



Workers Together

An Email Publication of the Kansas District LCMS



January 2012

Each article title is listed in the Index below and linked to the location of the article in this document. After each article there is a link, "Index", which takes you back to the Index. So, you can scroll down and read each article or pick and choose from the Index. We welcome your comments/suggestions, sent to Lori Hennessey at lori@kslcms.org.

Congregations, please forward this publication to your boards and committees. Anyone is welcome to subscribe and may do so by emailing their email address to lori@kslcms.org and requesting to be added to the Kansas District Email List.

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District Office Contact Information

President's Office

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Communications – Workers Together, District Email List, Website

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New District Staff Member

Shannon Oldham has joined the Kansas District LCMS staff in Topeka. Her primary duties will include providing support for the District business office and accounting department. Shannon attended Kansas State University and lives in Topeka. She has two daughters and is a member of St. John Lutheran Church, Topeka. Please join us in welcoming Shannon to the Kansas District!

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Call Updates

Calls Accepted

- Rev. Chad Trunkhill from Resurrection, Sunset Hills, MO to Our Redeemer, Hutchinson – Installation Sunday, Jan. 8, at 4:00 p.m.

Calls Pending

- Rev. Michael Flannery from Our Savior, Laurel, MD to First, Paola

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In Our Prayers

- Rev. Jeff Frakes, St. John, Ellinwood – health concerns
- Becky Schotte, wife of Mark Schotte, principal at Trinity, Winfield – health concerns
- Rev. Ervin Daugherty, Trinity, Garnett – daughter, Shawn, battling cancer
- Rev. Don Miller, Lawrence – daughter, Kriss, battling cancer

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Before Your Right Foot Hits the Floor in 2012 by President Keith E. Kohlmeier

“As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.”

With the turning of the calendar from December 31 to January 1, we are instantly reminded of the context of our days. The words above are part of the most common doxology of the church.

The doxology holds us in the palm of the temporal and the eternal. It exists somewhere between the God who has no beginning or end, and places us into the reality of “and there was evening and there was morning, the first day” and the reality of “ashes to ashes, dust to dust” and “from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.”

I was thinking about that recently at a meeting where the speaker said that the goal of the leadership of the church today is to help believers to grasp “where is there” as we plan our work together. Sometimes I struggle with this. There are so many times when I am working with and within our church that the conversations seem to be spoken in answers that try to seek the answer to the question, “where is was.” We would love to turn back the hands of time to what we believe were the better days of our memory of the church. It is in the nature of our psyche to believe that what we had is better than what we have or where we believe we are going.

I have no desire to rob that from any one. But the truth is that each day, when your right foot hits the floor, you and I are heading into a new frontier in kingdom work. It is not about whether today or yesterday or tomorrow is the best choice. It is about putting all of those things into the context of the God who is “the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

The Lord of the church places us into today, invites us to do so on the basis of the yesterdays embedded in His cross and resurrection, and would draw us toward the eternity that He has prepared for us.

An exciting new year awaits each of us in 2012. It will be filled with everything that we bring with us into this New Year, but also prepared for us under the cross that we may live in and for Him each new day.

To each of you, a blessed new year. And may the peace of Him who has prepared this year for you and His church fill you with joy each day before your right foot hits the floor.

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District Calendar

- Dec. 30 – District Office closes at 2:00 p.m.
- Jan. 2 – District Office closed
- Jan. 22-23 – Circuit Counselors Conference – Wichita
- Jan. 23-25 – Pastors' Pre-Lent Retreat – Wichita
- Jan. 27-28 – Board of Directors – Topeka
- Feb. TBA – Kansas Association of Independent and Religious Schools (KAIRS) Conference
- Feb. 3-4 – Churches Planting Churches Seminar – Trinity, Mission
- Feb. 17-18 – District Youth Ministry Team Retreat – Retreat Center, Herington
- Feb. 22 – Ash Wednesday
- Mar. 4-10 – National Lutheran Schools Week
- Mar. 15-19 – Council of Lutheran Youth Fellowship Representatives – St. Louis
- Mar. 22-24 – Regional DCE Conference – Beautiful Savior/La Vista, NE (Omaha)
- April 16-17 – Timothy Gathering – Retreat Center
- April 27-28 – Board of Directors – Retreat Center
- April 30-May 1 – Kansas District DCE Retreat, District Retreat Center
- May 30 – Kansas Information Data System (KIDS) Training - District Office, Topeka
- June 7-9 – Kansas District Convention – Maner Conference Center, Topeka
- June 22-24 – Teen Leadership Retreat – Webster Conference Center, Salina
- July 17-18 – Principal's Spiritual Retreat – Retreat Center, Herington
- July 22-27 – Sr High Camp Week – Lutheran Valley Retreat – Woodland Park, CO
- July 28 – Early Childhood One-Day Workshop – Calvary, Topeka
- Sept. 20-21 – Principal's Conference – District Office/Clubhouse Inn, Topeka
- Oct. 7-9 – District Educators Conference – Manhattan
- Oct. 14-16 – District Pastors Conference – Manhattan
- Oct. 26-27 – Junior High Youth Rallies – Rexford and Williamsburg, KS
- Nov. 16-18 – District Youth Gathering (Sr. Youth) – Capitol Plaza, Topeka

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2013 National Youth Gathering



It's time! The National Youth Gathering - **live love(d)** - July 1-5, 2013 in San Antonio, Texas will be here before you know it! So, it's time to begin planning for this spiritual growth opportunity for high school youth. For more information, visit the district website, www.kslcms.org, look under **Quick Links** and click on 2013 National Youth Gathering. You can also visit the national site at www.lcmsgathering.com. Check out the information today!

Downloadable brochures:

- [NYG General Information](#)
- [NYG Volunteer Brochure/Volunteer Information](#)
 - Community Life Builder (CLBs) [online application](#) – due Feb. 12, 2012
 - Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs) – application process opens Summer 2012
- [District t-shirt design](#)

The Kansas District coordinators, Elaine Whiteneck (ekwhite@messiahlutheran.org) and Arleata Harmon (Arleata@RisenSavior.net), are available to help you and answer questions.

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National Lutheran Youth Workers Conference

When: July 12-15, 2012

Where: San Antonio

Theme: *Remember*

Who Should Attend: Individuals and teams serving junior and senior youth in LCMS congregations

Attendees will:

- Be affirmed in the service your work provides the Church through encouragement, celebration, and recognition of your calling to be a youth worker
- Discover practical skills and relevant theory for effective youth ministry
- Network with volunteer and professional youth workers through fellowship and community building
- Be challenged and equipped to develop youth ministry programs that focus youth to Christ in mission, program, and outreach
- Leave enriched by content that is timely for your ministry and applies your understanding of that ministry in your day to day vocation
- Get an inside look at the 2013 National LMCS Youth Gathering general program and the city of San Antonio.

[Website & Registration](#)

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Family Friendly Partners Network (FFPN) Information Meetings Coming Soon!

Parents are the primary shapers of faith and life in their children; and the role of the church is to partner with the home in that process.

For parents to be successful in their role as primary faith and life shapers, they need to have a healthy marriage, parenting skills for every age and stage of family life, and faith imparting skills. They also need resources to shape their family's view of human sexuality and the ability to use God-given resources effectively. And, if they lose a spouse through death or divorce, and choose to remarry, they will need a new set of skills to raise a blended family.

Therefore, the church's family ministry is all about creating a culture at church that impacts positively on the home. This Biblical church culture supports parents and grandparents as the primary agents of faith formation and equips them for that role by providing an intentional training center. The church will then equip the home to be all God intended it to be.

In order to advance congregational leader training in family ministry, the Kansas District has raised up retired Emporia State University Family Studies Professor and Faith/Emporia member, Jan Borst, as a Family Friendly Partner Network (FFPN) trainer and retired Lutheran School Principal-Teacher, Keith Jopp (St. Paul/Cheney), as a FFPN Regional Administrator. They both attended the Workers Conference in Wichita in October and led the *Heart of Family Ministry* workshops and hosted an information booth.

It is now time for the next step – Jan and Keith invite you and all Kansas congregations to explore the three-year FFPN process to train and equip lay leaders and church workers desiring to be intentional in equipping families to pass on faith in Jesus Christ to the next generation. The first series of FFPN information meetings have been confirmed and will be offered in regional settings, as follows:

- ◆ Sunday, January 22, 2012 – Risen Savior Lutheran Church in Wichita, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
6770 E 34th St N
- ◆ Sunday, January 29, 2012 – Bethany Lutheran Church in Overland Park, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
9101 Lamar Avenue
- ◆ Sunday, February 5, 2012 – Trinity Lutheran Church in Salina, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
702 S 9th Street

These meetings are FREE to all who attend. We encourage a team of leaders, including the Pastor, to participate in one of these meetings. **For further information and to register for any of these meetings, please contact Jan Borst (whborst@att.net or 620-343-1154) or Keith Jopp (keith.jopp@gmail.com or 316-542-3527).**

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2012 Lutheran Singles Association Tour

What: A weekend of fellowship and learning with other Lutheran Single Adults from around the country includes a visit to NASA's Johnson Space Center. Space Center Houston's (SCH) unparalleled exhibits, attractions, special presentations and hands-on activities tell the story of NASA's manned space flight program. SCH is the only place in the world where visitors can see astronauts train for missions, touch a real moon rock, land a shuttle, and take a behind-the-scenes tour of NASA. A confirmation will be sent after your registration is received.

Date: June 8-10th, 2012

Place: NASA 1601 NASA Parkway (formerly NASA Rd. 1), Houston, TX 77058, approximately 25 miles south of downtown Houston in the NASA/Clear Lake area

Cost: \$40.00 (Includes ticket for NASA & dinner at the Lighthouse Buffet)

Hotel: A block of rooms has been booked, checking in on June 8 and checking out on June 10th, 2012):

Holiday Inn Express

900 Rogers Court

Webster, TX 77598 Tel: 1 877 786 9480

Amenities include Free Express Start Breakfast Bar and an outdoor pool. They DO NOT have a shuttle to/from the airport.

Special Room Rate: \$ 94.00/night (tax not included). Participants must make their own reservations with the

group LSA. Reservations must be made 30 days in advance for this rate to apply.

Registration Deadline: May 1, 2012

Contact: Carolyn Jean Morton, Tour Coordinator, at 832-247-4859 or tour@lsalcms.org.

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Regional Conference for Directors of Christian Education

Date: March 22-24, 2012

Place: Beautiful Savior, La Vista, NE (Omaha)

Theme: The Call - Ephesians 3:17

Cost: \$75 (plus housing)

More Info: fallinlovewithyourcall.com

Every book and conference out there regarding the ministry right now has leadership in the title or theme somehow. The funny thing is that when Jesus taught his disciples, he spent most of his time instructing them how to **follow**. What happens when the going gets tough, just as Jesus promised it would? Do we begin networking for a new job? Find greener grass?

Maybe it is time to put down roots. How can we—as DCEs—be firmly rooted at our churches where we soak up the nourishment of grace, and where our roots reach deep and wide to connect with one another? How can we represent the unmovable, unshakable reality that that Jesus can be for the people we serve?

This conference is designed to help all of us together to reach deeper and wider as we ground ourselves in the love that brings us back to where it first led us into the ministry. **Come fall in love with your call again!**

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Churches Planting Churches Seminar

It's in your congregation's DNA to plant new congregations. It is NOT in your money, or possessions or some new scheme. Planting new congregations is natural, theological, and biblical. If a congregation in Iowa can plant a congregation in southern California, where might your congregation plant a daughter congregation? Please consider registering and participating in the Churches Planting Churches Seminar, Feb. 3-4, in Kansas City. This is a fact-finding workshop. However, you will be challenged to think on church planting from your vantage point. Congregational leaders will not be asked to commit to planting at this workshop, simply given a good conversational and prayer piece to take back to your congregation. You will have much to talk about when you head home. We strongly urge a team of people to come from a congregation: the Pastor and at least three to five lay people.

When: Feb. 3-4, 2012

Friday - 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to Noon

Where: Trinity Lutheran Church
5601 W 62nd St
Mission, KS 66202

Presenters: Rev. Mike Ruhl, Center for United States Missions
Rev. Mark Frith, Assistant to the President for Mission & Stewardship, Kansas District LCMS
Rev. Lee Hovel, Senior Pastor, Trinity, Mission

Who should attend: Pastor and 3-5 key leaders

Cost: \$125/congregation through 12/31

\$175/congregation, 1/1 to 1/22

\$250/congregation after 1/22

Registration includes lunch Friday & Saturday, snacks, all materials

Registration deadline is Jan. 27.

[Registration Form](#)

Lodging: Drury Inn
9009 Shawnee Mission Parkway
Merriam, KS, 66202

Rate is \$90.90, including tax for two double beds – Free Hot Breakfast, Free 5:30 p.m. Hot Food & Cold Beverages,
Free 60 Minutes of Long Distance, Free Soda/Popcorn in Lobby (daily 3-10 p.m.), Free Wireless Internet

To make reservations, call 1-800-325-0720 and refer to Group Number 2133925 or go online to

<http://www.druryhotels.com/Reservations.aspx?groupno=2133925>.

Cut-off date for group rate is Jan. 2.

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Transforming Churches Network by Rev. Mark Frith

Transforming Churches Network (TCN) is a Registered Service Organization of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and now a partnering organization with the Kansas District. In August of 2011, three Pastoral Learning Communities were formed, meeting in Topeka, Olathe, and Humboldt respectively. This month we are working to form two to three more Pastoral Learning Communities. These new communities we hope to locate in the central Kansas regions. In these pastoral learning communities, our pastors come together to pray for one another, challenge one another and encourage one another as pastoral leaders in their communities.

There is so much that I could tell you about the components of these groups. I recommend that you go to our webpage and read more about these facets. Let me tell you about one of these components. The pastors and congregations engaging in the TCN Process receive a pastoral coach. The pastoral coach helps the pastor focus on concrete plans for being a strong pastoral leader. The coach brings a healthy sense of accountability for the pastor. The coach helps the pastor work wisely. It isn't about becoming more busy, but working efficiently. The coach also helps the pastor coach his lay leaders, empowering them to work efficiently and faithfully. As our pastors and congregations participating in TCN progress, we will delight in sharing with you the fruits that the Lord is producing through this transformational process. For more information on this subject please see our website at www.kslcms.org and click on Missions.

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TCN Hinge Training Events

What exactly is a Hinge Training Event? It's an event where people who are passionate about seeing the Kingdom of God grow in their community come together to experience how to:

- Open new doors to their community
- Release their creative genius as God's people
- Discover the 8 Hinge Factors for Church Transformation
- Connect with others on the same journey
- Begin a new Life Cycle for their church

There are three Hinge Training Events being held in Kansas with the theme, *Starting a New Life Cycle in Your Church*.

- January 28 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Holton – deadline to register is January 20
- February 25 at Risen Savior Lutheran Church in Wichita
- March 24 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Olathe

Each of these events will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We encourage congregations to bring at least five people. The cost is \$10/person or \$100/congregation (more than 10 people), which includes lunch and materials.

To register for the January event at Trinity, Holton, contact Lori Hennessey at 785-357-4441 ext. 223 or lori@kslcms.org. Registration information for the February and March events will be coming soon.

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Midweek Outreach in Kansas from LCMS Rural & Small Town Ministry

Throughout the year, many congregations work hard to put on successful Midweek programs. While many churches run excellent Midweek Christian education programs, some congregations have found ways to utilize them in their outreach efforts. LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission had the chance to visit with some rural churches in Kansas that have recognized the outreach possibilities and have been doing exciting things with their Midweek programs. We want to pass these great ideas along to you.

At Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sylvan Grove, Rev. Phil Augustine shared that they have an after school Midweek program each Wednesday from 3:45- 5:30 p.m. Their theme this year is *Ambassadors for Christ Midweek*. The congregation has partnered with the local school district to bus children to the church door after school each week. He's pleased their numbers have grown to 36 children from grades 1-6. That's pretty impressive considering only 8 of those children are members of the church! After the children are served a snack, two teachers go through memory work and lessons. There is a worship time and occasionally they do craft projects which they give to the residents of a local nursing home. A resource they have found useful is, *My First Catechism* from Concordia Publishing House (www.cph.org).

Rev. Matt Schneider, Lincoln, is also very excited about the commitment his dual parish made to run a strong Midweek program. He finds that while the parishes are growing through both youth and adult confirmations, this doesn't always translate to growing numbers at worship. Rather than let this get him down, Pastor Schneider asks how he can use the Midweek program to build closer relationships and bring those who are willing to attend on Wednesday nights to church on Sunday mornings. The congregation has begun hosting occasional breakfasts on Sunday mornings before the worship service where the children from the Midweek program sing. Afterward they provide a fun activity such as skating for the children.

Kansas District Executive, Mark Frith, shared that many congregations find it helpful to incorporate a meal into their Midweek programs. Some churches are using this mealtime as an opportunity to teach table manners. Providing transportation for participants has proven beneficial as well.

A number of congregations have found it very helpful to focus on strengthening families. Their Midweek activities intentionally keep families together rather than separating them. Consider these great ideas: have family groups sit together at Midweek meals or teach whole families how to do family devotions as an activity rather than dividing into groups by age. Think outside the box about what you can do to keep your families together when they are at the church for Midweek.

LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission supports and encourages rural and small town congregations in engaging their communities and growing together in Christ through Word and Sacrament. If you have a good idea for outreach or a story you'd like to share with us, so that we can share it with others, please contact us at 888-463-5127 or ruralmission@spife.org. Learn more about us at www.spife.org or by calling us anytime.

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MOST Ministries Eyeglass Clinic Trip to Guinea

The Kansas District and [MOST Ministries](#) are planning an Eyeglass Clinic Trip to Guinea, March 16-25, 2012. We're looking for 8-10 people who would love to travel to Guinea, West Africa to experience not only the warmth of the African climate, but also the warmth and generosity of the African people. This trip will be to the capital city of Conakry.

Participants on these mission trips will assist Guineans with selecting eyewear that has been pre-tested and coded. Daily clinics will be held to test vision and distribute eyeglasses to those in need. MOST Ministries uses a very simple testing system which was created by an optometrist. This simple yet effective system allows for accurate testing for appropriate prescriptions. Patients are tested for both far- and near-sightedness and then fitted with corrective glasses.

A team might serve between 100-300 people each day of the clinic. All patients are registered and these registrations provide names and contact information for the local Guinean church for follow-up evangelism. Eyeglass Clinics minister to the physical and spiritual needs of the patients, with the witness station being the most important part of the clinic. The witness station allows the local missionary, national pastor or lay minister to speak one-on-one with each individual who comes through the clinic. During this time, the Gospel message and information about the local church is shared. The Guinea Lutheran Church is the primary worker at the witness station so that they are the ones building relationships with the local people.

Participants must be 14 years of age or older, and have the stamina to withstand bumpy roads, long days, and living conditions of a third world country. MOST Ministries provides the eyeglass training. Tickets, VISA's, logistics, etc. will be coordinated with the Kansas District and MOST Ministries. The cost is approximately \$3,000 for this trip. Grants up to \$500/person are available from the Kansas District.

Please contact Jane Limback at jane.limback@gmail.com for more information or if you have any questions.

The deadline to register is December 21.

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Collecting Eyeglasses for Guinea

We have two separate eyeglass collections for Guinea:

- Jack & Cathy Carlos are continuing ministry from the February 2011 Eyeglass Clinic Trip – Some of the reading prescriptions are all gone and they need ONLY READERS. The readers don't need to be new, but they have to be labeled with the prescription number +1.0, +1.25, etc. You can send the readers (cases, too) to: Kansas District Office
Attn: Lori Hennessey
1000 SW 10th Ave
Topeka, KS 66604-1104

Jack & Cathy will be in Kansas in January and will take the glasses back to Guinea.

- Future MOST Ministries Eyeglass Clinic Trips – Below are the different types of glasses needed and the address to send them to. Thank you for your help!

MOST Ministries accepts the following type of glasses:

- Adult-sized Glasses
- Children-sized Glasses
- Non-prescription Sunglasses
- Over-the-Counter Reading Glasses – especially 1.0 and 1.5

Please sort the eyeglasses before mailing as broken glasses cannot be used.

For shipping purposes please send all glasses to:

MOST Ministries
C/O: The Michigan District
3773 Geddes Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Contact [Lynn Wrightson](#) (MOST Ministries' Eyeglass Coordinator) for additional information.

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Guinea Prayer Requests

Prayers from the Carlos family

- For all the church presentations that we have lined up - it is so awesome to connect with the people back home who are praying for and supporting us. We will be visiting congregations in Kansas in January 2012 – [schedule](#).
- For the people back in Guinea, that the seeds planted during our time with them would grow in their hearts until we are reunited.

Prayers from the Heiney family

- Many of you kept track of all that happened these past few weeks and were a blessing to us through cards, scripture notes, and words of comfort. We're so thankful for you and for our fellowship with you! We remember that without our Father's gift of His Son to this Earth, we would not have the Spirit that binds us together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

May God pour His Spirit on you this Christmas season as you share the Good News of our fellowship with our Creator!!

Prayers from the Norton family

- Thanksgiving for the rich learning environment at Gordon-Conwell, especially the mission week and visit from Dr. Volf
- Thanksgiving for the opportunities the children have had here in the U.S. school environment and in the life of the congregation at Our Savior’s Lutheran
- Pray for our discernment for God’s will for our lives in the future
- Pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ back in Guinea; we heard a good report about a visit from a pastor friend from Mali in October, and how he encouraged the new believers. We’ve also heard how one of the new believer’s wives left him, and another’s was about to be baptized, but was discouraged by a relative.

Praises from Andrea Herman

- Corrine’s strong faith despite troubles during my absence
- Changing hearts among Corrine’s family members, that they understand why she won’t marry the director
- Good progress on my Masters thesis
- The opportunity to spend Christmas with my family; that hasn’t happened in 6 years
- The great (not cold) weather I’ve been able to enjoy while home, (a very cold winter was originally predicted)
- For taking care of so many little details enabling me to work on my thesis and not be miserable doing it

Prayers from Andrea Herman

- God’s provision for Corrine, that He would protect her from the director and prevent the unwanted marriage
- The Holy Spirit to draw Corrine’s entire family to Christ, that they would all believe in Jesus & be saved
- His provision for a volunteer/volunteers to start an English as a Foreign Language outreach
- His provision for a Maninka evangelist to serve alongside Carloses in their health care outreach
- Help for those working on Bible translation projects, so that we will one day have Scriptures in our language
- Encouragement and strong faith for isolated believers, that God would provide the fellowship they need
- His provision for resources and personnel for all the ministry opportunities He is opening to us
- Guinea legislative elections to take place without violence, unrest or ethnic clashes
- God’s strength and perseverance to finish my Masters thesis and all the required papers
- Help in creating balanced schedule between life, work and play
- Our internet service to be restored while we’re away
- Strength, health and energy
- The wisdom to rely on God alone

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Help Needed in Joplin

Trent Davis, the Director of Disaster Response at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Joplin, sent the following: “The Lord has blessed us with the ability to get five decent sized projects under roof before the weather has gotten too ugly here, however we have only a few teams committed from Dec.-Feb. We need additional teams. All help will be greatly appreciated. Types of skills we are looking for include: electricians, plumbers, HVAC, drywall, painters and interior trim. Not everyone on a team needs to be skilled, but we need enough skilled folks to give direction to the willing. Thanks and Blessings!”

Contact information for Trent is: Trent Davis, Director of Disaster Response, Immanuel Lutheran Church – LCMS; 2616 Connecticut Ave; Joplin, MO 64804; 417-624-0333; tdavis@immanueljoplin.com.

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2012 District Convention Assessments

The District Board of Directors has set the congregational assessment for the 2012 District Convention at 99

cents per communicant member. Assessments were calculated based on the communicant membership number received from congregations' 2010 statistical reports. If the 2010 report has not been received, the most recent statistical report submitted by your congregation was used. The assessment letter with your congregation's assessment amount was mailed September 1.

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Year End Checklist

Kansas District Fiscal Year to Close

The District will close its 2011 fiscal year on **Friday, Jan. 13, 2012**. Any receipt received after that date will be credited to the fiscal year 2012 for your congregation. In order to meet the standards for a not-for-profit corporation audit, we cannot credit any 2011 mission gift received after the close of our fiscal year, so please work to meet this deadline. If you are sending any 2012 gift prior to January 13, please indicate that the gift is for 2012 so that we may credit it correctly for your congregation.

Housing Allowance

Housing allowances for Pastors and Commissioned Ministers should be approved by Dec. 31 in order to obtain the full annual benefit of housing allowance exclusion for 2012. The designation should be adopted during a regular or special meeting of the church board and should be contained in the minutes of the meeting. A worksheet for calculating the housing allowance is included in the Congregational Treasurer's Manual which is available on our website.

W-4

Have all full-time and part-time employees complete a new W-4 for 2012. This will insure that your withholding records for the year will be accurate. If the employee does not provide a completed W-4, the employer must withhold federal income tax as if the worker were single with no withholding allowance.

Charitable Contributions

Charitable contributions for 2011 must be received before the first worship service in 2012 in order to claim the deduction. A contribution received after that date is counted as a contribution for 2012 for income tax purposes even if the check was written in 2011. However, checks that are written, mailed and postmarked in 2011 will still be deductible. A reminder in your weekly bulletin would be appropriate.

Gifts to Church Workers

Christmas gifts to Church Workers from the congregation in most cases represent taxable income and not a tax-free gift. Be sure to report correctly on the recipients W-2 or 1099 the amount of these gifts. Also important to note - donations made by members for these gifts are not included as tax deductible contributions recorded by the church office.

PLEASE CAREFULLY CHECK THE YEAR-TO-DATE STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS TO MAKE SURE

EVERYTHING IS CORRECT. These statements are sent after the 15th of each month. Contact Lori at 800-357-4421 ext. 223 or 785-357-4441 ext. 223 or lori@kslcms.org if any changes need to be made.

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Congregational Resources

Do you need help with W-2 and 1099 preparation? The updated 2011 [*Congregational Treasurer's Manual*](#) is now available online and will guide you through the process. Go to www.kslcms.org, click on *Publications - Resources* at the top of the page, look under Business Office - Synod. You are able to view or print the manuals from this site. Congregations will not automatically receive a copy of the updated Treasurer's Manual. If you are not able to access it on the website and would like us to send you a copy, contact the Business Office at 800-357-4421 ext. 223, 785-357-4441 ext. 223 or lori@kslcms.org. Cost of a CD of the 2011 Treasurer's Manual is \$6.00.

Church Administration Resources:

- Taxes and Ministers
- Congregational Constitution and Bylaws Guidelines
- Employment Resource Manual
- Sample Performance Appraisal Worksheets
- Job Descriptions

FlexPlus® Health Savings Account

Save for your high-deductible health plan with LCEF’s FlexPlus® Health Savings Account. More and more people are learning that a health savings account can provide a smart way to pay qualified medical expenses and save money with many tax-saving features.

If you are enrolled in a health savings account-compatible high-deductible health plan, look to LCEF’s FlexPlus® Health Savings Account to help you take control of your health care dollars.

LCEF’s FlexPlus® Health Savings Account offers:

- Competitive interest rates
- Convenient fund access via checks and debit card
- Invested dollar work for you and the Church at the same time.

Contact Steve Bremer at 785-357-4441 ext. 118 or 800-357-4421 ext. 118 or sbremer@kslcms.org for more information OR speak to an LCEF Information Representative at 800-843-5233.

LCEF Interest Rates

[LCEF Interest Rates, January 2012](#)

Steward Account Rates:

Congregational Certificates

Demand: 0.375%

Steward Account: 1.125%

Individual Accounts

Less than \$1,000: 0.375%

\$1,000 - less than \$5,000: 0.500%

\$5,000 - less than \$10,000: 0.625%

\$10,000 and over: 1.250%

Congregation Loan Rates

Monthly, quarterly or annual adjustable: 4.750%

5 Year fixed: Call Steve Bremer at 1-800-357-4421 ext. 118

Congregation Endowment (60-Month Fixed or Floating)

Min. Investment	Rate	APY
\$1,000	1.605%	1.615%
\$10,000	1.730%	1.741%
\$100,000	1.855%	1.868%

Develop Your Witnessing Skills

Steve Cohen from Apple of His Eye Ministry will be presenting a witnessing workshop on Saturday, January 28, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at Bethany Lutheran Church, 9101 Lamar Avenue in Overland Park. The workshop, entitled *Win-Some Witnessing 101*, will provide participants with practical skills to share Jesus with others.

There is no cost, but please register by January 26 either by calling 913-648-2228 or by emailing Pastor Mark Schulz at mschulz@bethanylutheran-op.org.

Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity Trip to Guatemala

John and Jenny Peimann, members of Trinity, Mission, are recruiting individuals to join a Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity trip to Xela, Guatemala. The trip is scheduled for March 10-18, 2012. Some basic details of the trip are:

- 1) Trip cost is \$800 for Thrivent benefit members, \$1,300 for other team members. Thrivent benefit members are those who own insurance or annuity products through Thrivent Financial. Trip cost includes most meals, all lodging and team ground transportation in Guatemala. Team members are responsible for transportation to Guatemala City, Guatemala, passport costs and personal expenses.
- 2) Thrivent Financial donates \$8,000 to the local Guatemalan Habitat for Humanity affiliate if the team is comprised of at least 50% Thrivent members. This donation provides enough money to construct more than 1.5 houses in Guatemala. Team members will spend five days of the trip working with local

contractors and homeowners to construct their future homes. No prior construction experience is needed to join the team.

The team needs to be filled by approximately mid-January, 2012. Please consider joining like-minded individuals in helping Thrivent Builds and Habitat for Humanity in Habitat's mission of providing safe, affordable housing to those in need. For information, contact John Peimann via email at jpeimann66067@yahoo.com or via cell phone at 785-248-1221. Further information is also available at www.thriventbuilds.com.

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