



The Beacon Online

March 13, 2026/ Vol. 7 / No. 11

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.



Congregational Statistics are Due March 31, 2026

The deadline has been extended a month

The annual congregational statistics are due to the Synod by March 31, 2026. If you are having trouble logging in to lc.lcms.org or that need other assistance can use the on-screen help or email Rosters at Rosters.Stats@lcms.org or call (314)996-1366 and Synod staff will assist them.



A New Pathway for LCMS High School Seniors: CUC Announces Direct Admission Program

Concordia University Chicago recently announced its participation in the new Direct Admission program, sponsored by the Concordia University System (CUS). The Direct Admission program streamlines the application process for graduating seniors from any Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) high school, homeschool, or partner school. The program takes effect immediately for seniors in the class of 2026, with more robust offerings beginning in the 2026-27 academic year.

"Going from an LCMS high school to Concordia-Chicago should be as easy as moving from one room in the family home to another. It's all one family, one home, just different rooms. That's the goal of the Direct Admission program," said University President Dr. Russell Dawn. "The Direct Admission program is one of many ways that Concordia-Chicago stands tall for the Church."

In addition to Concordia-Chicago, other participating institutions include Concordia University, Nebraska; Concordia University, Saint Paul; and Concordia University Wisconsin.

"To all our LCMS high school students, I would like to say that CUS universities are your universities," said Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy, president of CUS. "Direct Admit is a great way for you to continue your studies at a university committed to the Lutheran confession of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If you are considering college, consider attending a Concordia University System school. Direct Admit makes your move to college easier than ever."

Additional information regarding academic programs, scholarships, campus visits, and admission timelines is available at cuchicago.edu. Questions and information related to the Direct Admit program may be directed to Kyle Thoms, assistant vice president of undergraduate enrollment, at kyle.thoms@cuchicago.edu.



LWML Convention May 1 - 3, 2026



The LWML-SELC is holding their convention in St. Louis, Missouri May 1 - 3, 2026. The theme of the convention is "Rivers of Living Water" based on the Bible verse: John 7:38 - Jesus declares, he that believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly will flow Rivers of Living Water.

The convention will be held at St. Lucas Lutheran Church at 7100 Morganford Road St. Louis, Missouri 63116. Overnight rooms are available at the River City Casino and Hotel and rooms must be reserved by **April 16, 2026 at 8:00 AM** is the last day for guests to reserve their hotel rooms through the booking link [River City Hotel Booking](#) **Link** CODE: **STLC26E**. Individuals may also call 855-785-4263 for reservations using the same code STLC26E.



Rev. Miguel Torneire, a Church Planter in metro St. Louis, will speak at the LWML convention. Pastor Torneire was called by the SELC to start a Hispanic mission. He is based at St. Lucas in St. Louis where the convention is being held. Pastor Torneire is involved in the Spanish worship services at Concordia Seminary on the last Monday of each month. These services support his broader mission of planting churches and forming meaningful ties between the Hispanic community and the Seminary. Through these efforts, new individuals are being introduced to the LCMS and experiencing worship in their native language.



2026 Take Heart Scholarships Available

The Take Heart Scholarship was developed for high school seniors who will soon advance to your next level of higher education. During these times of excitement, anxiousness and uncertainty, "take heart!" As Christians, we cannot anticipate that life will be perfect or familiar, but when we feel that the world has become difficult, take comfort in knowing that our God has overcome it all!

As you begin your new journey, LCEF wants to assist your transition by offering financial support through the Take Heart Scholarship. Three individual awards are available: **\$3,000, \$1,000, and \$500**. Applications close May 1, 2026, and winners will be announced by May 30.

How to Apply

Complete the [application form](#).

In 1,000 words or fewer, answer this question in essay form:

Other than Jesus, pick one person from the Bible you would want to talk with for an hour. Why would you choose this person? What would you talk about? What questions would you ask them? What would you hope to learn?

Scholarship recipients will be selected based on the thoughtfulness and creativity of their response.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR
Scholarship Opportunity

High school seniors who have a Young Investors StewardAccount® with Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) are eligible to apply for the Take Heart Scholarship. Answer this question, and you could receive up to \$3,000

Other than Jesus, which person in the Bible would you love to talk with?



 · Recipients awarded up to \$3,000
· Apply by May 1, 2026
· Visit lcef.org/scholarship

 LUTHERAN CHURCH
EXTENSION FUND

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. The recipients of this scholarship award will be notified by LCEF. Funds are awarded to be used to defray expenses for tuition, books, laboratory expenses and/or related educational expenditures. The award amount will be deposited into the student's LCEF investment. Any amount awarded will be taxable as ordinary income to the recipient to the extent it is not used for "qualified tuition and related expenses" under Section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code. Some expenses, such as room and board, will not qualify. The recipient should consult with his or her tax advisor regarding what expenses are "qualified tuition and related expenses" and to determine whether any part of the award will be taxable. If the recipient misrepresents any information, LCEF reserves the right to revoke the scholarship.



Registration open for Vocatio: High School June 20–26, 2026

Students explore vocational ministry during on-campus visit

Vocatio: High School, an annual weeklong visit event for high school students held on the campus of **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis**, is set for June 20–26, 2026. The visit provides an introduction to Seminary life and the ministerial formation process.

Specifically, the retreat offers young people the opportunity to explore the vocations of pastor and deaconess and consider future service in the church. Participants will engage in theological conversation, hear from Seminary professors and attend a Concordia University System college fair. Group sessions will focus on thoughtful conversation about the Lutheran faith, aspects of vocation and the call to pastoral or diaconal ministry. Participants also will walk through the admissions process, learn about the St. Louis area, and engage in some fun and recreation!

“As I went through high school, I thought about pursuing several different vocations, including helping with my dad's business, going into youth ministry or studying to become a Lutheran teacher. While the idea of becoming a pastor was on my mind as well, it wasn't until I visited the Seminary campus that the idea became a real possibility,” said **Rev. Craig Reiter**, admissions officer. “It's a joy now to lead Vocatio: High School and I pray our youth are blessed by their time on campus and are encouraged toward considering church work like I was.”

The registration fee is \$300, which includes lodging and meals. The deadline to **register** is May 15, 2026.



Mark Your Calendars

March 19, 2026 - LWML in person and zoom monthly Bible study. 10:30 AM EST

March 31, 2026 - Congregational Statistics reports are due

May 1 - 3, 2026 - LWML District Convention in St. Louis, MO



Family Bible Journey

The family Bible journey podcast is walking through the pages of Isaiah, a mini Bible within the Bible. We are also reading 2nd Thessalonians. Learn how the book of Isaiah is an Old Testament summary of the entire scripture including 27 chapters of prophecy, promise and hope in a Messiah that correspondence perfectly with the 27 books of the New Testament.

Listen on your favorite podcast platform or go to the website familybiblejourney.com.



Join the journey
of journaling through the Bible.



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





- 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

lcef.org/SELC



Let's discover your financial path together

Meet your LCEF representative

Your LCEF District Vice President (DVP) is
John Hoover

 314-276-3370
 john.hoover@lcef.org



I am here to help **start, sustain and strengthen** LCMS ministries through financial and strategic partnerships.

 LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND



Prayer Requests

We ask for your prayers for the family of Geoff Paul, a member and leader at Grace Lutheran in Lakewood, Ohio who went to be with Jesus last Friday morning. Please keep Geoff's wife Bobbi and his family in your prayers as they grieve Geoff's passing yet rejoice in his entrance into Heaven.

Rev. Ron Meyr, Rockledge, FL, please pray for continued healing for heart surgery. We give thanks to God that he is home and focusing on his recovery.

Rev. Brian Roberts, Orlando, FL, please continue to pray for him as he continues his journey following cancer treatment.

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. 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, please pray for Pastor Kevin and Holly Duff, asking Him for peace and courage in coming months as doctors figure out course of treatments for brain tumors and other issues.

Rev. Edward Kucera, and his wife Irene, St. Louis, MO, for God's loving care.

Rev. Stephen Bocklage, Bel Air, MD, for care and healing for health concerns for his left leg.

Rev. Arthur H. Baisch, Sharon, PA, spent 7 days at UPMC Presbyterian Hospital MICU, Pittsburgh; received treatment for multiple blood clots in lungs; now recovering at home, while also receiving further treatment for chronic open wound on left foot, which may need future surgical care. Thanks for prayers and good wishes!

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. John, Granite City, IL. Praise the Lord for 7 years of healing, the name *Jesus* is greater than *Cancer*. We thank Him for His presence in daily victories, while we all watch and wait to see Jesus face-to-face.

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 Song Is Love Unknown – A Hymn Well Worth Knowing**

Rev. Kenneth Ballas, EM

My song is love unknown, My Savior's love to me.
Love to the loveless show That they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I, That for my sake.
My Lord should take Frail flesh and die?

He came from His blest throne Salvation to bestow;
But men made strange, and none The longed-for Christ would know.
But, oh, my friend, My friend in-deed,
Who at my need His life did spend!

Some-times they strew His way And sweet praise sing;
Resounding all the day Hosannas to their King.
Then "Crucify!" Is all their breath;
And for His death They thirst and cry.

Why, what hath my Lord done? Why this rage and spite?
He made the lame to run, He gave the blind their sight.
Sweet inj-ries! Yet they at these
Themselves dis-please And 'gainst Him rise.

They rise and needs would have My dear Lord made away;
A murderer then save, The Prince of life they slay.
Yet cheerful He To suff'ring goes
That He His foes From thence might free.

In life no house, no home My Lord on earth may have;
In death no friendly tomb But what a stranger gave.
What may I say? Heav'n was His home
But mine the tomb Wherein He lay.

Here might I stay and sing, No story so divine!
Never was love, dear King, Never was grief like Thine.
This is my Friend In whose sweet **praise**
I all my days could gladly spend!

As indeed "all music was once new," **Samuel Crossman**, gifted author of the words of this moving passion hymn (with which I was unfamiliar in my earlier years) died in 1683 two years *before* the birth of such noted composers as J. S. Bach and Handel lived up to the meaning of his family name in recognizing that one certainly need not have lived during the First Century to acknowledge regardless of circumstances our part in the all-atoning voluntary sacrificial death by crucifixion of our sinless Brother-Savior Jesus Christ. **Thank You, Jesus!**



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
610-965-3265

Contact Us
selc.lcms@gmail.com

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

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



Try email marketing for free today!