

Presenters for the 2019 CNH District Missions Conference

Dawit (David) Bokre currently serves as lead pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Hayward, CA. Born and raised in the capital city of Asmara, Eritrea, Dawit and his family were faithful members of the Eritrean Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 2003 at the age of 13, he came to the United States and lived in Boston and Houston during the first five years of his life in America. In 2008, Dawit was called by a small group of Eritrean in the Bay Area to be a bi-vocational church worker and plant an Eritrean Church. After his arrival, the group started to meet in homes and eventually started to meet every Sunday for worship in their heart language, Tigrinya. Also at this time, Dawit began his theological training entering the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology program through Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO, which he then completed in 2016. Today, Dawit serves an English-speaking multiethnic group and a Tigrinya-speaking Eritrean group at Good Shepherd while he continues to look for ways to plant more churches. Dawit resides in Hayward, CA with his wife, Saron. Apart from ministry, he enjoys meeting new people, socializing with others in coffee shops, cooking, and watching basketball, football and soccer.



John Denninger (Keynote Speaker) is currently serving his 3rd term as Southeastern District President. He was first elected to the position in May, 2012. Born in Hannibal, Missouri, John spent most of his growing up years in Fort Wayne, IN. He graduated from Concordia Junior College, Ann Arbor, MI; Concordia Senior College, Ft. Wayne, IN; and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO. He earned his Doctor of Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. After being ordained in 1980, he served as Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Auburn, NE. In 1984, he was called to be Campus Pastor at Nebraska University, Kearney, NE, where he served until receiving a call from Prince of Peace, Springfield, VA in 1988. He served at Prince of Peace first as Associate Pastor, and then as Senior Pastor. John has been married to Constance for 36 years, and they have three daughters: Jessica, Laura, and Sara; three sons-in-law; and 6 grandsons.

CNH District's **Disability Ministry Task Force (DMTF)** is using the life and ministry experience of panel members to lead a discussion on ways a congregation can begin to grow a healthy and vital disability ministry. Each panel member serves as their congregation's Disability Ministry Contact Person. Their congregations have found a variety of exciting ways to build an environment of disability awareness and welcoming inclusion of people with disabilities and their families into the life of the congregation.

- ⇒ **Dianne Flynn** – Peace Lutheran Church in Sacramento, CA. She began a disability ministry at Peace Lutheran Church in Sacramento two years ago, where they have held a workshop and respite events.
- ⇒ **Rev. Phillip Kohlmeyer** – Serves part-time at Christ Lutheran, Martinez. They host a weekly dinner followed by Bible study. Some special needs adults of the community have also participated. Rev. Kohlmeyer, who is a member of Faith Lutheran Church in Pleasant Hill, facilitated their first disability awareness workshop in 2018. That congregation opened a preschool on January 2, 2019, which is designed as an inclusive school with plans to enroll some special needs children.
- ⇒ **Art Larson** – Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Los Gatos, CA. Art organizes a four-hour respite event for children with disabilities twice a year at Holy Cross, and has helped create an environment of disability awareness within the congregation.
- ⇒ **Debbie Oatman** – Grace Lutheran Church in Hayward, CA. Along with her husband, Rev. Mark Oatman, they are passionate about ministry to people of all abilities. They lead volunteers of Grace Lutheran Church, Hayward, in providing a twice-monthly worship and dinner fellowship called *Friday Friends* for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- ⇒ **Elaine Zimmerman** – St. John's Lutheran Church in Napa, CA. She served as a teacher in Lutheran schools for 24 years, and this training also led her to provide Bible classes for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Elaine will serve as the moderator for the discussion.



Engene (Gene) Eckert is a long-time member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Los Gatos, CA. He grew up in Racine, WI, and graduated from Lutheran High School there. After graduating from Valparaiso University, he worked as an engineer for GE until retirement. All along, the Lord has kept him busy in high school youth work, singing, handbells, and Mission trips to the Czech Republic, Thailand, Taiwan, and now to his home church community. He is married to Joan, who is also very active in Mission ministry, and they have been blessed with a large 4-generation family. He presently serves as vice president of Mission Outreach at Holy Cross.

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Dust Kunkel grew up in Ghana, West Africa and the Pacific Northwest, the son of LCMS missionaries, and has served for eight years as executive assistant to the president of the Northwest District, LCMS. "Because of living on two continents as a kid," says Dust, "Walking alongside leaders comes naturally, it feels right to me to see things from their point of view." Dust holds a DCE post-bachelor certification, and a MSc in Outdoor Education from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He is a certified executive coach through Coachnet (ACC credential from the International Coach Federation). He served as interim director for campus ministry at Concordia University, Portland; managed year-round programming and staff at Lutherhaven Ministries in North Idaho; launched a youth and family small group ministry in Oregon; co-directed Mass Events for the LCMS National Youth Gathering; and loved 52 children in two years with his wife, Jan, at *The Shepherd's Home, Inc.*, a non-profit home dedicated to helping abused and neglected children. Dust and Jan live in Portland, Oregon, and have two biological daughters, Lily and Zoe, and a number of "grafted" children from their years at *The Shepherd's Home*. When talking about Dust Kunkel, people use words like: friend, proactive, singer-songwriter, team-builder, playful, strategic, encourager, third-culture-kid (TCK), resilient, and fly fisherman.



Michael (Mike) Lange presently serves as the CNH District President. He is a 1988 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Mike served as an Associate and interim Senior Pastor in Wayzata, MN, a missionary-at-large in Dixon and Brentwood, CA, and Senior Pastor in Brentwood, CA. Most recently he served as Assistant to the President, Executive Director for Mission Advancement in the CNH District from 2013—2018. He participated in two different leadership tracks through Pastoral Leadership Institute and is presently working to complete his D.Min. in missiology. He has been married to Kristi (Peck) Lange since 1988. They have four adult children and two in-law children. Two golden retrievers round out the family and have together beget 29 puppies.

Paul Henry Lauaki: For the last five years, Paul has been working as the Assistant Director of a nine-month discipleship program called Master's Commission based out of Phoenix, AZ. While a part of the Phoenix Master's Commission, Paul created new ministries and brought creative ideas. He helped revamp a program that only had three students and one person on staff when he joined, to now having four staff members, and 15 students on average a year. He has now moved back to his hometown of Palo Alto. Together with LINC Bay Area and the support of CNH, he seeks to build on his experience in raising disciples to bring up a generation and a mindset of raising disciples here in the Bay Area.

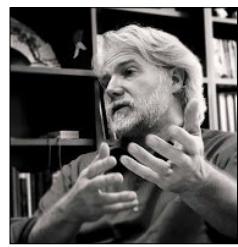


Peter Meier serves as Executive Director for The Center for United States Missions, a mission organization founded in 2000 by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod North American Missions, along with Concordia University Irvine and the LCMS North American Mission Executives (NAME). Its purpose is to equip disciples to multiply faith communities. The Center provides research, training, coaching, consultation and resources for church multiplication. Today, the Center operates as a unit of Concordia Irvine, in strategic partnership with NAME, POBLO, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Prior to joining the Center in July 2013, Peter served in the Minnesota South District, LCMS, as Executive Assistant to the President (2005-2006), and Assistant to the President for Missions (2005-2013). He served as Senior Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church and School in Mayer, MN from 1982-2005. Born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Peter received an undergraduate education degree from Concordia Teachers College in River Forest, IL in 1978, and his Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana in 1982. His Doctor of Ministry degree was granted in 2011 by Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. Peter is married to Kathy; they are blessed with three married children and six grandchildren.

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Aaron Putnam is Executive Director of LINC Bay Area, an urban ministry network working collaboratively to restore the people of the San Francisco Bay Area through Christ. LINC Bay Area focuses on empowering local leaders to impact their community through the Gospel.

In 2007, Aaron was called to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Hayward, California as a church planter focused on ministry with Hispanics. He spent 10 years serving as pastor at Good Shepherd working with ministries in English, Spanish, Tigrinya and Oromo. Aaron graduated from Willamette University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and from Lewis and Clark College with a Master of Arts in Teaching. After spending five years as a public high school teacher in Oregon, he moved to Guatemala and worked as a volunteer missionary with the Lutheran Church of Guatemala for five years. Upon returning to the U.S., he entered Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and graduated in 2008 with a Master of Divinity degree. Away from work, Aaron enjoys spending time traveling, hiking, golfing and enjoying life with his wonderful wife Sofia and their four very active sons.



Cordell Schulten is a teacher at Heritage Christian Academy in Fenton, Missouri and serves on the advisory board for Family Shield Ministries. Previously, he served for 4 years as the English Ministry pastor at the Korean Presbyterian Church in Kirkwood, Missouri. From 2009 through 2014, Cordell lived in Korea and taught American Law at Handong Global University. He has also taught at Missouri Baptist University and Fontbonne University in St. Louis, Missouri. Before teaching, he practiced law for ten years. Cordell earned his M.A. in Theological Studies from Covenant Theological Seminary in 2004 and his J.D. from Saint Louis University School of Law in 1986. He has also studied Theology & Culture at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Cordell and his wife Sandy have been married for 40 years. They have four grown children and five grandchildren. He is the author of *Life Abroad @ Handong*.

Terry Tieman (Keynote Speaker) began his career in ministry as a pastor in Michigan and Arkansas. He then served for 13 years as Mission Executive of the Mid-South District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS). In January 2009, Terry became the Executive Director of Transforming Churches Network (TCN), which helps churches become more effective in reaching their communities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Terry continues to gain front-line experience as Pastor at Grace Celebration Lutheran Church in Memphis, Tennessee, where he began serving August 1. He is also the author of several books, including *Hinges: Opening Your Church's Doors to the Community*, *Catching Vision*, *Skill Builders*, *People of Passion*, *Discipleship: Following the Master*, and *The Discipleship Journey*. Terry's most recent work has led to the development of *Seasons of Discovery*, a step-wise church transformation process. Terry and his wife Becky, have three sons and two grandchildren.



Abi Tesfaye serves as DCE at Good Shepherd in Hayward, overseeing music and youth programs. She completed her degree in Religious Education at Concordia University Texas. A native Texan, she is perpetually cold in the Bay Area, yet enjoys the unique opportunity to serve such a diverse population. Abi is passionate about seeing people love and serve God through the gifts which He has given them.

Stella Yau Lok serves as an Associate City Director of LINC Los Angeles to empower, equip, and train local leaders to start new ministries that impact Los Angeles with the Gospel. LINC exists to move your God-given vision from dream to reality. Stella was born in Hong Kong and grew up mostly in Northern California since she was 9 years old. She went to UC Davis and studied Economics and Communications. She grew up in the church (Hong Kong Lutheran Synod and later LCMS) and has a heavy heart for youth, college, young adults, worship, and mission ministries. She loves the LORD and she loves the ministries and missions of the local church. She and her husband, Ron Lok, moved to Southern California in early 2014 where she attended Azusa Pacific Seminary. She graduated in Spring 2016 with a master's degree in Pastoral Studies, emphasizing in Church Leadership and Development. In the past two years (2016-2018), Stella was the Mission Director with LINC Los Angeles for First Lutheran Church and SONshine House Preschool in Temple City, contracted specifically to redevelop ministry and mission and served as a bridge between the church and the community.

