

The Spirit of Southern

Web Edition – September – October, 2014

Bold Faith – Bold Living

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1: 7

This month the church celebrates Reformation. At the forefront of this event was a man by the name of Dr. Martin Luther. Many have wondered what was at the center of this earth changing event, and what changed the fearful monk, Luther, into a fearless witness of the Gospel. The answer is the powerful Spirit of God. When the pure Gospel of God's free grace in Jesus Christ touched the hearts of his people, they fully understood what Timothy was writing about in his second letter. God has not given us a spirit of timidity, or fear as an older version translates it.

There is need for this same reformation even today. Fear is not of God, yet we operate so much out of fear and timidity. We determine our actions often on the basis of fear. We are fearful of what people will say or think about what we do. We are afraid to trust God and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. We are afraid to risk ourselves for the kingdom. We are afraid to commit ourselves to doing the will of God



because of the cost or the consequences. So we live out our days timidly and seldom see the hand of God at work in our day to day existence.

We need to live each day trusting God. He loves us in Jesus. He declares us his children though the waters of baptism. He wants to give us good things, to provide for us and protect us. Why are we afraid of him? He gives us the spirit of power - not our power, which is puny, but his power to meet the situations which overwhelm us and are so much greater than our power. He gives us the spirit of love - his love to dwell in and to share with others. We can't love anyone beyond ourselves without the gift of his love. He gives

us the gift of self-discipline. Many of us have a hard time disciplining ourselves in places of recurring temptation. We have a difficult time controlling lifelong habits and patterns of behavior. We find it often exhausting to rein in our impulses and feelings. Yes, he has given us the spirit of self-control to help us follow his will and way.

Don't let the enemy (or the "old evil foe" as Luther calls him) fool you into believing that God has not provided all that you need in your situation. Don't surrender to fear today. Don't let it rule your life. Choose to believe this great promise. Live in the spiritual gifts that God has provided for you. Then you will live in the joy of reformation. *Lord, thank you for gracing us with your gifts of power, and love, and self-discipline. Help us to use these gifts today to do your will that reformation may continue in your church, your world and in us today. Amen.*

Rev. Kurtis D. Schultz, President, Southern District, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



74th Convention of the Southern District-LCMS June 4-5, 2015

Concordia College Alabama - Selma, AL

Go to this link for additional information:

<http://southernlcms.org/district-convention/> for information about registration, nominations for Southern District offices, submitting memorials/overtures as well as other important information.

Check it out!

Stewardship - One Question Changes Everything

One question changes everything. Here it is: "God, what do you want me to do with all that you have entrusted to me?" We all seem to be more than willing to acknowledge that God owns everything, but we still seem to continue making all the decisions regarding what we do with

what we have. The ultimate objective of our stewardship (management) of God's property is to do with it what he (the owner) wants us (the managers) to do with it.

Sometimes people, for various reasons, stop giving back to God a portion of what he has first given us. Sometimes we hold back from giving because of personal grievances, political differences, or just out of good old fashioned sinful selfishness.

Asking the one question that changes everything helps me shift the focus away from me and what I want, and instead focus on God and what he wants.

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38

Rev. Eric Johnson, Southern District Mission and Ministry Facilitator

(Are you looking for ministry ideas and resources for your congregation? Check out Rev. Johnson's newsletter: "Cross Points – A Practical Newsletter of the Southern District" on the district website.)

Revitalization & Transformation - Seasons of Discovery

Southern District congregations can benefit through participation in a new process offered through Transformation Churches Network (TCN). Seasons of Discovery is a step-wise Church Transformation process delivered to the congregation in four seasons over two or more years, that helps your church begin engagement in your community with the Gospel of Jesus.

Why a new process? Many congregations struggle to reach and to serve the community. For many years, congregations have depended on events to reach the community by bringing the people to the building. We live in a new culture and age where persons want to see faith in action in the community.

Genesis 1:14-15 notes: "And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so." In creation, God used light for signs and seasons. So also today, Jesus as the Light of the world is calling the Church to be His light in new ways to reach those not connected by faith to Jesus.

Seasons of Discovery can help your congregation learn attitudes and skills that will make a difference in outreach. To learn more about the program, go to: <http://transformingchurchesnetwork.org/>. You can also contact me at 256-486-9422 or by e-mail at gwmenz@aol.com for further information or a special presentation.

Gene Menzel, Contractor to Southern District Congregations For Revitalization & Transformation

Southern District Church Extension Fund (CEF)

When your pastor came back from the Professional Workers conference in Destin, he came with a lot of information on the Southern District Church Extension Fund: a table top display, investment brochures, bulletin inserts and most importantly, a renewed understanding of our support of the Southern District mission and ministry.

The Southern District Church Extension Fund is alive and well. We once again met or exceeded every financial benchmark the LCMS Board for CEF's established and also the North American Securities Administrators Association guidelines. In short, we have a financially healthy organization.

Our fiscal year ending June 31, 2014 realized profits of over \$1,200,000.00 and a record number of loans were also processed. At the current loan rate of 4% (3% for designated missions) many congregation are re-financing their secular loans, upgrading their property as well as planning new construction.

\$ As of September 1, 2014 we have new HIGHER investment interest rates. We offer 1% on 1 year notes, 1.5% on three year notes and 2% on five year notes and 1% on our Save By Mail demand account with low minimum requirements. I personally was amazed when my secular bank sent a "preferred customer invitation" for 2% on a 10 year certificate of deposit until I noticed a \$25,000.00 minimum. I thought, Southern District CEF is offering 2% for five years with only a \$1,000.00 minimum. Point is, we are

more than competitive in our products plus you have the satisfaction of knowing your interest is growing in your church.

\$ NEW INVESTMENT PRODUCT: YES -Young Elite Savers is special investment for children and youth under that age of 18. Currently it pays 3% on the first \$3,000.00 invested. Once your account goes over \$3,000.00 we will still pay the higher interest rate on that investment and accept additional deposits at the

Save By Mail Rate. It is our intention to always keep the Y.E.S. accounts at a higher interest rate than our other investments. In addition, every new investor receives a "Lagniappe" tote sack with age appropriate school & craft supplies. And there is still more. Send us a report card and get a \$1.00 deposit to your savings for each "A" or equivalent, limited to \$10.00 a year.

\$ RETURNING PRODUCT: CEF Stamps. We have brought back CEF stamps in \$1.00 denominations. They are perfect for rewarding Sunday School attendance, chores, mid-week or Bible school attendance. Parents, pastors, teachers may purchase stamp sheets for \$25.00 and your students or children may start saving on their redemption page. They may be redeemed for cash, deposited to an existing account or to open a new Y.E.S account.

As always- The Southern District Church Extension Fund serves only the Southern District. We are your CEF directed by your Southern District Convention. Your support of us allows us to support your congregations and ministry. Go to www.southerncef.org and download the investment brochure and application or call us at 1-888-493-5962 to get online access and make your investments through our secure server. As there is always risk in every investment, read the full prospectus before making any decisions. Southern District CEF is not FDIC insured, but we have not lost a single investor dollar in over 127 years of ministry.

Rev. Stephen S. Linck, Executive Director, Southern District CEF



Southern District Junior High Youth Gathering

Unity | Knowledge | Focus

Proverbs 2:6 – *For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.*

Wisdom. What is it? Where does it come from? How should we use it? We will discuss what wisdom looks like in a culture that glorifies shallow thinking, immature behavior, and selfishness. We will see how Christ becomes not only the center of our faith, but the very beginning of wisdom.

Gathering Locations and Dates:

Camp Blue Lake, Andalusia, AL – November 7th – 9th

Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center, Woodworth, LA – November 14th – 16th

Registration Costs (Includes Lodging, Meals & Program):

Early Bird registration \$85 – Prior to September 15th.

Regular registration: \$105 – September 16th – October 20th.

Registration Ends October 20th.

ALL Registration is ON LINE and MUST Be Paid In Full Prior to Gathering

Go Southernlcms.org - Click on the Youth tab. Questions? Contact: Cindy Namanny 601-924-9999, dce@orlcm.org
Cindy Namanny

Southern District Constitutions Committee

Is your congregation considering changes to your Constitution/By-laws? A Constitution/Bylaw review of your document should be made every 5 years or so to make sure it is updated for effectiveness.

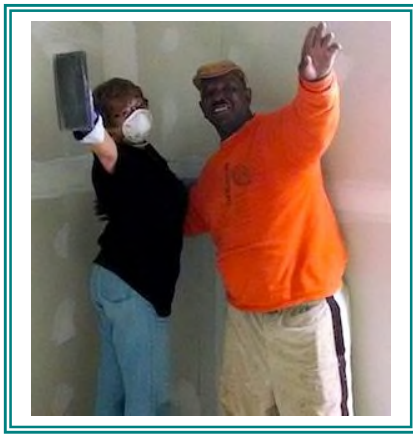
When considering changes, please keep in mind that your documents must be reviewed and approved by the district Constitutions Committee. The committee has posted guidelines and helpful information on the district website. They can be found under "About – Southern District – Constitutions and By-laws" which can be accessed on the home page.

If you have any questions, please email noon4130@bellsouth.net.

Rev. Thomas Noon, Chairman

Camp Restore Nine Years Later - Where We Stand

The following is a brief summary of where Camp Restore is today; over the next 12 months we'll be taking a deeper look at the past decade of RAI Ministries' work on the Gulf Coast and into the future with a monthly blog series under The Latest at camprestore.org.



We've come a long way in the past nine years. Much of what was flooded has been restored. Today a nationwide network of volunteers has joined with local volunteers and nonprofits, working together to restore homes, relationships with one another, and our environment.

Katrina highlighted problems that affect not only New Orleans, but many cities. There are significant systemic and social-justice issues that are just beginning to be addressed. Katrina also created opportunity to respond to these challenges in new ways, transforming NOLA into a test bed of community innovation with the highest rate of charter school students in the nation and a business start-up rate that far outpaces the rest of the country.

In many ways, New Orleans' story is also the story of 21st-century America. We have a lot of work to do, but we also have many new opportunities to use our God-given personal gifts and resources to do it. From a Christian perspective, it's a lot like what Isaiah 58 suggests we should be about.

According to the latest census data, Orleans Parish is home to around 378,000 people, or about 78% of its pre-Katrina population. There are at least 100,000 who have not yet returned. (NOLA.com: Katrina 9 Years Later)

We say "yet," because there continues to be steady population growth, with the neighborhoods hardest-hit seeing the greatest growth in the past four years. Both the Lower Ninth Ward and New Orleans East have experienced growth exceeding 20% since 2010, but they still have a ways to go as they remain well below their 2005 populations. (The Data Center: Neighborhood Growth Rates)

The levees have been rebuilt and improved, but much work needs to be done in restoring our protective wetlands.

We host an average of over 3,000 volunteers a year from across the country, and in 2015 we anticipate welcoming our 25,000th volunteer to Camp Restore!

In our construction efforts, we're now working almost exclusively with families who've had the toughest time recovering- and for whom funding for materials is scarce. Since 2012, we've completed 55 restoration projects on family homes, with much financial

help for materials coming from our volunteer groups.

Additionally, the Trinity-Claiborne facility in the Lower Ninth Ward was completely restored in 2012, and a permanent commercial kitchen was built at Camp in 2013.



Nearly a third of our volunteers have worked on dozens more homes in partnership with St. Bernard Project, Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together New Orleans, LowerNine.org and other community organizations.

Nearly half of our volunteers have served tens of thousands of hours over a wide range of volunteer opportunities with our nonprofit partners across the Greater New Orleans area.

Behind all the numbers are the relationships built and life-changing results of service with one another. Our NOLA family is growing far beyond Louisiana!

We've got an ever-increasing range of volunteer opportunities to address our long-term issues and develop solutions together. We thank everyone in the Southern District who has partnered with us from the first day until now, and invite you to join us moving forward!

Kurt Jostes

Concordia College Alabama – Selma, AL

Concordia College Alabama is expanding its degree programs this fall with the addition of two new Bachelor of Science degrees: B.S. Criminal Justice and B.S. Social and Behavioral Sciences. These new degrees are in addition to CCA's B.S. in Education and B.S. in Business Administration.

This is the first time since 1999 that new bachelor's degree programs have been added to the academic program. The new degrees were approved for immediate implementation by the college's accrediting agency, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Concordia also received approval from SACS COC for the addition of two new concentrations in the Bachelor of Science Business Administration program: Organizational Leadership and Management Information Systems. In addition, the College will offer a new associate's degree in Applied Management.

"When we received approval for the new programs, I was very happy for the faculty and staff because it's a result of their hard work," said Rev. Dr. Tilahun Menedo, Concordia President. "I'm even happier for the students and the community because this is just the beginning of making a bigger impact in service and expanding our academic reach."



The 2014-2015 school year began on August 11, 2014, with many Southern District pastors bringing prayers and presence to the opening service.

Concordia invites everyone to attend its 2014 Homecoming celebration to be held on October 11, 2014 at Bloch Park Memorial Stadium in Selma.

Abby Campbell

Congregation & School News

Bethany - Slidell, LA

Our pastor, Rod Pasch, recently celebrated his 33rd year anniversary of his ordination! We are a lucky congregation to have this man of God - lead us, teach us, and love us. Rejoice!

Sunday, August 24, 2014 was a day long awaited as we held the groundbreaking for a new Community Center. In many ways the project we are about to undertake is a continuation of the miracle God performed in the funding, building, and opening of our Open Arms Child Development Center which enabled us to fulfill our dream of providing quality Christ-centered education for children six weeks through four years old. Now it is time to turn our focus to other age groups for whom God has given us a heart and build a Community Center that can house numerous outreach initiatives.



This is a sample of the kinds of ministries the Community Center would enable us to provide:

- ✘ Supervised tutoring for local students
- ✘ After school programs for Open Arms families
- ✘ Recreation activities for youth and adults
- ✘ A School of Music and Arts
- ✘ Expanded youth opportunities for junior and senior high groups
- ✘ A shelter to be used in emergencies
- ✘ Housing for groups serving in our area
- ✘ Enrichment courses (e.g. parenting, marriage)

Bethany Lutheran Church has been blessed to be a blessing to our community. By sharing the resources God has entrusted to us through the Shine Capital Campaign we can change the lives of children, youth, and families in our area for time and eternity. Now is our time to "Shine", Matthew 5:16.

Kathy Boyea

Epiphany – Jackson, MS

The LWML of Epiphany, Jackson, MS held their annual luncheon on August 16, 2014. Opening and closing prayers were led by Rev. Raymond Gage, Interim Pastor. Linda Turner, President, gave a short review on the history of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the work of mites for missions. Two skits were presented by the ladies, "Kinds of Mite Boxes" and "Together We Can Do Great Things."



Xavier Johnson, Health and Wellness Coordinator, gave health tips. We had special support, wherever needed, by Congregational President Victor Cavett and Elder Carnie Hayes.

The luncheon was well attended, the food was delicious, and the fellowship was a blessing.

Linda Turner

St. Paul – Hammond, LA

Pastor Louis Boldt and Mrs. Marie Heck, congregational president & Restoration House volunteer, recently presented a check for \$1,085.75 to Mrs. Megan Richardson, RN & Restoration House volunteer, to support Restoration House's efforts to affirm human life in Tangipahoa Parish, LA. This year marked the fourth year of St. Paul's support for this crisis pregnancy center in Hammond which endeavors to "protect life and restore hope" for women and families facing the

challenges of an unplanned pregnancy. The congregation's gift was raised through a congregation wide "Baby Bottle Campaign" from Mother's Day to Father's Day, freewill offerings from their Summer VBS program, and their Sunday School Project Fund. St. Paul's LWML Society also joined in the fun by throwing a "Baby Shower" for Restoration House at their "Mother's Day Tea Party." The ladies collected all sorts of items that expectant mothers will need once their precious gift from God is born.

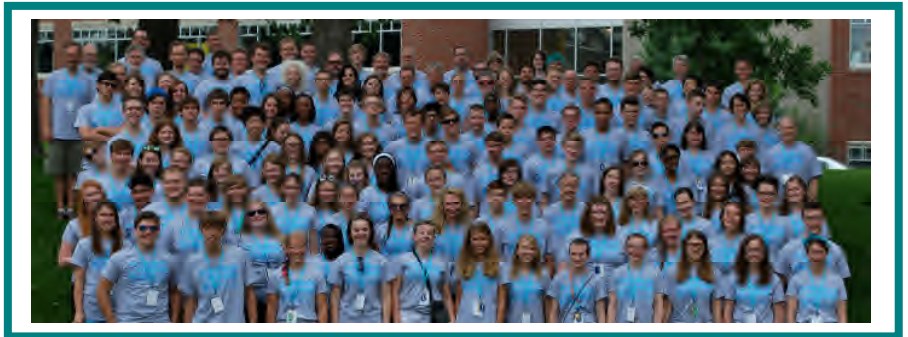
After 50 years of "Town & Gown" ministry, St. Paul got ready for the start of another school year by revealing part of its new outreach campaign to Southeastern Louisiana University students. The congregation created two banners that are displayed in prominent, high traffic areas around the church which is situated on the southwest corner of the college campus. In addition, Pastor Boldt hopes to build a "small-group" campus ministry group that will meet on the college campus throughout the year by gathering together for lunch and devotions in university's new student union.

Pastor Louis Boldt



St. John – Lake Charles, LA

The 2014 Lutheran Summer Music Academy (LSM), a four-week residential camp for talented high school musicians, was held at Luther College in Decorah, IA, June 22 - July 20. Along with 100+ students from 30 states, Austin Theriot of St. John - Lake Charles, LA was chosen to participate in the program. Austin is now a high school graduate who is attending Rice University this fall. This is the 4th summer for Austin at LSM.



Founded in 1981, LSM's mission is to transform lives and connect people through faith and music. By offering programs for young people that teach and celebrate the extraordinary musical heritage of the Lutheran church, LSM trains and inspires the next generation of musicians for the church.

Since its founding, more than 4,000 students have attended Lutheran Summer Music. Hundreds of these alumni have pursued careers in music education, church music, and music performance. LSM 2015 will be held June 21 to July 19 on the campus of Luther College in Decorah, IA.

Lutheran Music Program has developed two partnerships for congregations and colleges. The Young Musicians Partnership (YMP) encourages congregations to set up local scholarships for youth interested in attending the Lutheran Summer Music Academy.

The Collegiate Partnership brings together colleges and universities who join LSM faculty and staff in encouraging our students to consider studying music at your Lutheran institution.

For more information about Lutheran Summer Music or the Young Musicians and Collegiate Partnerships, please visit www.lutheransummertime.org, call the LSM office at 888-635-6583, or email lsm@lutheransummertime.org.

Megan Hasche, LSM Communications Coordinator

St. Paul's – Cullman, AL

St. Paul's - Cullman, AL, would like to invite all district congregations to the congregation's Reformation Festival on October 26th, 2014. Pre-Service music will begin at 3:15pm with guest organist, Paul Soulek, Director of Parish and School Music at St. John - Seward, Nebraska. The worship service will begin at 3:30pm featuring a sermon by Dr. Tim Saleska from Concordia Seminary - St. Louis.

Audrey Quick

St. Matthew – Gulfport, MS

St. Matthew - Gulfport, MS, will celebrate its 95th anniversary on Sunday, October 26, 2014, at 10:45 a.m. Because the date is also Reformation Sunday, we wanted our theme to reflect on Martin Luther. Our theme is: 95 and the 95th - By Grace Through Faith Alone. Rev. Adam Cooper, Pastor Emeritus, will conduct the worship service. Rev. Cooper served St. Matthew for twenty-six years before his retirement in 2006.

There will be a reception following the service in the church education building. Old friends as well as new are invited to join us on this special occasion.

Carolyn Peterman

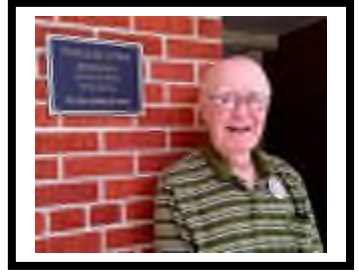
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd – Biloxi, MS

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd – Biloxi, MS, rededicated its education building, originally dedicated in 1956. The voters of the congregation approved the rededication. It was blessed and rededicated on August 31, 2014 in memory of Phyllis Litke.

Phyllis was a member of Good Shepherd since 1970 and served as a founding member of the Executive Board of Loaves and Fishes (a local soup kitchen), Chairman for the Board of Trustees, Chairman for the Board of Welfare, Nursery attendant, VBS teacher, and Sunday school teacher. She spent 44 of the building's 58 years as a leader in the church's education programs.

Phyllis passed away July 29, 2014. Her husband Jack Litke was present and unveiled a plaque in her honor. Phyllis and Jack were blessed with five children, Curtis Litke, Mike and his wife Monica Litke, Scott Litke, Sonia and her husband Chris Hill, and Paul Litke, all of Biloxi. They have 19 grandchildren and 35 great-grandchildren.

For Phyllis it was always about the kids. She spent her life taking care of children and teaching them about Jesus. The blessing and rededication was presided over by deferred Vicar James Garnett.



Vicar James Garnett

Faith – Shreveport, LA

Truth-telling, Stewardship, and Leadership.

The children had fun learning about God and praising Him. They sang, made beautiful crafts, played games and enjoyed snacks. We collected on offering each day for our mission project. On Sunday, June 22, the children presented a Praise Break to the congregation with songs, talks, and a slide presentation of their week of praising God.

On Monday, August 4th, The Gospel Guiders, Faith's youth group, under the direction of Mrs. Glenda Lafitte, journeyed to Great Wolf Lodge in Grapevine, TX. The youth held fundraisers and were given donations to help sponsor their summer trip to the lodge for a two day fun-filled excursion.

The trip provided the Guiders with a summer to remember and a way for us to show our love and appreciation for them. We thank God for His many blessings.



Arlene B. Ferguson



Our Vacation Bible School was held on June 16-21, under the direction of Ms. Brenda Baker. The theme was "Praise Break-Celebrating the Works of God!". Our lessons were: Praise God for Freedom, The Faith to Pray, The Savior's Birth, Lost and Found, and Marching to Zion. Our focused words were: Praise, Faith/Prayer,

Faith – Madison, AL

As everywhere, summer was a busy time at Faith - Madison, AL. In July we had the counselors from Camp Dixie return to lead our Vacation Bible School. It was a really fun and educational time with over 40 children participating.

In July the Christian Outreach Committee raised money for Gospel for Asia, specifically targeting their Water Buffalo project. We raised enough money to purchase 3 water buffaloes and to contribute to the campaign of a fourth.

In August we helped Pastor Eddie Scheler of St. Paul's - Decatur with his "It's Time" project of planting churches in Ethiopia. Pastor Scheler has challenged each congregation in the circuit to raise \$1,000 toward the Mekane Yesus Open Door Campaign.

Wishing you a blessed and fruitful Fall season, your brothers and sisters in Christ welcome you any time you may be in the area. Stop by and worship with us! Services are at 8 a.m. and 10:45 with fellowship at 9 and Sunday School at 9:30.

Sherrie Calahan

CrossRoad Church - Horn Lake, MS

On August 17, 2014, Pastor Tommy Lampella was installed as pastor at CrossRoad. District officials and pastors from around the district were in attendance. The installation ceremony was followed by a reception at LifeSpace, our multi purpose facility.





(L-r) Front row: Pastors Wally Lamb, Tommy Lampella, Kurtis Schultz, John Cantelle, Back row: Pastors Vic Maslowski, Warren Pellom, Jim McGee, James Holowach, David Hartung, Phil Schmidt

With Pastor Tommy's arrival there is a new breath of excitement at CrossRoad. We are glad to be spreading the Gospel in new ways to Horn Lake, MS and beyond.

We were blessed and thankful to have had Pastor Phil Schmidt, Pastor Emeritus from Trinity - Memphis, TN to serve as our vacancy pastor. Pastor Phil was a great encouraging cheerleader while we sought God's leading in finding our new pastor.

Tricia Smith

Redeemer – Fairhope, AL

Patti Miller, a religious artist from Redeemer - Fairhope, AL, was commissioned by LCMS Disaster Services to paint 20 original works of art for the 2014 Lutheran International Disaster Response Conference. The conference was held at the Fort Wayne Seminary in September and featured clergy from around the world.

The theme of this year's conference was "Standing with Mercy in Times of Disaster." The artwork was presented to the guest speakers at the conference. The scripture messages on each piece included, "Peace Be Still," "Follow Me," "Kyrie Eleison," and "The Good Shepherd." Patti hopes that by sharing these messages through art that it will bring hope and comfort to those impacted by disasters.



George Miller



St. Mark's – Elberta, AL

St. Mark's – Elberta, AL, installed Josiah Fitch (pictured center) as their vicar on Sunday, August 3. Fitch will work under Rev. Keith Ringers as he serves his third year in the four year pastoral program at Concordia Seminary - St. Louis. Vicar Fitch and his wife, Ashley, were welcomed to the church and community with a potluck dinner and a food and pantry shower following the service.

They are both very excited to be in Baldwin County and are eager to begin their year of ministry at St. Mark's. Their hobbies are traveling, visiting local sights, playing games, and enjoying good food.

Jennie Williamson (pictured right) from AriSon Records will be featured in, "God is Great! An Hour of Music Celebration" beginning at 8:45 AM at St. Mark's on Sunday, September 21. The goal of AriSon Records is to give each listener the opportunity to know the comfort of God's presence in their lives. Jennie will also lead the singing in the 9:45 AM service.



Diana Ringers

Ebenezer, Atmore, AL

On Sunday August 31, 2014 Ebenezer – Atmore, AL, celebrated their annual Men's Day Program. The guest speaker was the Rev. Michael A Johnson of Faith - Mobile AL, The theme was, "Men's As Witnesses" - Acts 1:18. We thank Mrs. Barbara Dunning for an awesome solo.

Pictured are from left to right are our guest speaker Rev. Michael Johnson, our Master of order Mr. Arbo Bradley, Bernard McCullam, Delarrian Poole, Rufus McCullam, Hoover Brown, Courtney Leslie, back row Rev. Benjamin Stallworth pastor of Ebenezer Lutheran, and Lawrence Goldsmith, not pictured Willie Barron.

We would like to thank everyone that came out to help us make this program a success and invite you to come again.



Annie Poole

Grace – Destin, FL

Grace - Destin, FL held an exciting, spirit-filled Vacation Bible School this summer. Over 100 children and 60 volunteers sang and danced to the theme, "Gangway to Galilee". Bible studies, reenactments, crafts and picture taking all led to Galilee while everyone had a great time learning about Jesus and His disciples at sea.

Pictured with some of the children is Timo Svedko, a seminary student and summer intern at Grace, from Tartu, Estonia. The VBS was organized by Jen Wendt wife of Pastor Kevin Wendt.

Leanne Andreas



Grace – Pensacola, FL

And He (Jesus) gave gifts to men.... And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints... Eph 4:8, 11-12.



On December 31, 2013, Pastor Stephen Linck resigned from GLC to become the Executive Director of the Church Extension Fund.

On August 3, 2014 Jesus blessed Grace – Pensacola, FL with Pastor Phillip Phifer and his family. His wife, Jennifer, is an elementary school teacher and they have 4 children.

Pastor Phil's ministry/focus is organizing outreach and missions for the congregation. His most recent program is "Theology on Tap," a monthly discussion group having conversations about faith and life at a local restaurant for anyone who wants to join the discussion.

We welcome Pastor Phil and his family and look forward to a time of renewed energy and opportunities to reach out to our community and around the world.

Susan McFarland

Christ – Tuscaloosa, AL

We give God thanks and glory for blessing our Vacation Bible Boot Camp at Christ - Tuscaloosa, AL. on July 14 - 16, 2014. We had an excess of 35 young people from the community to participate and they had a blast.

I personally thank Dr. Tonnia Prince and her staff who did an awesome job directing and implementing the event. I am (maybe just a bit boastful) blessed to have the greatest congregation in the world. Follow us on Facebook: Christ Lutheran Church, Tuscaloosa, AL.

Rev. Anthony Robinson

Immanuel - Pensacola, FL

On August 17, 2014 a celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Ordination of the Rev. Victor P. Schulz was held at Immanuel. A special presentation by the Rev. Randy Blankschaen, as well as the title Pastor Emeritus was officially bestowed on Pastor Schulz during the worship service and a reception followed in his honor. Pastor Schulz (right) is pictured with Pastor Blankschaen.

From 1947-1948 Pastor Schulz served as Vicar at St. Paul, Port and Burgundy, New Orleans before he graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois in 1949.

On August 14, 1949 Pastor Schulz was Ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry at St. Paul, Port and Burgundy, New Orleans at the same time he was installed as Assistant Pastor.

Pastor Schulz served congregations in New Orleans, LA; Odessa, TX; Perry, Oklahoma; Lake Charles, LA; Birmingham, AL; and Kansas City, KS before accepting the call to Immanuel - Pensacola, FL in 1982.

Pastor Schulz served the congregation of Immanuel faithfully for 15 years from 1982-1997. He retired in 1997 from Immanuel where he remains an active church member.



Kristin Schulz

St. Paul's - Decatur, AL



St. Paul's - Decatur AL, recently honored Pastor Christopher Brynestad on the fifth anniversary of his ordination, installation and ministry with a reception and celebration breakfast. Pastor Chris was ordained in Corpus Christi, TX on August 9, 2009 and installed as Associate Pastor at St. Paul's on August 16, 2009. His primary ministry responsibilities have been with our Youth and our Care Ministries. We thank God and appreciate Pastor Chris and his passion for serving our Lord here at St. Paul's.

September 4th was a special day at St. Paul's Preschool. We had 60+ grandparents and special friends visit our classrooms for Grandparent's Day. Our parents and grandparents are an important part of our Preschool ministry. Proverbs 22:6 says: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." We thank our families for being their first and most important teachers.

Carol Morgan

Good Shepherd Lutheran School Elberta, AL

In their weekly chapel service, the students of Good Shepherd Lutheran School – Elberta, AL learn about "giving back to God", by bringing an offering. In September, their offerings will go to the American Heart Association. In October and November, the offering is a non-perishable food item which will be donated to a local food pantry before Thanksgiving.

On Saturday, October 25th, the school will have a booth selling water and drinks at the Elberta Sausage Festival. This is one of the school's fundraisers, and funds raised will be matched by Thrivent.

Charlotte Bailey

Redeemer Lutheran School – Pensacola, FL

"For sixty years Redeemer Lutheran School - Pensacola, FL, has been in the 'growing' business," stated Principal John Price. Redeemer has seen children grow from little "tikes" into young adults following many different paths in life.

On Sunday, August 24th, teachers and staff were installed during a "Chapel Service" for the congregation led by Mr. Price. This year's theme is "Witness Always." A luncheon was shared with parents and members. Over the past 60 years there have been many changes at RLS, but the unchanging love of Jesus has always been foremost in the teaching of these little lambs.

Cynthia Henderson

Holy Cross – Mobile, AL

Now that the school year is back in full blast so is our local student/ young adult ministry. Lutheran Student Fellowship of South Alabama, which meets at Holy Cross – Mobile, AL, set a goal this year to lead as a young adult group in our area.

I, along with three other friends from Holy Cross, attended an LCMS four day service event this summer hosted by Brandon Heath's (DCE) Orange Nation out of Christ - La Mesa, California. Whenever Young Adult Volunteers in the LCMS go somewhere as a group we wear orange shirts; it's where we get the nick name "Orange Nation". Orange is an unapologetic, bold color and as this sea of Orange traveled around San Diego we, too, unapologetically and boldly, served in the name of Christ. It is a true blessing to be united with other young adults from all over the country and see the body of Christ in action in a society that often times finds the church body irrelevant.



Being a part of Orange Nation means being a part of a movement. We show our communities as individuals and as a group that we are relevant and bring hope to the hopeless.

With the support of our congregation and Thrivent's live generously campaign. Lutheran Student Fellowship of South Alabama hosted a Service Event for our region at Camp Dixie Lutheran Outdoor Ministries September 12-14. Groups from the University of Georgia - Athens, Georgia Tech, Florida State, University of Florida, Auburn University, and South Alabama were all in attendance. We accomplished

so much in three short days, including two much needed onsite service projects for the camp, outdoor contemporary worship, small group Bible studies, and special sunset prayer circles on the public beach with a beautiful double rainbow as our backdrop.

Whether on a national or local scale, it is college groups and retreats like these that really make a difference in Christian young adult unity. We show are communities that we are here, relevant, and active. If you or someone you know is looking for a college/young adult group to plug into we warmly welcome you to join us on Tuesday nights at 6:00pm at Holy Cross in Mobile. We will have many other activities throughout the year and look forward to seeing new faces. Call 251-342-8755 for more information about our group or visit LCMSU.org for more information on other college groups in the area.

Maria Brutkiewicz

Share Your News

The Spirit of Southern is the Southern District's publication in which we share the good news of our District and its congregations. The following guidelines are designed to assist you in preparing materials for submission.

Deadlines: The Spirit of Southern is produced six times a year. Deadlines are the 15th of odd numbered months (Jan., Mar., May, July, Sept., Nov.) Please keep in mind that from deadline to your mailbox is a time frame of approximately one month. If you wish to announce a coming event, it should be sent well ahead of the event date. Material received after the deadline will be included in the web edition.

What to send: We look for the "good news" of events happening in your congregation – special programs, outreach events, installations, dedications, anniversaries, new member Sundays, etc. A good photo is a plus! Please see photo information below. The guideline for article length is 200 words.

What cannot be used: Our non-profit postal permit does not allow for any advertisement. Therefore, we cannot include information that may result in sales of a product or service. Also, space does not permit the publication of creative writing.

How to submit: The preferred method is e-mail to the editor at sosstuff@yahoo.com. Articles and photos may also be mailed to the District Office (The Spirit of Southern – Southern District LCMS –100 Mission Drive, Slidell, LA 70460-5221). Please allow 2 weeks for mailing.

Photos: Please send photos as a JPEG file. Photos included in a Word file are not reliable.

Please keep in mind that we cannot improve the quality of your photo. A dark background or grainy print will look darker or grainier in the publication. If you are using a digital camera, please set to the **highest resolution**. This is necessary for a quality photo to be produced on a press. If you are sending a print, use a high quality photo paper or photo lab printing. Scanned pictures and photocopies cannot be used, and prints are not returned.

Where: Outdoor photos will generally result in a better photo for publication. Be sure that indoor pictures are taken in a brightly lit location with a light background, if possible.

What: A good question to ask is, "What would I like people to see from this event?" Include people whenever possible. If individuals can be identified, please include that information with the photo.

Installation photos: The traditional photo of pastors in attendance at the installation is a wonderful memento for the pastor to keep, but we prefer for publication that you include the pastor and members of his new congregation (officers, call committee, elders, etc.) as they begin ministry together. Another option is the pastor and his family as they are welcomed into a new congregational family.

We look forward to receiving and sharing your congregation's good news!