and staff face in our behalf.

Christian patients can be special blessings in the lives of these dedicated professionals. Some medical professionals (as well as their patients) have even been known quietly to pray for or with each other – how unusually comforting is that!

Largely because of my baptismal faith in our resurrected and ascended sinless Brother-Savior and now forever everlasting Lord not only regarding "end of life legalities," it is *not* my wish to be kept alive artificially when the Good Lord graciously chooses to call me home from this temporal life in exchange for just a few more minutes of this worldly existence when there is already something infinitely better to look forward to meeting, actually Someone!

In the meantime, should the timing coincide with your being a viable "match" as one of countless potential (again only temporary) organ donors – that's also something others of us may prayerfully consider at one's nearest Board of Motor Vehicles.



SELC District - A District Without Borders
Showing Everyone Life in Christ, by Showing Everyone Love in Christ

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

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



Try email marketing for free today!