



This Ministry That We Share

*Southern District -LCMS
December 2013-January 2014*



DON'T BE AFRAID CHILDREN

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." 2 Cor. 5:17

It can be frightening to stand at the beginning of a new year and ponder what the future holds. As evil grows attacking us and our families, we become fearful of the days ahead. The apostle Paul warned all believers in Jesus that life will be a daily struggle with the devil.



The key to a life of victory over the devil is all wrapped up in being "in Christ." The expression "in Christ" appears some 200 times in the New Testament. To be "in Christ" describes many aspects of the Christian life. For a believer to know that he is "in Christ" brings confidence, joy, and eternal hope. St. Paul writes, "for to me, to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21). The Bible tells us that believers are "hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

One cannot help but be excited about, and strongly desire, the great blessings the Bible promises to all who are "in Christ." If God's great blessings come to those "in Christ," do we, and our families, become united with Christ, both in His sin-defeating death and in His life-giving resurrection?

The Bible says: "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. FOR IF WE HAVE BECOME UNITED WITH HIM IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH, CERTAINLY WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS RESURRECTION" (Romans 6:35).

In Galatians 3:27 we read: "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Baptism is more than a ritual or a ceremony. Baptism is not a mere tradition of men. Baptism is a clear teaching of God in His Word. In baptism God is at work, bringing us into the family of God. Through baptism God miraculously unites us with Christ. Baptism is part of God's ongoing creating, and recreating, using the power that He used to create the whole world. Jesus said, "My Father is working until now, and I myself am working" (John 5:17). In baptism we become "in Christ," and "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV).

The joy and power of baptism is crucial to the correct understanding of the New Testament and the strengthening of the Christian life. Through baptism we are miraculously connected to Christ and all His power for life. Through baptism Christ unites us to Himself, to His cross and resurrection, the only foundation and strength for all Christians. Through baptism God promises us power to overcome Satan, strength for a daily life of joy, and the blessed certainty of the final resurrection "in Christ," unto life eternal.

Have no fear baptized child of God! Your past, present, and future are in the hands of our loving and gracious Father.

Powerful and loving God, thank you for enabling us to celebrate, as your baptized Children in Christ, a life without fear. Amen

BEREAVEMENTS

The mother of **Rev. Paul McComack (Trinity - Monroe, LA)** entered into the Kingdom of Heaven on October 26th. Neldo Jo McComack of Panola County, TX, was 86 years old. Her husband, Ira, preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by one son, Guy Daniel McComack. She leaves to mourn her loss: two sons, Timothy and Paul. **Rev. John Karle of Christ the King Lutheran - Natchitoches, LA** officiated at the funeral service held on November 1st.

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". . .and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels." Luke 20:36 (NIV)



WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER. . . .

These brothers and sisters in Christ coping with cancer:

- Rev. Jack Betz (Emeritus - Miramar Beach, FL)
- Rev. Jerry Conley (Emeritus - Marianna, FL)
- Mrs. Gloria Moritz, wife of Rev. Victor Moritz (Emeritus - Metairie, LA)
- Rev. Sidney Ponseti (Emeritus - Baton Rouge, LA)
- Rev. Ed Rogers (Emeritus - Ozark, AL)

These brothers and sisters in Christ coping with various health issues:

- DCS Margaret Anderson - Birmingham, AL
- Rev. Jesus Gonzales - Monte de los Olivos-Metairie, LA
- Commissioned Minister Ray Hauer - Huntsville, AL
- Rev. Rory Hermann (Good Shepherd - Gulf Breeze, FL)
- Rev. David Moerbe (Good Shepherd - Gardendale, AL)
- Rev. Vic Moritz (Emeritus - Metairie, LA)
- Ms. Debbie Nelson (Preschool Director - Holy Trinity-Covington, LA)

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed. Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NIV)

RETIREMENTS APLENTY!

It's really apparent that the Baby-Boomers are bound for retirement as several of our pastors are headed that way.



Rev. Stanley Clark who served **Zion - Clinton, LA**; **Rev. Floyd Smithey** who served **Our Savior - Columbus, MS**, have "officially left the building," as Elvis would say. **Rev. David Doroh** and his wife, Dorie, enjoyed an "Appreciation Reception" on November 23rd. Pastor Doroh will leave Our Redeemer - Florence the end of the year. The Dorohs will remain in the area. They have purchased a house in the beautiful area of northern Alabama.

Rev. Gary Archbold, pastor of the dual parish of **Redeemer - DeRidder** and **Trinity - Leesville**, will also retire the end of this year as well. Knowing Pastor Archbold enjoys potlucks, Trinity planned a special potluck dinner for him, held December 15th. An engraved mantel clock was presented to him as well as a plaque. Various people contributed to the celebration by sharing words of appreciation for Pastor Archbold. Pastor and his wife, Carol, will remain in their home in DeRidder. He is looking forward to spending more time with his study of astronomy.

Rev. Arthur Porter who currently serves **First - Birmingham, AL** will retire the end of the year. A special retirement celebration is being planned for December 28 in the evening

Rumor has it that **Rev. Steven Koenig** of **Our Redeemer** in **Clinton, MS**, is also heading in the retirement direction.

*Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The unity of heart and mind
Is like to that above.*

MAKE NEW FRIENDS.

God continues to provide workers for the harvest. **Rev. Eric C. Johnson** has joined the Southern District Executive Staff as the District's Mission and Ministry Facilitator for Congregational Networking. His job is to support YOU in mission & ministry within the congregation and especially to those outside the congregation who don't yet know Jesus. Eric is busy developing a network of people and resources with the goal of helping to connect congregations and leaders with the best tools available in the areas of mission outreach and ministry support.

Areas where Eric can be helpful include, but are not limited to: Small Groups, VBS, Sunday School, Missional Evangelism and Outreach, Youth and Stewardship. When YOU need help with ideas and resources Eric is here to help. YOU can reach him by email e.johnson@southernlcms.org or by calling his direct line @ 985-445-9339.

His prior district membership was in the California-Nevada-Hawaii District where he served as a district missionary at Word of Grace in Rohnert Park, CA.



Rohnert Park is about fifty miles north of San Francisco. Eric and his wife, Lisa, have three children: Eric Jr., Zachary, and Emily. Lisa home schools their children. Southern roots emanate from Lisa; she is from Birmingham, Alabama. Her parents currently live in Mobile.

The current District President of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District writes "Pastor Johnson is able to translate and apply this theology and confession to a post-church world." Check out Pastor Johnson's blog [Click here](#)

Another worker new to the Southern District is **Mr. Glen D. Gerber**. Glen will serve the schools of the District and oversee the Southern District Foundation. He has been in education for more than 30 years. He has been the chief administrator of schools in Florida, Hong Kong, Missouri, and Texas. In his most recent position in Katy, Texas, he was hired to over see the construction and start-up of a new school. His school experienced positive growth every year in a time when private and parochial school enrollment has been declining, nationally.

Previously employed by Lutheran Hour Ministries as Director of Gift Planning, and Vice President of the LHM Foundation, he has also served as a District Representative and Assistant General Agent for the St. Louis office of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. He holds a master's degree in Administration and Supervision from Nova University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and a bachelor's degree from Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois.

Mr. Gerber currently serves as a Trustee of the Lutheran Hour Ministry Foundation

Board and as a member of the Lutheran Education Association National Board. He is also on the board of directors of his church, Crosspoint Community Church.

Mr. Gerber is married to Judy, who is a Lutheran School Teacher, and has two grown daughters and two grandchildren.



LUTHERAN SCHOOLS - EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCE MANUAL



Lutheran schools are connecting places! If your congregation has or is looking to offer an early childhood ministry, it is strongly recommended a copy of the updated ***In His Hands*** Manual be purchased. This is a resource manual for **starting, expanding or improving a Christ-centered early childhood development ministry**. This edition of "In His Hands" is intended for **leaders and board members of early childhood programs** that are either free-standing or **integrated with a Lutheran elementary school**.

In His Hands provides direction as new programs are developed while offering on-going support for established programs to raise the bar of excellence through the utilization of accreditation, technology integration, and innovative ideas. Produced under the auspices of LCMS School Ministry, the resource can be purchased and downloaded by clicking on the link below. The resource contains 178 pages and is being offered at a price of **\$20** through the end of 2013.

***In His Hands* (downloadable, pdf). . . . 3rd Edition, ©2013**

Product ID S08669-E. . . . <http://store.lcms.org>

YOUTH ALERT. . .YOUTH ALERT. . .YOUTH ALERT

Mark your calendar for the

- **2014 SOUTHERN DISTRICT YOUTH WORKERS CONFERENCE**

This annual event is for volunteer and professional youth leaders.

January 31 - February 2 @ the district offices in Slidell, LA

Watch for further updates.

- **SOUTHERN DISTRICT SENIOR YOUTH GATHERING**

July 10-13, 2014 @ Camp Restore in New Orleans, LA

The planning team has begun making preparations.

Share the dates now with your youth leaders.

Further information will be released soon.

OUR STEWARDSHIP OF HIS RESOURCES

District and Synod Mission Support Trends	2011	2012	2013
Total Budget	\$1,125,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000
Budgeted Income through 12/15	\$1,031,250	\$1,008,333	\$1,008,333
Actual Income through 12/15	\$882,795	\$928,810	\$902,555

CLOSING OUT 2013 TO LOOK FORWARD TO 2014

A new year has begun for the church, yet we are also involved in closing out the 2013 calendar year in good and proper order. With that in mind, we would ask your congregation to give attention to your **2013 PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENT** to the Southern District for work in the District/Synod and beyond!

The District Stewardship Committee is truly grateful for all the Churches that have given support to this ministry that we share. We are also grateful for all that the Lord allows your congregation to give in the future.

Please note that the District operates on a budget that runs from January 16, 2013 through January 15, 2014. We would greatly appreciate that all Partnership Commitments for 2013 arrive in the Southern District office no later than **JANUARY 14, 2014**. Please share this with your treasurer and/or other leadership to assure the accuracy of our records and to bring to our attention any discrepancy in gifts sent to the District office.

May the coming weeks and months be a time of much growth for your congregation, and the entire Southern District.

"May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead, our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever." Amen.

(Hebrews 13:20, 21 NIV)

Donald A. Hennings
Chairman, Stewardship Committee

NAME YOUR CONGREGATION'S BUCKET LIST FOR 2014

CONGREGATION - HOPES AND DREAMS FOR 2014

We often read about persons who have developed a bucket list of things they want to accomplish in their lifetime. Does your congregation have a "bucket list" for 2014 and beyond? A congregation's mission and ministry is there to breathe hope and health as the Gospel message is shared with others.

This is also a good time to take inventory and see what we valued in 2013 or in the past. As you look at your congregation's budget and monthly calendar, what priorities were evidenced in the past year? Is this what you really want to be said about the congregation's mission and ministry? What are the core values that are lived out in your place of mission and ministry? Be intentional to name them and how does that drive your congregation's mission and ministry!

Networks for support and encouragement are foundational to revitalization & transformation. **Transforming Churches Network** offers a number of options for partnership and support:

- * Congregations (3 options)
- * Pastor and Leadership (2 options)
- * Pastor (2 options)

Through TCN, congregations have a variety of tools (training and resources) to empower the congregation to open new doors into their communities with the Gospel. I will be happy to supply a list including the various options available to your congregation through the Southern District. I also welcome the opportunity to meet with the congregation's leadership to explore tools for transformation.

As a contractor for the Southern District in the area of Transformation/Revitalization, I want to be certain to offer the tools and support that will help congregations grow in health and vitality. I encourage congregations to have a named "bucket list" of dreams and goals for 2014 and beyond.

Gene Menzel
Contractor for Congregation Transformation/Revitalization
504-495-7436 or gwmenz@aol.com

CONFERENCE AND SCHOOLS



Women's Leadership Institute to Host March Events

In March 2014, the Women's Leadership Institute (WLI) of Concordia University Wisconsin is hosting its biennial conference, "Christ-Connected Women," and prior to the conference its schools for speakers and writers. The WLI conference and schools have a tradition of bringing together women of all ages who are eager to share and learn ... and have a renewing and fabulous time!

* At the March 14-16 WLI Conference, former national LWML President Ida Mall will be the featured speaker. Also participating in the program will be Monique Nunes, motivational speaker; Sharla Fritz, Scripture study leader; Rev. Dr. Wayne Braun, worship leader; Wendysue Fluegge, song leader, and 13 sectional leaders, and women from across the United States.

* Before the conference on March 12-14 WLI will host its excellent School for Speakers and School for Writers. The schools exist to educate, equip and encourage women to use their God-given gifts in public speaking and professional writing. The School for Speakers is taught by Ruth Koch, a mental health educator and a noted speaker for local and national events, and Julie Stiegemeyer, a distinguished freelance writer and author of children's books, will serve as the instructor for the School for Writers.

These WLI offerings will be held at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center, Milwaukee, near the General Mitchell International Airport.

Please visit the WLI website <http://blog.cuw.edu/wli/> for information and the registration forms for both the conference and School for Speakers and School for Writers.

CALLS AND VACANCIES

CONGREGATIONS IN THE CALLING PROCESS FOR PASTOR

ALABAMA

First - Birmingham
Our Redeemer - Florence
Grace - Mobile
Prince of Peace - Ozark
University - Tuscaloosa

FLORIDA

Grace - Pensacola

LOUISIANA

Zion - Clinton
Holy Trinity - Covington

Trinity - Leesville

MISSISSIPPI

Good Shepherd - Biloxi
Our Redeemer - Clinton
Our Savior - Columbus
CrossRoad - Hernando
Beautiful Savior - Olive Branch

CALLS - ORDAINED - ACCEPTED

- **John Karle**, Christ the King - Natchitoches, LA, to St. John - Hattiesburg, MS
- **Stewart Marshall**, Prince of Peace - Ozark, AL, to Redeemer - DeRidder, LA

The gift of generosity

This Christmas season, we thank every person who supported the Southern District this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions. We look forward to your support in the year ahead. If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings; or, if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to look into our electric giving options. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around this time of year, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions. Visit [here](#) or contact the District office for more information.



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