



The InSIDE Word

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A newsletter by and for Southern IL District-LCMS

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Presidential Activities November 2008

- 4 Individual Consultations
- 3 Days –C.O.P.
- 3 Days LCEF Conference
- 2 Days—Travel
- 3 Meetings with Roger Sprengel
- 7 Congregational Meetings
- 1 Prayer Breakfast
- 1 Installation
- 4 Preaching/Speaking engagements

Incarnation

...who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man... With these words from the Nicene Creed we confess the incarnation of our Lord Jesus, as the Scripture teaches, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). Speaking this confession, we are part of a long line of witnesses for Christ extending all the way back to the beginning.

But have you ever considered how truly comforting these words really are? “*For us men and for our salvation...*” “Us men” here, of course, refers to all of humanity, male and female, boys and girls, men and women, young and old. For all of us who live on planet earth, “for our salvation” the One who is “*God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, begotten, not made, by whom all things were made*” became man, a real live flesh and blood human being, full of life for us.

God in our flesh, God became man, for us! This is the reason for our season of Christmas.

Everything it takes to be human – from conception to birth, to growing up, all the way to death on a cross – it all happened to him. He is both creator and creature. He made the sunrise, but He also enjoyed the beauty of sunrise and sunset. Nestled at His mother’s breast, He also grew to be a man, with all the human emotions we also know. He knew how to work, how to be a friend, how to teach, how to love. All of that without sin.

Christmas then is the story of how our God works. Every other religious system on the face of this globe teaches people that somehow they have to work their way up to God. Our God in Jesus Christ comes down to us to bring us up to Him. Here’s the heart of the incarnation of our Lord. “*For us men and for our salvation*” He “*came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary.*” He became flesh to die and to rise for us.

He still comes down to us, coming alive for us in His Word, feeding us with His body and blood, washing us clean in Baptism, speaking forgiveness into our hearts with His absolution. God comes to us to rescue us from ourselves, from sin and from death. God comes in Jesus

to give life.

Whatever else is happening in your world – the good, the bad, the ugly – Jesus Christ, born for us, is God come to dwell with us, “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Wherever you are, Jesus has been there before you. However you feel, Jesus knows what it is like. Whatever your fears, your struggles, even your joys, Jesus will not only understand, but will bring you through to make you part of His Kingdom.

Even if you feel far away, trust that in Jesus “you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13). That’s what God is up to. That’s what we celebrate at Christmas. That’s the best news ever!

But there is one more step to the incarnation, one more response to what God does in Christ. The incarnation is not only God coming to us in Christ, but also becomes Christ coming through us to others. You are the voice of Jesus. You are the arms, the feet, the heart of Jesus for the world. For you are the body of Christ, filled with His life and His peace. Through you, Jesus Himself seeks the lost, loves the sinner, brings life to the dead. Through you, the incarnation goes on and on, as God comes in Jesus for you and for the world.

How will you be an incarnation of the love of Christ for the world? (That’s way too general.) Who is there in your life who needs the love of God in Jesus? You may be the only Jesus they ever meet. Let them see in you, the God “*who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man*” for us and for all.

A very blessed Christmas and joyous New Year to all!

CALLING CONGREGATIONS

ZION, FARMERSVILLE—(Rev. Walter Byerley is serving)

CHRIST, FAIRFIELD—(Served by seminary students, and profs)

TRINITY, HARVEL—entering call process

ST. PAUL, TROY—Called Rev. Mitch Schuessler of Immanuel, Altamont, IL. (Received)

SID PASTOR’S CALLS RECEIVED/ACCEPTED/RETURNED

PRAYER REQUESTS



For **Dawn Mueller**, wife of Pastor Tim Mueller, (St. John's, New Minden and St. Luke, Covington) as she recovers from surgery on Nov. 20.

For **Rev. Mark Meschke**, (emeritus, living in Collinsville) and his wife, Dottie, for strength and courage and peace.

For the **Mission Efforts** going on in Harrisburg, Illinois.

For health concerns for baby **Laura Braun**, infant daughter of Pastor Allen and Laura Braun, (formerly of SID).

FFor **Marian Martens**, former SID Treasurer, who has been diagnosed with cancer and inclusive body myositis.

For **Cathy Bevirt and Melissa Combs**, teachers at Holy Cross, Collinsville, for strength and courage while both are fighting cancer.

Please keep our brothers and sisters serving our country in your prayers

Active duty Chaplains from the SID: **Major Gregory Jans**, **CDR Gregory N. Todd**, and **LT. COL. David Wilshek**.

For **Khotsi Tswaedi**, son of Bishop David and Lucy Tswaedi, Southern Africa, in the U.S. Army, deployed to Iraq.

Lt. Commander Craig Muehler (brother of Cindy Nebel) US Navy Chaplain now serving in San Diego.

Lt. Carl Muehler (brother of Cindy Nebel) US Navy Chaplain now serving at Norfolk, VA.

Capt. Joshua Henschen (son of Ron and Ellen Henschen, teachers in Edwardsville) at Ft. Hood, TX.

Capt. Drew Ponivas (son of Nancy Ponivas, teacher at Zion, Bethalto) is stationed at Ft. Benning, GA..

MM1 John Ponivas (son of Nancy Ponivas, teacher at Zion, Bethalto) will be deployed soon to 3 months at sea.

Lt. Col. Robin Schultze (daughter-in-law of Shirley Schwartzkopf) is now at Fort McNair, DC. as a National Defense University Nurse.

Sgt. Matthew Kasten (son of Steve and Marge Kasten, Hoyleton, IL.) U.S. Army has returned to Baghdad for 18 mp.

Capt. Anthony Skeesick (son of Pastor Dale and Kathy Skeesick, St. Peter, Prairietown) serving in the US Air Force has been deployed to Afghanistan.

Lt. Col. John Pepin (son-in-law of Pastor [Emeritus] and Lois Eckert) has returned from Iraq -Praise God.

Please call Donna at 618-234-4767 to add your prayer request, or update the information above, to our monthly newsletter.

PRAISE REPORTS:

Let us give praise and thanksgiving to God for the marriage of **Roger Wittmann**, retired teacher from St. Paul, Troy, to **Carole Stultz**.

Praise God for the birth of **Dean William Augustine Hemmer**, son of Pastor Jeff and Laura Hemmer, Hope, Jerseyville. Dean weighted in at 8 lbs and is 20 in.

PASTORS' ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATED

The following pastors celebrated anniversaries of their ordination into the Holy Ministry in **November** and received certificates. If you, or someone you know had an anniversary (20, 25, 30, 35, etc.) during the month of **November** and their name is not on this list, please call Donna at the District Office so this can be taken care of right away. Thank you.

No Anniversaries celebrated in November

Concordia Historical Institute

**The Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
804 Seminary Place
St. Louis, Missouri 63105
314-505-7900
<http://chi.lcms.org>
Or <http://www.lutheranhistory.org>**

A coming attraction for CHI (Concordia Historical Institute) is the opening of the new museum that will be housed on the second floor of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's International Center in Kirkwood, Missouri, located in a multi-story atrium, directly across from the chapel. (The current site of the Concordia Historical Institute at 804 Seminary Place will continue to be used for expanded archival storage and administrative services) At the new location, a greater stream of visitors will be given the opportunity to witness the authentic history and true identity of our church body in a rapidly changing environment, thus strengthening faith and nurturing a greater appreciation of the unfailing grace and mercy of God.

Each congregation is encouraged to identify one individual who can become CHI's contact within their local congregation. Wouldn't it be wonderful if each congregation in our synod had its own archivist/historian who would, not only preserve the congregation's history safely, but make its stories available as a testament of God's faithfulness and intervention in history throughout the ages? CHI has an excellent skilled staff equipped and willing to provide that support to the church.

HELP!

Lutheran Child and Family Services is looking for volunteers to help out at the Belleville Nice Twice Shop. For more information please call Miss Ina at 618-234-8904.



Present for the Installation of Rev. Martin Springer on September 13 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Edwardsville are from left to right: Rev. George Gude, Emmaus, Dorsey; Rev. Brian Downs, Zion, Belleville; Rev. Tim Weiser, Trinity, Iuka; Rev. Hyo Jung Kim, Zion, Belleville; Rev. Gary Galen, Associate Pastor at Trinity, Edwardsville; Rev. Leonard Laetsch, Hope, Highland, also Circuit Counselor for Circuit 3; Rev. Randy Wilken, Acts1 Mission Society; Rev. Robert Mundahl, Peace, Fairbault, MN; Rev. Martin Springer; Rev. Martin Schultz, St. Paul, Wood River; Rev. David Fielding, Hope, Granite City; Rev. Darwin Schrader, Candidate; Rev. Jim Daub, St. Paul, Havelock; Rev. Ron Nelson, LCMS, I.C.; Rev. Doug Nicely, Installer and Chaplain at Memorial Hosp. in Belleville; Rev. Ron Hilmer, Emeritus; Rev. Jules Bush, Emeritus; Rev. Bob Weise, Concordia Seminary.



Kirk Mueller (left), gift planning counselor for the Southern Illinois District, was recently recognized for his accomplishments in gift planning and received the 2008 Leadership Award for ministry teamwork from Terry Gerdt, Senior Vice President of Gift Planning Services for the LCMS Foundation.

If you would like to contact Kirk, you can call him at 314-741-3700 or you can email him at: kirk.mueller@lfnd.org

Happy 140th Birthday Zion, Mascoutah

Zion, Mascoutah celebrated 140 years of God's grace and blessings on the congregation in a special worship service held on Sunday, November 9. Worshippers filled the sanctuary to capacity for the joyful occasion under the anniversary theme, "Preach the Word." The sermon was preached by Rev. Herbert Mueller, District President, who urged the congregation to sense the urgency in sharing God's Word, along with pointing to the many blessings God has bestowed on the congregation in the past 140 years.

Along with President Mueller, participating clergy included: (back row left to right) Rev. Glen Thomas, former pastor of the congregation, now serving the LCMS as Exec. Dir. For Board for Pastoral Education; Rev. Kirk Clayton, current pastor of Zion; Rev. Darwin Schrader, former pastor at Zion; (front row left to right) Rev. Paul Donner, Emeritus, son of the congregation; President Herbert Mueller, SID; Rev. Paul Bramstedt, Emeritus, son of the congregation; Rev. Don McKelvey, Emeritus, son of the congregation.



In addition to welcoming former pastors back for the service, the day was supplemented by special music including Zion's Senior Choir, a brass ensemble, soloists, and guitarists. Following the festive worship service, the celebration concluded with a catered banquet.

All Praise to God!



Trinity, Hoyleton

Trinity, Hoyleton helped their home town celebrate their 150th anniversary by participating in the July 12 parade. The float was such a hit that the congregation entered it in the Okawville Wheat Festival Parade where it earned 5th place in the competition.

Rather than handing out candy, the crew handed out scrolls containing a brief history of the congregation beginning with its humble 1867 charter.

On the float (right to left): Rebekah Theilen, Pastor Joshua Theilen. Behind pastor and his wife are the elders: Rollan Schnitker, Roger Koelling and Norman Kasten. Ringing the church bell is custodian, Don Schnitker. On the back of the float Diane Guinzy is seen teaching Sunday School to Andrew and Own Holle, and they were followed by Mrs. Laura Haake, working on a quilt while Paige Kasten reads to her from Holy Scripture.

A *Treasury of Daily Prayer*

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I must make a confession to you. I struggle at being faithful at my own personal daily devotions. Does that surprise you? I could perhaps make excuses referencing my schedule and the daily pressures – but those are actually all the more reason I need to be in the Word of God and prayer even more. Actually, the only reason for my struggle is my own fault, my own sinful flesh, for the flesh is always lazy, weak, and constantly ignores my need for the Word of God and prayer.

But now Concordia Publishing House has provided me (and all of us) with a wonderful resource to help in this daily battle against the flesh. It's called a *Treasury of Daily Prayer*. Since I received my copy it has become a great tool for me in my struggle against the flesh (see also the editor's preface). I leave my copy open on my desk so that the first thing when I come in each morning I can use it right away. It is always open to each day's readings and prayers. When I travel, I also have a copy on my laptop right there on the Windows desktop.

How is *Treasury of Daily Prayer* such a great tool? Under one cover you have Old Testament, New Testament readings, a reading from Luther, one of the church fathers, or other orthodox theologians. Psalms, prayers, brief explanations of festivals and saints days round out the daily fare. At the center of the book, you will find all the prayer offices of the church, ready for us. The book includes the whole Psalter, the Small Catechism, confessional readings and a whole lot more. Under one cover, then, you have all you need for a daily regimen of Scripture and prayer. In the short time I have used it, I have grown to appreciate it more and more.

I say all this after a number of years using the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau's four volume set, *For All the Saints*, a resource I found mostly good and helpful, but occasionally the writings are less than helpful. In the case of *Treasury of Daily Prayer*, the writings included have been researched by LCMS pastors, edited by Scot Kinnaman (who started as pastor in SID) and his staff at CPH. Thus far, I have found the writing very helpful, connected to the lessons of the day, and centered in Christ and His Gospel. In short, Scot Kinnaman and CPH have done a great service to the church. Look it up on CPH's web site, www.cph.org. Use it! Try it! I think you'll enjoy it.

Is this just for pastors? NO! Anyone who can read will benefit! Fathers and mothers leading their families in devotions will profit. Students and anyone who will benefit from a structured approach to prayer and the devotional life can use this great resource. Tell your people about it – let them try it.

Trinity, Edwardsville
Has 356 copies of Hymnal Supplement 98 available.

For more information contact Connie at 656-2918

A Mission Request from President Herbert C. Mueller

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ's Service,

Please keep the following in prayer, bringing our brothers and sisters in Golconda and Harrisburg/Eldorado before our Lord's throne of grace. November 16, 2008 was an important date for the Lutheran Church and the Southern Illinois District – for on that day, God willing, our newest “preaching station” began regular Sunday worship services in Eldorado, Illinois.

Earlier this year, the members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Golconda, Illinois – a congregation of only 61 members! – voted to begin a church plant effort in Saline County, an area that has been without an LCMS presence for many, many years. Directed by Pastor E. James Rivett, the members of Our Redeemer began an intensive study of the two major cities in Saline County, Harrisburg and Eldorado, and on August 1 Vicar Terry O'Brien relocated to Harrisburg to begin full-time canvassing and development work. Weekly Bible Classes began on September 18, and a small but faithful core group of people has been meeting weekly. Now this group – hopefully joined by some unchurched residents of the area who have expressed interest – will have the opportunity to participate in a formal Lutheran Worship Service each Sunday morning.

Martin Luther once said that “it is the devil's rule to build a chapel next to a church,” and we can be assured that the forces of evil will be hard at work to derail these efforts and discourage these faithful men and women. But we are emboldened by Christ's promise of Matthew 18:20: *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them.”* (ESV)

As our brothers and sisters in Christ begin their regular Sunday Worship Services in Saline County, I ask two things of each of you:

Keep the Saline County church plant foremost in your prayers. Pray that the Lord of the Harvest will bring the unchurched to learn the Gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus ... and pray for the continued faithfulness of those who will be attending these first services.

In addition to your prayer support, the Saline County church plant effort could most assuredly benefit from your financial support. If you would like to make a donation, please send it to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, PO Box 580, Golconda, IL 62938. Be sure to write “church plant” on the “memo” line of your check. Our Redeemer receives a grant from the District, but has expenses beyond what the grant is covering.

May God bless and keep our brothers and sisters in Saline County in the loving hands of our Lord Jesus as they seek to serve Him and testify to His name. Please keep them in prayer!

Yours in Christ Jesus!

+ Herb Mueller

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS & EVENTS IN AND FOR THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT 2008

DECEMBER

- 4 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 25 Celebrate Jesus birth!

2009

JANUARY

- 8 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 15 Mission Staff Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 17 Mission Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
- 21 Finance Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- 25 SID Convention Floor Committees Meet at St. Paul, Columbia, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
- 26 Convention Planning Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 31 SID Board of Directors, 9:00 a.m.

FEBRUARY

- 2 Board of Spiritual Care and Supervision, 9:00 a.m.
- 5 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 19-21 SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT CONVENTION

MARCH

- 5 S.A.M.T.F. Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Board of Directors and all Boards Day of Orientation