



# Cross Points

A Mission and Ministry Resource for the Southern District

January 7, Year of Our LORD 2014

## **Featured Article**

### **Hope**



A dying congregation of faithful Lutherans is transformed and grows from 15 people to more than 65 in worship!

[Read The Article](#)

## **What is Cross Points?**

Cross Points is a brand new electronic, resource rich newsletter sent out to our Southern District leaders and congregations on a regular basis in support of your mission and ministry. Through the office of the new Mission and Ministry Facilitator, Eric Johnson, Cross Points will endeavor to provide practical and doable resources, encouragement, stories, and suggestions to help you lead God's people forward in their mission and ministry as together we follow Jesus in reaching people with the Gospel, bringing them to faith, baptism, and discipleship.

## **Quick Links...**

### **District Website**

### **Missio Today**

### **Dwelling 1:14**

Greetings in the Name of our Missionary God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Please allow me to introduce myself, my name is Eric Johnson and I am your new Mission and Ministry Facilitator. My job is to support you and your

NewsLetter Sign Up

## Mission/Ministry Tool Box

[Simple Ways To Be  
Missional](#)

### Featured Video: *Click to Play*



This is  
Discipleship

congregation in your mission & ministry within the walls of your church building and especially outside your walls in the community where people who don't yet know Jesus live and work.



Areas where I can be helpful include, but are not limited to, Small Groups, VBS, Sunday School, Confirmation, Building bridges to the community around your church, Outreach/Evangelism, Youth, and Stewardship.

**Let me know what kind of resources you need, I can help.**

My specialty is helping congregations build bridges in their communities to reach people who don't yet know Jesus. Before being called to be your new Mission and Ministry Facilitator I was a Missionary At Large for 12 years and also worked as a consultant and coach to congregations making the transformation from inward and dying to outward and thriving. It is my hope and prayer to help do the same for congregations in the Southern District.

When you find that you and your congregation can use some suggestions with ideas and resources, I'm here to help.

You can reach me @ [e.johnson@southernlcms.org](mailto:e.johnson@southernlcms.org) or by calling my direct line @ 985-796-7175

Your Servant In Christ's Mission,

Eric

*"Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell, I want to run a rescue mission within a yard of hell."*  
C.T. Studd

## How do we connect people to the Gospel in our changing world?

We all know, like it or not, that the world around us has changed and will continue to change at a rapid pace. We also all know that far too many of our Lutheran congregations are not managing the changes well,

resulting in the rapid decline of many congregations while a growing number are simply dying. This can be frightening, and can even lead us into paralysis and inaction.

Don't give up, don't lose heart, there is HOPE!

In this New Year, as we bask in the glow of Christmas and look forward to the coming Light of Easter, I want to encourage you to remember from whence our hope comes. Remember that **Jesus is hope!**

One of the best things Martin Luther taught me is that Jesus Christ is the center. He is the center of our doctrine, our worship, our lives. He is the center of our mission and ministry. He is the center of church and history. He is the center of hope!



## Featured Article: **Hope!**

5 years ago First Lutheran was a congregation in rapid decline and nearing death. The congregation was in conflict within herself and had done no community outreach in years. As members grew older some passed away while others moved away, and the once vibrant and healthy congregation dwindled down to a faithful few. Adding to their anxiety, the pastor was just months away from retirement. Needless to say, there was great fear and uncertainty amongst the leaders and the members about their future.

Without God doing something powerful, and doing it quickly, this congregation was doomed to close.

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