



DISTRICT NEWS

OKLAHOMA

Christ is Risen Indeed!



Rev. Dr. David Nehrenz
District President

What is the unique work of the church?

For the Third Sunday after Pentecost, we read about people as sheep and the world as God’s pasture in Matthew 9:35–38:

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

The plentiful harvest is all the people in the world. Jesus has compassion for a world of harassed, helpless and lost sheep. The Lord of the harvest is God the Father. He sends Jesus as the True Shepherd who serves the Lord of the living harvest. Jesus teaches, preaches, heals and cleanses. He freely brings the Good News of the kingdom of heaven through His sacrificial death on the cross and His glorious resurrection.

The Gospel lesson then names His workers (Matthew 10:1–4):

Jesus called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve apostles are these:

first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

The workers included the 12 disciples who were called by Jesus into the office of Apostle. After Jesus ascended and before the Day of Pentecost, Judas Iscariot was replaced by Matthias. They were eyewitnesses of the entire three-year ministry of Jesus Christ.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these apostles were guided by God to pen the writings of the New Testament. Paul was also called later as the apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote in Ephesians 2:19–21:

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

The 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is scheduled for July 18–23 in downtown Phoenix. The theme will be “Christ Is Risen Indeed,” based on 1 Corinthians 15:20–22:

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in

See **MESSAGE**, Page 3

Small acts ... big impact

By Deena Loret

LWML Ponca City Zone President

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As an active member of LWML, I have had a variety of opportunities to engage with many speakers, vendors and other participants during our district LWML conventions and our national conventions. I met a man of great inspiration at our national convention in June 2023 in Milwaukee. Phil Zielke, founder and president of Phil's Friends, was a break-out session guest speaker, and I was completely enthralled by his story of his two-time battle and triumph over cancer.

Having lost both my mother and father to this horrific disease, I was instantly overcome with the overwhelming desire to help this Godly man and his personal mission. After he had wrapped up his message, I introduced myself to him. I asked him if the very loomed baby hat that I had been making while listening to his message was the type of hat that his ministry could use. He was so thrilled when I informed him that our ladies had formed a hat club and that we could make hundreds upon hundreds of hats (and already have).

Because of Phil, our LWML group has made his ministry a main focus every year. Hats, double-tie fleece blankets, decks of cards, cards of encouragement, lotion, lip balm, fuzzy socks, puzzle books, pocket tissues, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and words of encouragement are collected and sent to Phil's Friends.

I was privileged to run into Phil last summer at the national convention in Omaha. Our ladies in purple sent several stacks of those same adult-and child-loomed hats with Phil and his team back to Indiana. Phil was so excited to see the true impact that his journey has made on our group of ladies.

This encounter is one of the many God-given LWML opportunities to Serve the Lord with Gladness!



Phil Zielke is pictured with Denna Loret (left) and Diana Vaughan.

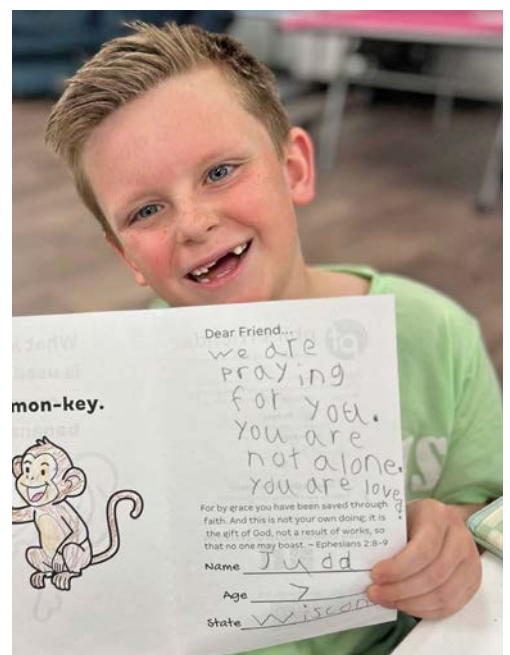
About Phil's Friends

This year, over 2 million Americans will face a life-changing cancer diagnosis. Many will find themselves in hospital rooms or homes, overwhelmed by fear and uncertainty.

Phil's Friends brings light into these moments of despair. Through its Christ-centered mission, Phil's Friends offers practical, emotional and spiritual support to those in need. Its hand-assembled Care Packages deliver comfort and love, while the Cards of Hope program provides ongoing encouragement.

Above all, Phil's Friends covers every individual in prayer, sharing hope and the peace found in Christ.

For more information, including how to provide support and/or request a package, visit philsfriends.org.



A meaningful milestone was celebrated at **Immanuel, Broken Arrow**, as nine young members received their first Holy Communion during the Maundy Thursday service on April 2.

J.C. Holt, Eli Sanzalone, Kate Fleming, Andrew King, Luke Nelson, Max Stone, Grayson Threadgill, Raleigh Hollock and Ross Cromer were joyfully admitted to the Lord's Table, confessing their faith and receiving Christ's true body and blood for the forgiveness of their sins.

This special moment, celebrated on the night when Christ first instituted the Lord's Supper, served as a reminder of God's faithfulness and the continued growth of His church in Broken Arrow.

The communicants are pictured alongside Rev. Arthur Spomer, emeritus.



The **First Lutheran School, Ponca City**, junior high golf team traveled to Cushing on March 30 to compete in the Junior High Golf Tournament. The Cardinals' girls team brought home the championship.

Individually, Madison Maddux won first place, Brooklyn Maddux won fifth place and Addie Lee won ninth place. Congratulations to all and to God be the glory!



MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

It is our unique work to proclaim this joyous Gospel truth. Pray for all of our district delegates and representatives who will attend, vote and speak at the convention!

As Christian disciples, we have our vocations and callings as spouse, parent, employee and worker. We serve in our congregations, homes, in the civil realm and at work. People today are brought into Christ's kingdom only through the Means of Grace. The Word of God comes into the world through preaching, teaching, baptizing, absolving, and communing at the Lord's table.

No one else has been tasked with this work. Only Christians do these things. It is our unique work to proclaim to the whole world that "Christ is risen indeed!" That is therefore the unique work to be done by each one of us.

God grant us wisdom and guidance as we do this!



69th Regular LCMS Convention

July 18–23
Phoenix
Convention
Center

THEME:

"Christ Is Risen Indeed"

(1 Cor. 15:20–22)

DISTRICT NEWS



'Shining on'

Holy Trinity, Edmond, held its Shine On outreach event on April 11. Over 60 volunteers participated to serve non-profits in the community. The event was opened with songs and a devotion.

Then teams headed out to serve and love their neighbors across the Edmond and Oklahoma City area.



CONGRATULATIONS!

We rejoice with those who are celebrating anniversaries of 50 years or more.

Bethlehem, Adair

Rev. Barry and Cindy Schwiesow
52 years, July 12

Zion, Alva

Kevin and Jana Theising
50 years, May 15

Redeemer, Bartlesville

Sig and Kop Vigesaa
53 years, June 1

Fred and Jackie Malone
59 years, June 3

Nolan and Marilyn Jones
64 years, June 11

Lewis and Becky Trentman
63 years, June 16

Ralph and Lois Bergstad
60 years, June 17

Ken and Cheryl Byam
61 years, June 26

David and Melanie Boucher
56 years, July 11

Our Savior, Bethany

Bud and Ann Reedy
59 years, July 15

Trinity, Blackwell

Joe and Loretta Bersche
66 years, June 7

Immanuel, Breckinridge

Gerald and Judy Roggow
63 years, July 7

Immanuel, Broken Arrow

David and Paula Smith
50 years, June 5

Charlie and Glenda Wallace
54 years, June 23

Don and Linda Hollrah
61 years, June 27

Cliff and Silver Morris
72 years, July 9

Bill and June Nessler
66 years, July 23

Trinity, Broken Arrow

Larry and Mary Everett
53 years, June 3

Lynn and Freida Burton
61 years, June 5

Mike and Denise Schultz
53 years, June 9

Mike and Jenise Braden
50 years, June 12

Bill and Diane Forsythe
52 years, July 3

Kenneth and Deborah Kite
56 years, July 25

Redeemer, Claremore

Don and Dorothy DeBolt
72 years, June 5

Denis and Sharon Nelson
64 years, June 8

Robert and Ginger Jahner
54 years, July 1

Tom and Mitzi Stanley
67 years, July 18

Trinity, El Reno

Mike and Cheryl Steffen
54 years, May 20

Paul and Nancy Hurst
52 years, June 21

St. Paul's, Enid

Ralph and Barbara Kroll
63 years, June 1

Mike and Judy Helberg
52 years, June 8

Ray and Sharon Mueller
58 years, June 8

Merlin and Linda Decker
54 years, June 10

Don and Teresa Payton
51 years, June 28

Rev. Kenneth and Carole Wade
62 years, June 28

Jere and Carole Courter
64 years, June 30

Zion, Fairmont

Steve and Denie Niehus
53 years, June 1

Mount Olive, Miami

John and Sherry Thomas
59 years, June 7

Christ, Mustang

Clyde and Carolyn Sanford
53 years, June 6

James and Glenda Berry
58 years, June 7

Trinity, Norman

Tom and Ann Anderson
57 years, June 8

Randy and Suzanne Venk
52 years, June 8

Norman and Nancy Parker
69 years, June 9a

Joel and Barbara Anderson
56 years, June 20

Steven and Elizabeth Amendt
53 years, June 23

Roger and Doranne Beavers
50 years, July 24

Messiah, Oklahoma City

Michael and Barbara Schnauffer
57 years, June 21

Ronnie and Dorothy Shaw
55 years, June 6

Hank and Denise Speilmann
59 years, June 17

Phil and Karen Woodward
56 years, June 20

Rev. Marvin and Shirley Henschel
67 years, July 18

Hugh and Dorothy Simpson
69 years, July 28

First, Ponca City

Loren and Denise Scott
59 years, June 1

Karel and Sherry Blubaugh
62 years, June 10

Gary and Sandy Sibley
56 years, June 13

Phil and Joyce Abbuhl
56 years, June 14

Glen and Barbara Mayer
63 years, June 30

James and Janet Goll
52 years, July 28

Zion, Stillwater

Merle and Ann Bell
52 years, June 1

John and Andrea Arstingstall
57 years, June 1

Gary and Betsty Rottmann
51 years, June 21

Glen and Sharon Hoecker
58 years, July 5

Buddy and Joyce Harrell
62 years, July 25

Christ The Redeemer, Tulsa

Harold and Colene France
61 years, July 24

St. John, Pryor

Steve and Linda Wyneken
58 years, June 8

John and Betty Mines
58 years, July 3

Christ the Redeemer, Tulsa



Dale and Cheryl Davison
55 years, June 5



John and Sally Neas
60 years, June 10



Bill and Patti Ross
52 years, June 14



Norman and Bernie Zanter
61 years, July 3

Immanuel, Broken Arrow



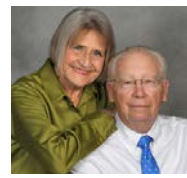
Lucky and Liz Engleman
52 years, June 7



Joe and Bonny Winston
67 years, June 19

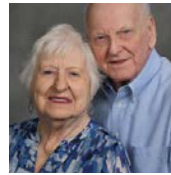


Charles and Linda Hieber
56 years, June 13

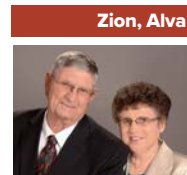


Joe and Garnita Kuhlmann
52 years, June 15

Zion, Alva



Jack and Edie deFreese
62 years, June 23



Phil and Felicia Lyon
65 years, July 5

Happy Birthday

Bethlehem, Adair

George Hugley
93 years, July 9

Redeemer, Bartlesville

Wanda Cogdill
91 years, June 18

Ron Hall
90 years, July 1

Trinity, Blackwell

Nancy Priebe
95 years, June 29

Trinity, Broken Arrow

Forrest Delunger
94 years, July 28

Immanuel, Breckinridge

Darlene Keilbarth
95 years, June 6

Bernice McCanless
92 years, June 10

Immanuel, Broken Arrow

Betty Franklin
90 years, June 25

Dorothea Daubert
100 years, July 16

Redeemer, Claremore

Bob Funkhouser
90 years, June 29

St. John's, Covington

Kay Carl
91 years, June 27

Marie Fischer
100 years, July 7

St. Paul's, Enid

Joe Chandler
91 years, June 30

Trinity, El Reno

Marcia Hurst
93 years, May 8

Trinity, Norman

Pat Ortgies
94 years, June 30

Dorothy Maltz
92 years, July 9

John Depe
91 years, July 25

Messiah, Oklahoma City

Judy Henderson
90 years, June 20

Char Ewing
90 years, June 22

Kristi Barsotti
91 years, July 5

Peggy Crawford
93 years, July 5

Charles Torbeck
97 years, July 12

Rita Malan
101 years, July 30

First, Ponca City

Joe Banks
96 years, July 28

Pete Setzkorn
94 years, July 15

Ablaze, Tulsa

Virginia Terril
91 years, June 30

Helen Anderson
91 years, July 28

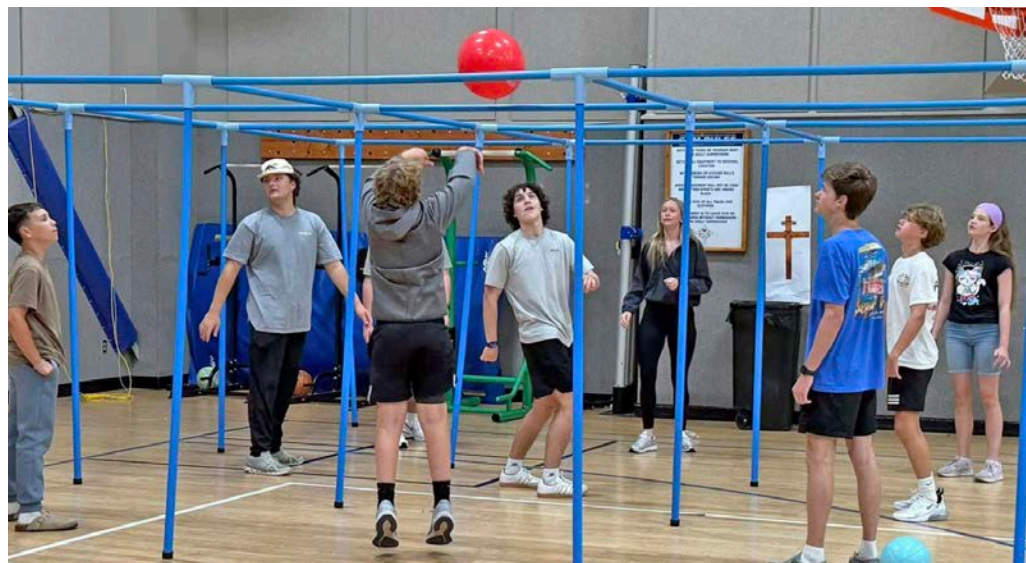
Ablaze, Tulsa



Marvin Duensing
93 years, July 24

Gearing up for camp season

Camp Lutherhoma staff visited Immanuel, Broken Arrow, on April 15. At right, (from left), Abigail Hinrichs (Jamm), Erin Busch (Tahle) and Nikki Boyd (Peach) led morning chapel at Immanuel Lutheran Christian Academy and had fun singing and dancing with the students. That evening, Immanuel hosted Camp Night. Tulsa-area youth gathered to play camp games, learn more about camp, sing songs, and have a campfire outside complete with s'mores. Campers and staff alike are looking forward to a great summer full of fun and praising the Lord with joy at Camp Lutherhoma. Registration for camp this summer is open for all ages at Lutherhoma.com.

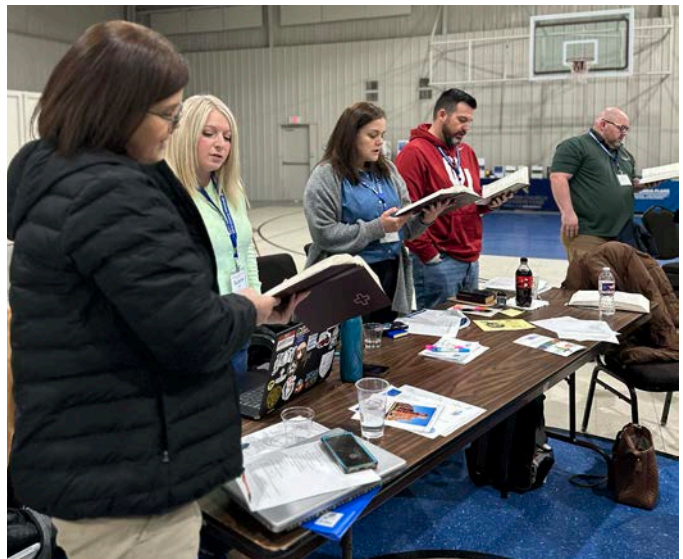


'A Match Made in Heaven'

Church workers from across the Oklahoma District gathered for the spring **Church Workers' Conference**, held March 16–17 at St. John's, Okarche. The topic was "Music and Evangelism: A Match Made in Heaven" with sessions led by guests Rev. Nathan Sherrill and Adam Fosse of David's Harp: A Center for Musical Development.

Through worship, devotions and sessions, attendees explored how music carries the Gospel into hearts and communities. Attendees also enjoyed wonderful fellowship, hymn singing and generous hospitality from our hosts at St. John's.

The Oklahoma District is thankful for the pastors, teachers, DCEs, musicians and other church workers who faithfully serve their congregations and district.



Above: Singing a hymn are, from left, DCE Nikki Boyd (Camp Lutherhoma), DCE Suzanne Watt (Christ the Redeemer, Tulsa), Carri Cline (Christ the Redeemer, Tulsa), Rev. Daniel Ross (Christ, Mustang) and Rev. Ryan Honeycutt (Redeemer, Claremore).

Far left, Rev. Nathan Sherrill leads the workers in singing while Adam Fosse plays piano. Adam is also pictured speaking.



LCMS Stewardship Ministry offers free workshops

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Stewardship Ministry, through the LCMS Office of National Mission (ONM), offers free workshops to help pastors and laity collaborate on stewardship, defined by Stewardship Ministry as “the free and joyous activity of God’s family, the church, in managing life’s resources for His purposes.”

Intended for congregations and pastors who may have struggled with stewardship in the past or who have been reluctant to take up an intentional stewardship focus, the stewardship workshop is designed to

open the Scriptures to attendees about the true nature of stewardship and its biblical importance and, at the same time, to offer practical suggestions the congregation can immediately put into practice.

The presenters of these workshops, ordained pastors of the LCMS, have direct experience in parishes both large and small, urban and rural — experience that well equips them to speak into a variety of situations.

To maximize attendance and foster both pastoral and lay leadership, workshops

are most often held on a weekday evening. Many congregations choose to include a dinner. Lay leaders, including but not limited to a congregation’s treasurer, church council and board of stewardship, are encouraged to attend with their church’s pastor(s). The stewardship presentation, which lasts about two hours, can be held by a single congregation, or congregations may collaborate to host a presenter for a circuit, regional or district-wide gathering.

There is no cost for a workshop, but the host congregation, circuit or district may be asked to offset travel and lodging costs where possible. To schedule a workshop or find out more, email stewardship@lcms.org.

Support for our servants

By Frank Kremer
LCEF Assistant Vice President, District Solutions

Dear Oklahoma District members,

I attended the Oklahoma Church Worker's Conference in Okarche this past March. Thanks be to God for our rostered church workers and their work for the church. We learned about the important place music has within our church from Rev. Nathan Sherrill, executive director of David's Harp, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization that "exists to print resources and establish centers for musical development in churches, schools and missions of the LCMS." The time together in fellowship with fellow attendees was a real treat. A visit to Ahlden Farms one evening a highlight for all.

April 28 and 29 were also wonderful days for the LCMS as Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, held their call and vicar/deaconess intern assignment services.

For those coming out of our seminaries, their service to the church is just beginning. For our new workers, as well as those church workers I met in Oklahoma in March, we work



to be a resource for them, their congregations, schools and organizations they will serve within the church. At LCEF, we strive to help align their financial goals and values through our Church Worker StewardAccount. This account is available to both rostered church workers as well as lay workers at LCMS churches, schools and organizations.

Our church workers are a blessing to the ministry of the LCMS and the work of LCEF. If you desire a faith-based investment with a trusted partner, please reach out. Start earning 3% on every dollar.

Invest with Purpose *Serve with Peace*

A Church Worker StewardAccount® makes it simple to invest and manage your funds at your own pace and on your own time. If you work for an LCMS church, school or organization, you are eligible to open an account. **Start earning 3% on your investment today!**



LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF Investments are not FDIC insured, are not a federally insured savings or deposit account or insured by any state or federal agency. This is not an offer to sell investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks. StewardAccount products are not available to investors in South Carolina. StewardAccount access features are offered through UMB Bank n.a. Rates as of May 2026. Balance restrictions apply. Rates subject to change. Visit lcef.org for details.

