PenPALS
NEWSLETTER

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September 2025

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RENEW ME, O ETERNAL LIGHT – *LSB 704, vs.2–3*

Remove the pow'r of sin from me, And cleanse all my impurity.
That I may have the strength and will, Temptations of the flesh to still.

Create in me a new heart, Lord, That gladly I obey Your Word.
Let what You will be my desire, And with new life my soul inspire.

FLEE FROM…FLEE TO…



BUT AS FOR YOU, O MAN OF GOD, FLEE THESE THINGS. PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, GODLINESS, FAITH, LOVE, STEADFASTNESS, GENTLENESS. FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF THE FAITH. TAKE HOLD OF THE ETERNAL LIFE TO WHICH YOU WERE CALLED AND ABOUT WHICH YOU MADE THE GOOD CONFESSION IN THE PRESENCE OF MANY WITNESSES. *1 Timothy 6:11–12*

St. Timothy…Pastor and Confessor was indeed a man of God, as St. Paul calls him here at the end of his first letter to him. And he encourages this man of God to "flee from these things". These things, begin with this: "But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs."

Flee from money? No, money is not the problem, but the love of it – the worldly reliance on it – the temptation that comes when you have it and the temptations that come when you don't.

St. Augustin writes this, "You were trying to flee with gold; flee from gold instead. Let your heart flee from it, and your use of it need have no worries. Do without greed; don't do without concern for others. There's something you can do with gold, if you're its master, not its slave. If you're the master of gold, you can do good with it; if you're its slave, it can do evil with you." *Augustin sermon on 1 Timothy 6*

So we are encouraged to flee from the love of money. But St. Paul also warns that "If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing." *1 Timothy 6:3-4a* And he instructs the Corinthians to "flee from sexual immorality." *1 Corinthians 6:18* And he exhorts them to "Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry." *1 Corinthians 10:14* And he writes, "So flee youthful passions." *2 Timothy 2:22*

Flee from the love of money – the conceited false teacher – sexual immorality and idolatry – youthful passions – ultimately, flee from all things that are contrary to the Word of God and his commands.

Sounds good, right? "But I know me…I know my thoughts and my words and my deeds…I can relate all too well to Jesus' words that 'the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak'."

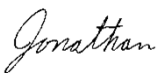
Kretzmann writes, "It is a bad plan to try out one's powers of resistance in courting the dangers connected with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. To keep away from their alluring attractions is the one safe thing to do." *Kretzmann commentary*

Flee from these things, for the good of your body and soul. But don't just flee **from** them – flee **to** something as well. Flee to that which the Lord has given you. Flee to his Word in the Holy Scriptures – flee with repentant hearts to the word of his holy Absolution – flee to the font where you were marked and claimed and redeemed as his child and where he daily reminds you of that gift and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit – flee to his altar where you receive his true body and blood.

In these means of grace, you will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness" – strengthened to take up the whole armor of God and "fight the good fight of the faith" and strengthened to "take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

In the strength of the Lord alone, you can flee **from** all things that are contrary to the Word of God and his commands – and you can flee **to** Christ. Through his death and resurrection, you have forgiveness for every time you've fallen to temptation and failed to flee from sin, and you have, even now, the eternal life to which you were called in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Jonathan Manor, Director of PALS and Continuing Education



NEWS FROM THE PALS FIELD

WHAT ARE PALS PARTICIPANTS SAYING?



I appreciate the wisdom of the facilitators and the support of the other participants in the first few years of my ministry. It is encouraging.

PALS is a wonderful opportunity to encourage pastors new to the field to interact with one another. With the various new blessings and challenges that come with the ministry, it is comforting to know that the shepherds of God's flock are not alone. The PALS retreat was a great opportunity to meet with fellow new pastors and families freshly out of the seminary. It provided a comfortable and casual opportunity to get together!

PALS provides a safe space for me to talk about current highs and lows in ministry with fellow pastors' families.

PALS is a wonderful opportunity for pastors and their families to receive love and assurance from brothers and sisters in the trenches.

PALS GATHERINGS

Central Illinois District



PALS facilitators, **Pastor David and Kassie Weaver** opened the PALS year with a Labor Day weekend retreat at **Camp Cilca** in **Cantrall, Illinois**.

The group enjoyed multiple opportunities to worship and study, as well as much needed time in casuistry. Wives worked through portions of the books, Pew Sisters by Katie Schuermann and Parenting in the Pew by Robbie Castleman. Pastors enjoyed a discussion around the topic, “Friends in the Congregation.”

Kansas District (West)



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Mark and Lynn Boxman** gathered their group together at **Redeemer Lutheran Church** in **Arkansas City, Kansas**. PALS participant, **Pastor Christopher Warneke** led the opening worship. The group worked through the PALS course, *Stewardship of Time*.

Participants appreciate rotating meetings to participants’ congregations and homes. One participant shared, “I always enjoy getting together and look forward to the next meeting!”



Kansas District (East)

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Andrew and Miriam Wehling** gathered their group together at **Immanuel Lutheran Church** in **Lawrence, Kansas.**

Pastors worked through a study of 1 Peter 5:3 and Hebrews 13:17 as well as a review of Walther's Pastoral Theology articles 10 and 45. Wives enjoyed studying portions of the book Faith to Follow by Kate Meadows, as well as Heidi Goehmann's book, The Mighty and Mysterious.



Ohio District

The Ohio District PALS group, led by facilitators **Pastor Mark and Sue Matzke**, met at **St. John Lutheran Church** in **Dublin, Ohio**. Pastors worked through PALS course, *Apt to Teach*, by Dr. Mark Blanke. Wives enjoyed a study around Deb Burma's book, Joy: a Study of Philippians.

One participant shared, "It was good to reconnect with others." And another, "I am blessed to be part of this group!"



Southern Illinois District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Peter and Carrie Ill** hosted a barbeque in **Millstadt, Illinois**, to kick off the PALS year.

In addition to time together around a meal, families enjoyed worship together, a program overview, as well as separate time for pastors and wives. The afternoon topic was "*Boundaries and Leisure Time*."

One participant shared, "*Very helpful! We enjoy these meetings*."



Iowa District West

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Chris and Heather Nitzel**, led a retreat for their group at **Camp Okoboji** in **Milford, Iowa**. The camp facilities were truly appreciated. One participant shared, *"The accommodations were great for the family. There was time for fellowship with other pastors and families as well as time to spend with our own family."*

The group enjoyed using the PALS course, *Transition from Seminary to Parish*, to guide their discussion.

South Wisconsin District



The South Wisconsin District PALS group enjoyed gathering at **Luther Memorial Chapel** in **Shorewood, Wisconsin.** PALS facilitators, **Pastor David and Becky Juhl** welcomed in the newly eligible pastors and wives into their fellowship.

The group worshipped together, worked through a Bible study, *Hospitality in the Bible, at Church and in the Home*, and enjoyed time together getting to know each other.

One participant shared, "*It's wonderful to enjoy the mutual consolation and conversation of the brothers, knowing that we are not alone but in this together*."

Iowa District East



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Ronnie and Sandy Koch** met with their PALS group at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church** in **Fredericksburg, Iowa**.

In addition to planning out the year's schedule, the group enjoyed ample time for discussion, study, and time together sharing meals. Children enjoyed making use of the playground!

SET APART TO SERVE

SET APART TO SERVE
LCMS CHURCH WORK RECRUITMENT

Dear Pastor,

Set Apart to Serve is a culture of forming and recruiting church workers in every LCMS congregation, family, school, district, and entity. One way to help develop this culture in your congregation is to *intentionally* focus on forming and recruiting church workers. *SAS* has a couple of excellent resources to assist you and your congregation.

Please look at Engaging Laity in Your Congregation and Talking to Young People About Vocation.

How can you use these resources in your congregation?

Rev. Dr. James Baneck (Jim)
LCMS Executive Director, Office of Pastoral Education