PenPALS

NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

AUGUST 2026

A Word from the PALS Director

"I'm reminded of the joy and hope we have in Christ, and the reality that, 'The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore....'"

Rev. Jonathan Manor

News from the PALS Field

Set Apart to Serve

What are PALS Participants Saying?

PALS Gatherings

PALS Facebook Page

PALS Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support



A PRAYER FOR OUR LIFE

O Lord God, our help and protection, You neither slumber nor sleep. Keep us from all evil in this world so that we may not be overwhelmed.

Assure us that you will keep our lives in our going out and coming in forevermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HE WILL KEEP YOUR LIFE



I LIFT UP MY EYES TO THE HILLS. FROM WHERE DOES MY HELP COME?
MY HELP COMES FROM THE LORD, WHO MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.
HE WILL NOT LET YOUR FOOT BE MOVED; HE WHO KEEPS YOU WILL NOT SLUMBER.
BEHOLD, HE WHO KEEPS ISRAEL WILL NEITHER SLUMBER NOR SLEEP.
THE LORD IS YOUR KEEPER; THE LORD IS YOUR SHADE ON YOUR RIGHT HAND.
THE SUN SHALL NOT STRIKE YOU BY DAY, NOR THE MOON BY NIGHT.
THE LORD WILL KEEP YOU FROM ALL EVIL; HE WILL KEEP YOUR LIFE.
THE LORD WILL KEEP YOUR GOING OUT AND YOUR COMING IN
FROM THIS TIME FORTH AND FOREVERMORE.
Psalm 121

As the calendar turns from August to September, I thought the temperatures here in St. Louis would begin to cool, but that's not the case so far! We're staying in the triple digits throughout this week. While that's not what I expected as we journey from summer into fall, there are other signs that show a new season is upon us. The public and parochial and home schools are back in session. Congregations and districts have been blessed as ordinations and installations of recent graduates have taken place in their midst. And the first gatherings of the new PALS year have begun in several of our groups.

These things taking place may be realities that you lament, or ones that you embrace, as there are renewed routines and overflowing opportunities and excellent experiences awaiting you – as there may be some anxious anticipation and challenging changes and weighty wrestling with it all as well.

As this all takes place in our rhythm of life under the cross of Christ, we are reminded of the realities written about in Ecclesiastes, that "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." As we go out and come in as baptized children of God we are assured that "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." And through the ups and downs of those seasons and times, your Lord has promised to never

leave you or forsake you. Because of that reality, you can continue to trust that "He will keep your life."

In this time and season of PALS, we are blessed with 62 amazing facilitators who give of themselves in service to the Lord and to their joyful task of encouraging and supporting you – the pastors, wives and families in their PALS group – as you transition from seminary life to parish life. Of those 62 facilitators, we have 12 new facilitators serving in their first PALS year – what a blessing!

As we journey together into new seasons and times in congregations, districts, PALS groups, and our personal lives, I'm reminded of the joy and hope we have in Christ, and the reality that, "The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore."

Go, my children, with my blessing, Never alone.
Waking, sleeping, I am with you; You are my own.
In my love's baptismal river
I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing - You are my own.

I the Lord will bless and keep you, And give you peace;
I the Lord will smile upon you, And give you peace;
I the Lord will be your Father,
Savior, Comforter, and Brother.
Go, my children; I will keep you, And give you peace.

Lutheran Service Book #922, stz.1,4

Yours in our crucified and risen Lord and Savior Jesus,

Jonathan

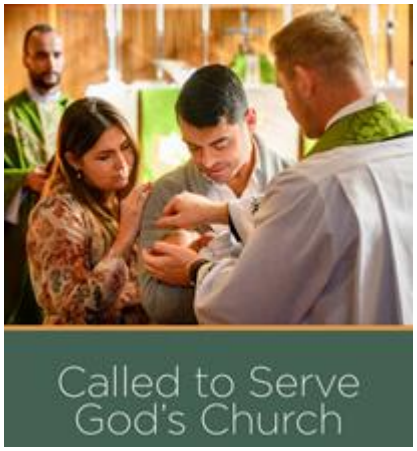
Rev. Jonathan Manor

Director of PALS and Continuing Education



NEWS FROM THE PALS FIELD

SET APART TO SERVE



Do you know someone who is currently serving in a career that is not full-time church work, but are finding themselves thinking more and more about becoming a pastor or a classroom teacher in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? This book is for them!

Called to Serve God's Church

This book shares the stories of men who pursued the pastoral ministry as a second career, and men and women who pursued being a Lutheran school teacher as a second career. I encourage you to browse through the pages and reflect on the many stories.

Think about the men and women in your congregation who are present in the Divine Service, weekly Bible study, and who serve in leadership roles. Pray for opportunities to talk with them about a second career as a pastor or teacher. Share this book with them either electronically, or in a hard copy that you can order from the LCMS Pastoral Education office at SetApart2Serve@lcms.org.

Rev. Jonathan Manor
Set Apart to Serve partner and contributor
Director of PALS and Continuing Education

WHAT ARE PALS PARTICIPANTS SAYING?

Thanks be to God for PALS!



It was wonderful to get to know other ladies going through the same stage we are. The wisdom of the facilitator and the ladies 1 or 2 years ahead of us was incredibly helpful.

It's great to have a set time to get to know other pastor families in the district and have a space to talk about potential issues.

PALS encourages open conversation and time to wrestle with topics as it relates to our context.

This truly assists my wife in building relationships after installation.

PALS GATHERINGS

Ohio District



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Mark and Sue Matzke**, hosted a PALS retreat in **Dublin, Ohio** this month. The retreat kicked off with an evening out together at Beef O'Brady's in Hilliard.

St. John Lutheran Church in Dublin was the site for the bulk of the event. Pastors worked through sessions on *Stewardship as Pastor, Leader, and Teacher*. Wives discussed "Life in a Stained-Glass Fishbowl," making friends as a pastor's wife, as well as Heidi Goehmann's article, "Is he my pastor or my husband?" Wives and children also enjoyed time together at the zoo!

One pastor shared, "*PALS is a great program to add to the tools to help form effective pastors in their first years*."

Iowa District East



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Ronnie and Sandy Koch** hosted a PALS event at **St. John Lutheran Church** in **Center Point, Iowa**. Topics studied by the pastors included, Walther's American Lutheran Pastoral Theology and PALS course, *Transition from Seminary to Parish*.

Wives were introduced to the book, Family Trees and Olive Branches, and appreciated time to discuss life and family. Everyone enjoyed time together for worship, prayer, casuistry, family time, and study in the congregation's meeting room.

One participant shared, "It is helpful to have time to meet and talk with other new pastors' families…very welcoming discussion."

Texas District



PALS facilitators, **Pastor James and Karen Menke**, gathered their group together for a PALS event at **Living Word Lutheran Church** in **The Woodlands, Texas**. The wives discussed the first 2 chapters of the book, I'm More Than a Pastor's Wife. Karen shared, "*I'm enjoying getting to know these ladies and giving them a safe place to share*."

Pastors discussed spiritual formation as part of pastoral formation. One pastor shared, "*The open community of support, prayer, and God's Word is filling*."