



PROFESSIONAL WORKER'S PACKET

Iowa District East—LCMS

December 2020 - January 2021

President's Piece for Peace	2
Calendar of Events	3
Vacancy Updates	4
Directory Updates	5
From Rev. Dr. Rothchild, Assist. to the President	6
Capital Campaign Update	7
IDE Schools	8
Parish Nurse	10
Lutheran Bible Translators	11
Iowa Lutheran Student Tuition Organization	12
Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca	13
IDE Archives	14
Rural and Small Town Mission	16
LCEF	17
L.E.R.T. Training - LCMS Disaster Response	18

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lcmside.org

President's Piece for Peace

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders
District President

December 2020

On the First Sunday of Advent the Scriptures rang out with Jesus' triumphal entry into the Holy City of Jerusalem. The people lined the streets with coats and palm branches. They stood in parade formation welcoming Jesus into their midst singing the Song of the Church. That song is heard throughout all generations, "Hosanna, Hosanna" which means "save us, save us." The question to be asked is, 'from what did they believe they needed saved?' There is no doubt about the misunderstanding of who Jesus was and why He had come. The vast majority wanted the Messiah to be the Son of David who would reestablish the throne of glory and honor that King David once occupied. They wanted to be out from under any foreign government tax and control. They wanted to live under the Laws of God (unfortunately believing that they could keep God's Law and earn salvation.) They called out for a savior who was a warrior, military mighty leader, and drive out the Romans as well as establish regional power once again.

I suppose they remembered the mighty works of God in the past when He led the Exodus people into the Promised Land with amazing victory after victory. They may have remembered Joshua 10 when Israel miraculously defeated the Amorites. However, did they forget the strange way it happened? It wasn't the army that won that war but God Himself who threw hail stones at the enemy and struck them down with such unusual warfare. Maybe they held onto the great battle against the Midianites. Yet do they remember that God depleted the Israelite army to a humble and unthinkable 300 men from 22,000? The armaments were not sword and arrow but trumpets and jars. With these God defeated the enemy.

Is it any wonder then that Jesus rides into Jerusalem on the humble creature of the foal of a donkey. Nothing grand about that but it is the way God works to save His people. The same is true then of the manner by which He came to carry out His mission. No fanfare except for a star in the sky. No parade of people but only a few eastern foreigners and a handful of shepherds. No palace of gold or robes studded with jewels, only a place for animals and a hewn out stone for cattle feed. There He was born, there He was laid wrapped in swaddling clothes. So humble, so unexpected. Not at all what the people were looking for, but that is just the way God does what He does to save His people.

What a lesson for us today to look for Him where He is. Our theology is a theology of the cross. There is no grandeur in His life, only perfect obedience to that which we fail at every day. There is no glow around His head at our altars, only bread and wine where He rests His Body and Blood for forgiveness of sins and strengthening of faith. No massive Roman pool for relaxation, only a font where the redemptive Blood of Jesus claimed us as His own. Nothing spectacular here, is there? Yet this is what God does to save His people. I pray a blessed and Merry Christmas to all of you fellow servants. I do not say, "ho, ho, ho," I say "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbaoth. Heaven and Earth are full of your glory." God keep you all safe from every enemy and grant the simple and humble joy that Christmas gives.

President Saunders

Calendar of Events

December 2020

December

24 – Jan 4 IDE Office Closed IDE Office

January

26 IDE Board of Directors IDE Office

29-30 IDE Middle School Retreat & Snowympics Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca

February

27 LERT Training—LCMS Disaster Response King of Kings, CR

These events are subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please stay tuned to www.lcmside.org for more information on these events as they approach.

Vacancy Updates

As of 12/10/2020

December 2020

Calling Congregations

Bennett & Stanwood, St. Paul

Marion, St. Paul

Garrison, St. Mark/Shellsburg, Zion

Sumner, St. John & St. Paul

Daniel Redhage (vacancy pastor)

Larry Lemke (vacancy pastor)

Dean Rothchild (vacancy pastor)

Michael Parris (vacancy pastor)

Pastor Calls

Accepted: Kevin Richter, Duluth, MN

St. John, Reinbeck

Pending:

Declined: Sam Beltz, Oskaloosa

Armed Forces - LCMS OIM

Stephen Preus, Vinton

CLTS, St. Catherines, Ontario CA

Sam Beltz, Oskaloosa

Grace - Hop Bottom, PA

Michael Boothby, Ireton, IA

St. Paul, Marion

David Daniels, Spring, TX

St. John/St. Paul, Sumner

DCE / School / Teacher Calls

Accepted:

Pending:

Declined:

Directory Updates

December 2020

PG #	RECORD	ACTION	INFORMATION
	49 Wapello, St Paul	Delete	319.523.6951 landline
	49 Wapello, St Paul	Add	319-850-1395 Pastors Cell ph #
	7 Eldora / Bollhagen	Change	replace email with kjbollhagen@msn.com
	70 Petersen/ Hannah	Delete	Transfer to S Wisconsin - effective 11.30.2020

**Please continue to send directory updates to:
pam@lcmside.org**

In a recent article in the Reporter, it stated that in the next 15 years the number of Pastors in the LCMS will decrease from 6000 to 3000. That is something that each of us ought to be concerned about. I have said for a long time that we need to do a better job of recruiting men to go to one of our Seminaries, either in Fort Wayne or St. Louis. I would like to think that I will have a Pastor to minister to me as I grow older.

Recall the words of Jesus: **“And seeing the multitudes, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” Matthew 9:36-38.** As our nation becomes more and more secularized and has less and less people confessing Christ Jesus, the need is tremendous for more Pastors. The need which the church addresses never changes. St. Paul states: **“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23.**

It is Christ's Church. He provides shepherds for His people. A faithful shepherd feeds His people with Word and Sacrament. The faithful shepherd addresses sin by the preaching of the Law and frees people from those sins by proclaiming Christ Jesus, crucified and risen for the sins of the world! COVID-19 is still wreaking havoc in our nation. It has caused the death of many people, but “sin” is the real reason why we have death in the world. It is Jesus Christ who is God's answer for our sin and our victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil. We find our hope and comfort in the fact that in Him we have forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

In the development work that I do here in the District I also see a pressing need to connect with donors who are younger than our present aging donor base. I am thankful for the donors I have been privileged to work with over the past 8 years. I have developed friendships that I would never have had without the opportunity to serve the District in this manner. I am thankful for each of our donors but each year we acknowledge that some of them become part of the church triumphant.

The donors I have worked with are faithful and generous supporters of their own congregations and also have a heart for the work of the Lord which the District does beyond the local congregation. Most people won't remember the Lord's work in their estate and will planning unless they are asked to consider it. It is time to begin cultivating the next generation of people who want the Lord's work to flourish here in the District and in places like Spain where the District is currently involved. St. Paul says: **“I have been crucified with Christ' and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.” Galatians 2:20.**

Rev. Dr. Dean Rothchild
Assistant to the President

Capital Campaign Update



Proclaiming Christ Jesus! Luke 24:46-47

Capital Campaign
Approved 6-29-12 by Iowa District East in Convention

- Pastors are being contacted by phone for potential names of those saints in Christ Jesus who may wish to make an individual gift.
- Dr. Rothchild will send a letter of introduction to potential donors and will follow-up with a phone call to schedule a personal visit.
- Dr. Rothchild will show the DVD and share other information at the time of his visit and the saints will be given a donor form to complete as they deem appropriate.
- I wish to thank all our faithful donors, both individuals and congregations.

As of 12/9/2020

Gifts received to date:	\$848,411
Gifts promised in next 1-7 years:	\$16,750
Total to Date:	\$865,161

For further information, please contact **Rev. Dr. Dean F. Rothchild**
319-373-2112 (office), 319-350-9564 (cell)
drothchild@lcmiside.org.

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. James 5:7-8 NIV



Have you heard this story yet? There is a story of a man who noticed the great patience that a mother was displaying with her crying daughter at the grocery store. At each outburst, the mom continued to respond calmly, "Don't be upset Sophie. We'll be home soon." "It's OK, Sophie, we're almost done, then you'll get a break." Just be patient a little longer, Sophie. It will be over soon." The man finally said to her, "I am so impressed with how calmly and patiently you responded to your daughter! How old is Sophie?" The woman replied, "Oh no, you've misunderstood. My daughter's name is Ashley. My name is Sophie."

How do you feel about waiting at the doctor's office? The fast food drive-thru lines (unless it's Chick-Fil-A)? your students to take their seats after recess? A recent poll by Priority Management, Inc. stated that, "In a lifetime, the average American will spend six months sitting at stoplights, eight months opening junk mail, one year looking for misplaced objects (I think that's an underestimate), two years unsuccessfully returning phone calls, and five years waiting in line."

Besides a more casual kind of waiting there are more serious forms of waiting. Waiting for a diagnosis from the doctor. The person struggling with depression who is waiting for a morning when things start to feel happy again. Waiting for a check from the insurance adjuster to see how much of the damage will be covered after a storm. Waiting for relief from the pandemic. Waiting with a loved one who is days or hours away from being with Jesus forever.

Why is this? One of the reasons may be that we have gotten so used to being "instantly gratified" in being able to have the item or the answer right now. Perhaps another reason is that we're not very confident about what tomorrow might bring. We don't like being in the "waiting room" of a hospital because we're uncertain of the outcome of our stay. We don't want to take the time to get to know that parent of one of our needier students because we might hear something we don't want to hear.

James gives us a great illustration of patience when speaking about the coming of our Lord. We know that if farmers don't have patience, they are in the wrong vocation! They have to wait for the rain. The meteorologist can predict the upcoming rain, but can't make it happen. Farmers can't control temperatures and they can't control drought. Farmers have to wait for the development of the crop from seed to harvest. Fretting about the process won't make it happen any faster or raise the yield. Farmers understand there are seasons of growth and seasons when it looks like nothing is happening. Ultimately, the farmer is resolved to the fact that he has no control over the weather. He is a steward of the ground doing his part, waiting for God to do His. Waiting means leaving room for God to act in His way, in His time, and according to His plan.

The season of the church year that centers around the theme of waiting and preparation is Advent. "The Advent season is a season of waiting, but our whole life is an Advent season, that is, a season of waiting for the last Advent, for the time when there will be a new heaven and a new earth."¹ How do we help our students look to Jesus as their Savior through all the seasons of life? How do we help them wait patiently? It is the

Holy Spirit that empowers and guides us to nurture our students' faith and understanding that this Jesus is their personal Savior and Shepherd. Going back to the farmer illustration: it's hard to see the seed for the dirt. We may not see the invisible works God is doing behind the scenes but something is happening. Be patient. Be encouraging. Be hopeful.

Are you an Ashley or a Sophie when it comes to waiting? We see the end of the line at the grocery checkout, but we just don't know when Jesus is going to return again. We might have even asked our Lord a few times these past few months if He could make arrangements to speed up the process and come sooner than later. We just don't know His timetable, but we do know that it won't be an ambush. No, instead it will be a fulfillment. While we wait, we live and walk by faith every day. Where you are right now is the time for faith and rejoicing. We have what we need to sustain our "wait" until He comes again. While we wait, we have promises and commands to heed. While we wait, we are reassured of these promises and we also share them with our students for they are certain and true:

- the promise that our future in Christ is secure.
- that we are beloved children.
- that ours is the kingdom of God.
- that there's a place already prepared for us.

"The message of Advent is that God isn't just a light at the end of a dark tunnel, but that God is with us IN this tunnel." As we are waiting and keeping watch, be a Sophie but don't rely on yourself. Rely on our heavenly Father for love and support. Keep pointing your students to the manger and the cross so that when their and our last day arrives, no matter when it is, they and you are ready to meet our Lord and King. At just the right time God sent Jesus: ⁴ *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,* ⁵ *to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.* (Galatians 4:4-5)

Be patient. Be hopeful. Wait well.

God be with each of you and your loved ones, and grant you a blessed Christmastide!

Jan Doellinger
Assistant to the President, Schools

It is estimated that nearly 40 million Americans suffer from an anxiety disorder, and most of us have felt anxious as a natural response to certain situations. Managing chronic stress or anxiety can be difficult, many spend much of their daily life with tools like therapy, mindfulness, exercise and anti-anxiety medications.

Food has also been noted to trigger anxiety response. Five foods that have been noted to trigger anxiety include alcohol, caffeine, aged fermented and cultured foods and conventional nondairy creamer. Alcohol changes the levels of serotonin and neurotransmitters in the brain, try “mocktails” or sparkling water. Caffeine in low doses is safe; several cups of coffee or tea can decrease the level of serotonin, the feel-good chemical in the body, causing a depressed mood. The bacteria in foods that have been aged, fermented or cultured have been broken down causing digestion to be aggravated which triggers anxiety. Instead, choose fresh, whole foods for snacking.

Sugar is sneaky and is in most foods in some form. The body releases insulin to help absorb excess glucose and stabilize blood sugar levels, but a sugar rush make the body work too hard to get back to normal, causing the highs and lows. Switching to a conventional nondairy creamer are sources of hydrogenated oils, known as trans fats, which are packed with LDL cholesterol and can lower HDL cholesterol. These fats have been linked to depression, anxiety and other mental health issues. An alternative choice to non-dairy creamers would be whole cream or milk.

Reference: www.healthline.com/health/mental-health

Submitted by Ronda Anderson RN, Iowa District East Parish Nurse District Representative. Taken from Kansas Parish Nurse Ministry, Faith Community Nursing, Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2020.

Lutheran Bible Translators - A Perspective on Cows

December 2020

My family and I served with Lutheran Bible Translators in a rural area of Botswana in southern Africa. In those communities, cows play a central role. There are words which describe each animal's color and pattern.

I read of a recent survey finding in the US. According to this report, 33% of those surveyed age 11-24 had never seen a physical cow.

No wonder there is strife in the world. The reader can picture the lack of a common perspective between such communities, especially if the topic is cows.

But there is a commonality – “The years of our life are seventy, or even by the reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away (Psalm 90:10).”

No matter how I see or describe my world, ‘toil and trouble’ does not go away. There is one certainty – time ticks on and each life on earth ends. A highly depressing thought on its own.

But we are not left without hope. God sent His Son Jesus so that “...while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).” We have all fallen short of what God would desire us to be but through faith given we receive life everlasting through Jesus’ death on the cross. We are reconciled. That changes everything!

Life is more than ‘toil and trouble’ until ‘seventy or eighty years’. It’s more than one’s perspective on cows. My life is lived because of what Jesus has done for me. That is God’s message in Scripture. We are invited into His story of salvation. That is a story worth telling no matter in which community, no matter what language.

by Dr. Mike Rodewald
Lutheran Bible Translators

Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization Bulletin items:

December 6

IOWA LUTHERAN SCHOOL TUITION ORGANIZATION: In 15 years ILSTO has been able to award over 7 million dollars to benefit families wanting to send their children to Lutheran elementary & secondary schools. This money comes from donors like you that benefit two ways: 1) You get to see more children experiencing the love of God every day, and 2) You will receive a 65% tax credit on your Iowa state income taxes and possible charitable deduction on your Federal return. Please consider making this donation a part of your tax planning for 2020. For further information, please contact Dewey Torkelson at 712-260-2991. You may also check the websites: www.iowalutheransto.org and www.iowasto.org

December 13

Students in our Lutheran schools need your help! While helping families, you get some help with your state taxes! The Iowa Lutheran Student Tuition Organization is at 35% of its \$950,000 goal as of Dec. 1. You have until the end of the year – Dec. 31 – to mail your gift. We know the need is becoming greater because of Covid 19. How can you help? A donation of cash, stock, or even grain, but giving is not limited to Lutherans. If you know someone who could benefit from a 65% tax credit, please give them a donor form. Remember the financial benefit to a contributor is a 65% tax credit on Iowa income taxes (which can be carried over for five years) and also a charitable contribution on your federal form. For more information about ILSTO go online to www.iowalutheransto.org or call Dewey Torkelson at 712-260-2991.

December 20

Time is short – December 31 is almost here! The Iowa Lutheran Student Tuition Organization (ILSTO) will gladly accept your gift that will provide financial assistance to our students. Your donation needs to be post-marked no later than December 31. Tax credits are available but the closer you donate to the deadline please call to make sure credits are available. You will receive a 65% tax credit on your Iowa taxes and possible charitable contribution on your federal form. To get more information for donating to the ILSTO go online to www.iowalutheransto.org or call Dewey Torkelson at 712-260-2991 or email deweytorkelson@hotmail.com

December 27

Time is very short – December 31 is almost here! As of December 1, the Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization was at 35% of its goal of raising \$950,000 for tuition assistance. Many Lutheran school students need this financial assistance to attend our schools so please consider a donation to ILSTO at this time. Your donation needs to be postmarked no later than December 31. Tax credits are available as of this date, but the closer you donate to the deadline please call to make sure credits are still available. For more information call Dewey Torkelson at 712-260-2991.

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca



December 2020

IDE Middle School Retreat & Snowlympics

It is our hope that our first youth retreat of the 2020-2021 season will be with IDE Middle School Retreat and Snowlympics. We're exploring both the possibilities of a regularly scheduled event or a one-day event on Saturday, January 30. Stay tuned for more information at <https://lcmiside.org/msretreat/>.

Camp Presentations

Would you like to know more about Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca? Camp Director Daniel Sanchez is available to speak to congregations and groups about Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca's mission, facilities, and programs. Call 319-848-4187 to schedule a speaker!

Support Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca Your Congregation's 2021 Mission Budget

Though many of Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca's donations come from individuals and families, we also rely on congregations for financial support. Some congregations are generous enough to add Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca as a line item in their mission budget. Other congregations have groups such as their LWML societies make financial contributions.

Congregational contributions make the mission of Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca, that is, providing Christ-centered recreation, education, and inspiration for all, a reality. It isn't merely about keeping the lights on or paying the heating bills, but it ensures that Camp's guests have a quality experience at a quality location. Does your congregation currently support Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca? We hope that is will!

Also, check out our new ***I Believe in Camp*** monthly giving program. It's a great way for your household to make support Camp's important mission for as little as \$25/month. Details are available at our website!

Important Dates

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, these retreats are subject to change, postpone, or cancel.

January 29
Summer Camp Registration Opens

January 29-30
IDE Middle School Retreat and Snowlympics

June 16
Summer Camp Begins

THANK YOU!!!!!!

3271 Sandy Beach Road NE, Solon, IA 52333

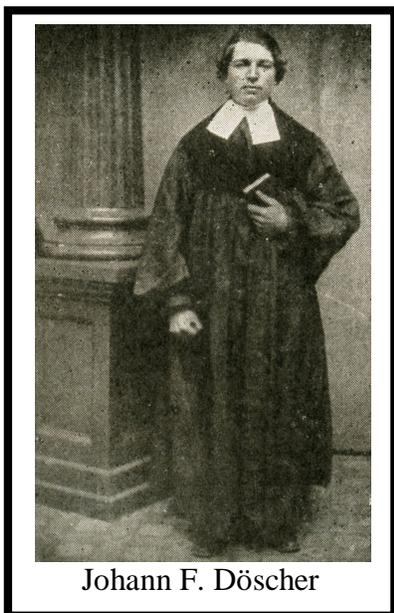
phone 319.848.4187

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IDE ARCHIVES

Follow-up on Travelling Missionary Johann F. Döscher [Part 3]



Johann F. Döscher

Assuming that all readers of the Professional Packet are just elated over the information shared with them about Traveling Missionary Johann Friedrich Döscher [Doescher] that was featured by the IDE Archives in the October and November edition, here is a follow-up which ought to bring this topic to an end.

My research about the man came primarily from archival documents on file within IDE congregations and an article in *Der Lutheraner*. I was able to trace his movements from Iowa City to Ft. Dodge, and ended up with what I thought was his retirement. Now, on a totally different subject for my reading, I was reading George Rath's 1977 book: *The Black Sea Germans in the Dakotas*, Pine Hill Press—Freeman, SD 57029. Low and behold, Missionary Döscher's name came up and here is what I have gleaned from Rath's book, pages 145-157 and 378-380.

With an influx of settlers coming from the German settlements in South Russia to the Dakota Territory in 1873, the Western District of the Missouri Synod called Rev. C.W. Baumhofer of Scribner, Nebraska to travel the 125 miles north to Yankton [South Dakota] to see what possibilities the Synod had in beginning mission work in the Dakota Territory. Having made mission contacts, he succeeded in gathering a few Lutherans near Yankton. Upon returning home, he wrote Rev. Döscher at Ft. Dodge, Iowa to encourage him to come and serve these German immigrants. Döscher wasted no time in making two trips to Yankton.

In the meantime, some Germans from Russia came to America in April of 1874. From New York, they worked their way westward. While on a train to Dakota Territory, they passed through Ft. Dodge, Iowa and stayed the weekend to attend the Lutheran worship services conducted by Rev. Döscher. So they were able to obtain information about the Germans in Dakota Territory. It is assumed that after these men arrived in Yankton, they made contact again with Rev. Döscher, for shortly after that, Döscher appeared in Yankton and started a Lutheran church of the Missouri Synod.

Sometime earlier, a Lutheran congregation, made up of both Reformed and Lutheran households, had been organized 20 miles northwest of Yankton. The man serving it turned out to be a drunkard and was sent packing. The congregation split and Rev. Döscher then served the Lutherans for a few years. He also organized congregations further north of Yankton in 1875 and informed the Western District that he was serving 26 preaching stations in 8 counties. More congregations were organized in 1876 and 1877.

Rev. Döscher's work came to a sudden end when tensions within the split church 20 miles north of Yankton arose. The Synod Conference held in Altenburg, Missouri on October 16, 1877 issued a call to him, which he accepted, to go into the Negro Mission at New Orleans, Louisiana. He served there for two years. He took up residence in the parsonage of St. John Lutheran church. Not much work was done among the Negroes, but he served temporarily the three Lutheran congregations in New Orleans. Synod authorities objected to his approach to his calling and he finally accepted to work at St. John Lutheran. He did English work on the side, which the congregation did not approve of, so this led to his suspension and dismissal.

In 1892, Rev. Döscher delivered a lecture at St. Paul, Minnesota about Dr. C.F.W. Walther's Predestination theory, which Döscher opposed. Disappointed with Walther on this issue, Döscher ended up joining the Evangelical Lutheran Ohio Synod and staying with it the rest of his life. In 1893, he was back in the Menno, South Dakota area and organizing congregations for the Ohio Synod. Soon after Döscher organized Zion Lutheran church in Bridgewater, South Dakota, he left after spending only about 4 years in the State. He moved to Oregon and served three congregations: Cornelius, Tunatin and Oregon City.

It is from obituary information that Rath helps us put a cap on this person's life. Döscher was born in the summer of 1840, in Loeste, Hannover Province, Germany. He came to America with his parents, studied for the ministry at Concordia College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana and was ordained in 1861. His marriage to Adelheid Meyer in 1860 was blessed with five sons and six daughters. His wife died in 1916. At the age of 78, he died in the Oregon City hospital on July 23, 1918. He is buried beside his wife in the Lutheran cemetery in Oregon City.

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Old Committee Minutes

In August of 1933, the Board of Directors called upon Committees of the Iowa District to turn over material pertaining to the work they were doing. Some of these reports and minutes are presently filed within the IDE Archives. Somewhere along the way, the turning over of "old" minutes stopped showing up in the district archives. In an attempt to continue that "ancient" request from the BOD, I would like to encourage any of you church workers who have, or had "recording the minutes" duties on some IDE Committee, to help those old records find a home in the IDE Archives. You can present those documents to the IDE Office, either in person, or by mail. They will then be filed within the IDE Archives. And thank you for helping revive an old tradition of preserving our district activity records.

Allen E. Konrad
IDE Archivist

REACHING RURAL AMERICA FOR CHRIST



Our "Life Together"

- To follow the core beliefs of the LCMS
- To equip rural professional and lay leaders
- To support congregations in community engagement



Please Pray for These Important Dates

Nov. 19 – Webinar
"Congregational Partnership Training"
with Rev. Todd Kollbaum, director of
LCMS Rural & Small-Town Mission
1–2 p.m. CST

December 10 – Webinar
"Deaconesses and the Rural and
Small-Town Congregation:
Partnership and Ministry Models"
with Deaconess Faith Swenson of
Fairbank, Iowa
1–2 p.m. CST



"... and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord..."

—Post-Communion Collect, Divine Service, *Lutheran Service Book*

STRONG FAITH, FERVENT LOVE

Partnership Models

Several years ago, I observed the following about our rural and small-town populations and our RSTM congregations:

One of the greatest attributes, in my opinion, of those who make up the populations of rural areas and small towns around our nation is their rugged independence. As I have traveled around the country, I am frequently amazed when I consider how and why different groups decided where they would settle and just how much grit and determination they had to have in order to "make it work." That resolute spirit didn't just bring about success in livelihoods, but also strong families, close-knit communities, strong educational systems and thriving places of worship.

Put into today's context, though, I find that this great attribute is often our biggest stumbling block as well. Oftentimes, we view ourselves as so fiercely independent that we forego the great value of working together in partnership. This shortcoming is easy to see when we watch our favorite sports teams full of athletes more interested in self-aggrandizement than the success of the team. We also see this play out in other arenas, from those who entertain us to those who make



our economy run: What's in it for me? Unfortunately, this also plays out the congregational context. Churches become more concerned with identity than mission, independence than outreach, survival than Christian care.

One of the greatest attributes we could retrieve from our ruggedly independent ancestors is the value they placed on working together. Partnerships in ministry allow us to do more for the Kingdom than we ever could on our own. They open doors, strengthen relationships and create avenues for sharing Christ's love. While we have long entered into traditional partnerships such as multi-point parish arrangements, these were often established with budgets as the sole motivator. I encourage you to take a look around and see if you can identify with whom you are in partnership and with whom you could



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Rural & Small Town Mission

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Contact us

We want to hear from you! If you have ideas for future issues, comments, or feedback on articles you've read in *Reaching Rural America for Christ*, please contact the RSTM office.

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Support This Work

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.

Click the Give Now button to support the work of RSTM.

GIVE NOW

Thrivent members: *Remember that RSTM is eligible for Thrivent Choice Dollars!*

be in partnership with the sole motivation of sharing the Gospel.

To that end, here are some partnership models to consider. These are nothing new, nor is it essential for every congregation to partner in these ways. However, these models have been found to be a helpful starting point as we look to how we can partner together to spread God's Word.

- **DUAL PARISH** — Two congregations of similar size partner in ministry.
- **HELPING HAND** — A larger congregation assists a smaller congregation.
- **CIRCUIT RIDER** — One pastor serves several small churches.
- **REGIONAL** — One larger congregation partners with 2+ smaller churches.
- **MULTI-SITE** — Congregations form one entity with multiple ministry sites.
- **CONNECT WITH TECH** — Congregations use technology to share mission and ministry resources.
- **BLESSED END** — One church closes, with the potential to help ministry elsewhere.

THIS MONTH'S WEBINAR: Partnership Possibilities

As we face so many new "normals" in our world today, we are often struck by how creative we have had to be in carrying out ministry. Through shutdowns and quarantines, upticks and decreases in virus spread and the tightening up and easing of restrictions, we have had to ensure that we will continue to spread God's Word and take care of His people regardless of our circumstances. Sometimes, however, it gets very difficult to do that on our own. Wouldn't it be nice if we could work together for the good of the Kingdom, partnering with one another to share our burdens and our joys? This month's RSTM webinar will look at possibilities and models of partnership which might just fit the bill of equipping us to better carry out the ministry God has called us to do.

For more information on these models, please contact us at LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission or check out this handy reference tool which can be found on the Kansas District Website: kslcm.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Partnership-Doc-7.2.20.pdf.

RSTM Events Update

Don't forget that Rural & Small Town Mission provides free monthly webinars on topics important to congregations in town and country settings. Up next is **Congregational Partnership Training** on Nov. 19, followed by **Deaconesses and the Rural and Small-Town Congregation: Partnership and Ministry Models** on Dec. 10. Find past webinars in our archive. Watch for information on all our upcoming events!

RSTM's **Welcoming Workshops** are something we think your congregation will love and benefit from. These day-long events will help congregations become more welcoming places, providing God's Word to both current members and guests. They offer practical resources on

having welcoming buildings, welcoming publications and welcoming people.

Register for one our **Engaging Your Community** (EYC) or **Engaging the Wandering** (ETW) events at lcms.org/rstm. These partner events offer practical resources and communication skills for reaching out to our wandering members and our communities with Christ's love. Contact your district or our office if you are interested in holding an event near you. We are currently scheduling for 2020!

In addition, pray for the new **Making Disciples for Life conferences** and watch for information on a regional event coming near you!



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Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> where investments build ministry



The Word Became Flesh...

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

- *John 1:14 (NKJV)*

This passage is familiar to so many of us and we often hear or read it every Christmas. Like countless other Christians, I would have loved to have seen the God Incarnate asleep in the manger. To have been alive at that time to rejoice with the angels and shepherds who shared the amazing news that the promised Savior had been born!

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

- *Matthew 1:23 (NKJV)*

He is with us now and we do get to see Him! He is among us wherever His Word, THE Word, is told, shared, proclaimed, and preached and His Sacraments are administered. We can still rejoice with the angels and, like the shepherds, we can make known all we have seen and heard, we can glorify and praise God for all that He has done for us.

It has been my privilege to be among you, Saints, in both new and familiar ways this past year. LCEF partners with investors and borrowers to help you further proclaim the Good News.

Thank you for your support of and partnership with Lutheran Church Extension Fund. God bless you with strong faith; enjoy a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. 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. Neither LCEF nor its representatives give legal, accounting or tax advice. Consult your tax advisor as to the applicability of this information to your own situation. UMB Bank n.a. serves as the custodian for the LCEF IRA/HSA programs. The State of Washington has adopted a regulatory position that currently prohibits residents of Washington State from opening a new investment unless they are already an LCEF investor and 18 years or older. Visit lcef.org for details.

LERT Volunteer Training Event

Training will be held at

Location: King of Kings Lutheran Church - Cedar Rapids

Date: Saturday, February 27 Time: TBD - Stay tuned for more information!

For more information, contact

Name: Daniel Sanchez

Phone: 319-373-2112 Email: dsanchez@lcmside.org

The registration fee is \$35, which includes a training manual, LCMS volunteer vest and lunch. You will receive your certificate of participation and volunteer certification badge from LCMS Disaster Response and the LCMS Office of National Mission.

(Please fill out, detach, and send this form with your registration fee to the host congregation.)

Disaster Preparedness Training Event Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Home Congregation: _____



Submissions for the next edition of our
Professional Workers' Packet are due
January 26.

Please email articles, photos and announcements to
Daniel Sanchez, IDE Communications/Events/Technology Coordinator
dsanchez@lcmside.org



The Professional Packet is Iowa District East's monthly newsletter sharing updates on vacancies, upcoming events, and district news.