



### **SID in partnership with LCSA**

St. John Lutheran Church, Chester, was honored to have guest speaker Bishop David Tswaedi on Sunday, March 1. Bishop Tswaedi and Mpolaise Masibi completed a two-week visit on March 8 in Nashville as they met the congregations of the Southern Illinois District (SID) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The Southern Illinois District is currently in a mission partnership with the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (LCSA) where Bishop Tswaedi is pastor and Mr. Masibi is a Lutheran layman and principal at a public school in the Northwest Province of Southern Africa.

Pastor Mark Willig of St. John is the Southern Illinois District chairman of the Task Force for the Mission Partnership of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. Rev. Herbert Mueller is president of the Southern Illinois District.

The goals of these leaders and the SID congregations with the Mission Task Force Partnership are to strengthen lay leadership in the LCSA, to strengthen missions/church planting in the LCSA, and to contribute to seminary support in the LCSA, as well as addressing the issue of HIV/AIDs.



**Bishop David Tswaedi was a guest speaker March 1 at St. John's, Chester. Pictured are, from left, Rev. Mark Willig, pastor of St. John, Chester; Bishop David Tswaedi, bishop of the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa; Mpolaise Masibi, a Lutheran layman and principal at a public school in the Northwest Province of Southern Africa; Christopher Urquhart, principal of St. John Lutheran School, Chester; and Rev. Herbert Mueller, president of the LCMS Southern Illinois District.**

In 2004, the LCSA celebrated 10 years of independent indigenous leadership and continues today to make great progress in developing leadership among its pastors. There is, however, a need for lay leadership that involves funding and training. Support to the LCSA provides workshops and Bible studies to train Bishop Tswaedi's local people in stewardship and evangelism training. The LCSA has identified a number of places where it would like to plant new congregations, so they are working toward purchasing tents for each of the five dioceses in the LCSA.

Once a congregation has

erected its own building, the tents are moved to another place. SID congregations are encouraged to match the LCSA grant funds to provide the means for church buildings.

The LCSA operates a seminary in Pretoria. Their vision is to develop Lutheran Theological Seminary Pretoria into a first-class confessional Lutheran seminary in Africa. A top priority for the LCSA is to address HIV/AIDs issues. Every diocese in the LCSA has appointed a HIV/AIDs committee to develop a plan on how the church can respond to the crises.

To support the task force's partnership, please

send proceeds to the Southern Africa Mission Fund, Southern Illinois District, 2408 Lebanon, Belleville, IL 62221. To invite a task force member to make a presentation to your group or congregation, contact the district office at 618-234-4767.

#### **EDITOR**

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August deadline:  
June 15

## **Lutheran Church Extension Fund update**

LCEF is the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, a unique ministry-through-investment organization that offers Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod members the opportunity to invest their money, earn interest, and help build churches and schools at the same time.

Investments in LCEF serve a dual purpose: to earn a fair rate of return for investors and to provide low-cost loans and services to LCMS ministries, helping them spread the Good News of Jesus. Your dollars also earn the “ministry dividend,” the return you receive knowing that your dollars are helping ministries support the Great Commission.

What kind of investments does LCEF have for an individual? We do not have mutual funds or investments in the stock market. But, you can invest in term notes (similar to CDs), which are fixed or floating rates, dedicated certificates (similar to a passbook account), or a StewardAccount (similar to a money market). All these safe investments also earn a fair rate of interest.

**StewardAccount** (Comparable to a money market account with many additional benefits and features.)

1. Tiered interest rates as your balance grows; rate are adjusted monthly.

2. Interest compounded and paid monthly.

3. Monthly account statements.

4. Electronic investments.

5. No annual membership or monthly fees.

6. Minimum opening deposit of only \$100.

7. Check-writing privileges:

- Minimum amount per check of \$250.

- Unlimited number of checks per month.

- First order of checks free.

8. ATM/VISA Check Card (optional).

9. Electronic funds transfer capabilities.

10. Wire transfers.

**Family Emergency StewardAccount** (Set aside funds for unexpected and unplanned expenses, while earning competitive market rates.)



1. \$25 minimum to open.

2. Rates are adjusted monthly.

3. \$25 minimum monthly deposit until the investment balance reaches \$10,000.

4. Check-writing privileges:

- Minimum amount per check of \$250.

- Limit of 12 checks per calendar year.

A key component of any successful investment strategy is to prepare for financial emergencies. Whatever your investment goal, it is important to set aside funds that you can use for the unexpected. Having an emergency fund can help cover the expenses of an unexpected event.

Preparing for the unexpected requires a commitment to putting money away consistently and then drawing upon it only for true emergencies. By investing a regular amount each month, you will accumulate funds steadily, adding to your Family Emergency StewardAccount before you spend on other items.

Contact Dan Roth, the Southern Illinois District promotion director, for more information about these two funds. Call 618-234-4767 or send an e-mail to Dan Roth, at [LCEFPromo@sidlcms.org](mailto:LCEFPromo@sidlcms.org).

## **Calls in the district Calls Extended**

James Kress, Our Savior, Carmi, to Redeemer, Englewood, Fla.

Nathan Meador, Zion, Staunton, to St. John, Plymouth, Wis.

Stuart Rethwisch, Holy Cross, Wartburg, to Trinity, Harvel, Ill.

## **Call Accepted**

James Kress, Our Savior, Carmi, to Redeemer, Englewood, Fla.

## **Call Declined**

Stuart Rethwisch, Holy Cross, Wartburg, to Trinity, Harvel, Ill.

## **Send in your news**

The Southern Illinois District Edition of *The Lutheran Witness* is designed for you—the pastor, teacher, layperson.

Send news about your congregation, school, or an individual's achievements to Editor, 2408 Lebanon Ave., Belleville, IL 62221; or e-mail at [sidlw@earthlink.net](mailto:sidlw@earthlink.net). Photos must be 300 dpi and e-mailed separately.



## President's convention report highlights

by Herbert C. Mueller

*The following is a continuation from last month of the President's District Convention report.*

How many congregations do we now have in Southern Illinois?

***Ninety-six—PLUS! God has given us an independent Lutheran congregation we now serve (Faith in Litchfield), plus two preaching stations.***

The first is a church plant in Saline County—an effort of Our Redeemer, Golconda, in cooperation with the Southern Illinois District (SID), in Harrisburg/El Dorado, Ill., an area which has the largest concentration of people in SID where we have no congregation. They began regular worship the middle of November 2008 and have already started an adult instruction class that is set to be completed in time for Easter, God-willing.

Secondly, Pastor Randy Wilken, working through the Acts 1:8 Mission Society, is gathering a group that may develop into another congregation



**Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr.**  
District President

gathered around Word and Sacrament at the east end of East St. Louis. In early 2008, we helped Pastor Wilken transition from Unity Lutheran Church, East St. Louis, to serving full-time as the executive director of the Acts 1:8 Mission Society. This group, now in the process of becoming an recognized service organization of the Synod, has been formed to support missions in the inner city. The group works both in St. Louis and in East St. Louis to bring the life and love of Christ to people.

This transition opened the door for DELTO (Distance Education Leading To Ordination) vicar Dr. Willie Stallworth to begin serving at Unity, East St. Louis, in early 2008. God-willing, he will be ordained in 2009. By bringing Dr. Stallworth into Unity, God has given a number of blessings! Unity congregation no

longer needs ongoing district subsidy—though the district does help with grants for specific mission efforts. The congregation has come together with him, and the congregation and mission school are working more closely than before.

Speaking of our mission school, Unity Lutheran Christian Elementary School now has 85 students enrolled in pre-school through grade 5. That's good, but we have outgrown the space available at the church. There are many questions—Do we purchase? Do we build? The district Board of Directors is working hard with the Unity School Board and Unity Church to find answers.

What will the future bring for the Southern Illinois District? Pray for our visitation. Pray for the "Freed in Christ" effort (something new you will hear about) and our prison ministry.

Pray for our mission efforts in East St. Louis and Saline County. Pray as well that our parishes will be focused ever more keenly on the life of God in Jesus Christ.

***The Word of God gives real life and real hope in Christ.***

The Synod has set the goal of revitalizing 2,000

parishes for mission outreach. We are developing a Gospel and Word of God centered approach for this effort in SID, summarized in a document printed in our *Convention Workbook*, "One Sure Hope—Growing Together in Christ."

***Are WE up to the tasks before us?***

***NO!***

***But Jesus IS!***

***He is our ONE SURE HOPE!***

His Word promises: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-4).



## **Exemplary Lutheran Schools**

Congratulations, **Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Collinsville!**

We congratulate the staff, students, parents, and congregation members at Good Shepherd Lutheran School in Collinsville for being recognized as an Exemplary Lutheran School by National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) for the 2008-09 school year!

Good Shepherd is one of three Lutheran schools recognized (Immanuel Lutheran School in Batavia, Ill., and Trinity Lutheran School in Elkhart, Ind.) out of 100 schools accredited by NLSA this past year.

NLSA exemplary accredited schools must demonstrate a high degree of excellence by complying with at least 90 percent of the indicators of success used to quantify compliance with required national accreditation standards. Exemplary schools also must demonstrate that their school is:

- Christ-centered and service driven;
- documenting an outstanding record of student academic preparation and success;
- perceived positively in its community;
- serving satisfied stakeholders; and



**Roger Sprengel  
Schools and Executive  
Assistant**

- demonstrating innovative leadership through specific “Best Practices.”

### **What makes a Lutheran school “exemplary”?**

The following traits,

characteristics, or “Best Practices” were recognized in the three schools awarded Exemplary Status:

“We must commend the pastors for their commitment to the school by visiting the homes on Sunday afternoon of any visitor in church that morning.”

“Pastors visit the homes of any member who has not been in church for four weeks.”

“The school encourages and demands exemplary performance.”

“Exemplary leadership has provided a strong vision and developed the faculty to achieve at the

highest level.”

“A seamless relationship and dedication shared by church and school toward one another in all aspects of their ministry.”

“The united leadership of church and school creates a team ministry focused on fulfilling the mission and supporting the philosophy.”

“There is a culture of ‘sharing and caring’ which has developed a strong sense of community.”

“Needs of the church and school are addressed with love and compassion.”

*(Continued on Page E.)*



**Terry Schmidt, director of the National Lutheran School Accreditation team, presented Robert Mayhew, right, principal of Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Collinsville, the Exemplary Status award on Sunday, March 22.**



## EXEMPLARY LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

(Continued from Page D.)

“This is about relationships and the positive, grace-filled environment that is evident in every aspect of this ministry.”

“A congregational ministry focused on children.”

“Developing goals that directly impact the lives of those it serves.”

“Relational Integrated Ministry—the mission to serve children and families is the centerpiece.”

### Scholarship Endowment Sunday: May 3

Student Aid for Future Professional Church Workers

“Will they always be there?” That’s the question many are asking in regard to the future need for pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, and deaconesses in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Southern Illinois District has established the first Sunday in May as Scholarship Endowment Sunday. A newsletter article, bulletin inserts, and a special offering envelope have been provided for each district congregation for this special emphasis.

The envelope should be in your worship folders on Sunday, May 3. Bring

the envelope back to services during the month of May so that your congregation can then remit these special offerings to the Southern Illinois District. The Fund Advisory Committee is a special group that manages and invests these funds to allow for district students entering full-time church work to receive financial aid.

As of January, this fund had about \$89,000 in it. During the current academic year, the Scholarship Committee dispersed more than \$50,000 in student aid (additional funds are received from the Spencer Werner Foundation). The Bob Streuter Memorial Golf Outing contributed \$10,000 for this fund last year and is actively seeking golfers for this year’s scramble in Okawville on Saturday, May 2 (forms available on the SID Web site at [www.sidlcms.org](http://www.sidlcms.org)).

Graduating high school seniors who are interested in careers in professional church work and are interested in applying for financial aid from the Southern Illinois District should contact Roger Sprengel no later than June 15 ([sidsage@sidlcms.org](mailto:sidsage@sidlcms.org), 618-234-4767). FAFSA forms also should be completed and filed with the Concordia University you will attend.

## Our Savior, Hillsboro, welcomes new members

On Sunday, Jan. 11, Our Savior, Hillsboro, welcomed Jeremy and Jami Schmidt and their sons Cooper and Chase. It is interesting to note that, with the addition of

Cooper and Chase, there are now three sets of twins that belong to Our Savior.

A triple double is a great statistic in basketball and a neat statistic for the membership of a church.

Rev. Tom Moyer serves as pastor.



**Pastor Tom Moyer with new members Jami and Jeremy Schmidt, and twins Cooper and Chase.**



**THREE SETS OF TWINS—From top to bottom are Our Savior, Hillsboro, members Kord and Creed Lewey, Michael and Marissa Johnson, and Cooper and Chase Schmidt.**

# LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK

## **National Lutheran Schools Week at Good Shepherd, Collinsville**

During the first week of March, Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Collinsville, celebrated National Lutheran Schools Week. The theme for this year's celebration was, "Securing Each Child's Future for Eternity," with John 3:16 as the theme verse. Each day's festivities were centered on a portion of the theme Bible verse.

The faculty began the weeklong celebration by singing at all three church services. Classes also made banners that incorporated each day's theme, in addition to student and faculty dress, and even the hot-lunch program. Students also had the opportunity to craft crosses, globes, and hearts, which decorated the facility.

The week began with "International Day," where students and faculty dressed in clothes that resembled cultures from around the world to show that God's love is for everyone.

"Rainbow Day" focused on God's promise to send a Savior, which was first promised to Noah through the sign of a rainbow in the Old Testament.

On Wednesday, the faculty and students wore fishing attire to fit the day's theme of "Fishers of Men" to carry out the Great Commission of tell-

ing others about Jesus so they can believe and be saved.

"Pajama Day" was definitely the student-favorite of the week. Pajamas were worn to celebrate the comfort that Christians have, knowing that they will not perish but have eternal life one day.

To end the celebration, Friday was "Royal Ball Day," where faculty and students dressed their best to celebrate their eternal life with Christ in heaven.

Good Shepherd also sponsored a service project during the week. Gently used clothing and non-perishable food items were collected to assist the St. Louis seminary with its Re-Sell-It Shop and food pantry.

Other activities enjoyed by the school families throughout the week were Grandparents/Special Friends Day for preschool through eighth grades, in addition to a talent show that featured current students and alumni.

One new addition to the celebration was "Muffins



**Good Shepherd, Collinsville, students celebrate "International Day" as they dress as cultures from around the world. Pictured, clockwise from top right, are Luke Sengele, Hailey Reese, Jordan Blasingame, Emma Reese, Riley Patterson, and Abbey Burns.**

with Moms" and "Donuts with Dads." Parents had the opportunity to come before school with their children and enjoy a special treat in their honor.

What a blessing it truly is for our children to have the opportunity to receive a Christ-centered, high-quality education from Lutheran schools!



**Eighth-grade students dress in bright colors to celebrate "Rainbow Day." Students pictured are, from left (standing), Leigh Ruckman, Lauren Daniels, Brooke Mayhew, and Brooke Blasingame, and (seated) Andi Harper and Kristen Ruffcorn.**



**St. Mark's Lutheran School in Steeleville, Ill., celebrated National Lutheran Schools Week March 1-6. Pictured are school children singing "We Are the Church" during the Sunday church service, with Pastor Al Janneke accompanying them on the guitar.**



**Eleven students from Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School in Evansville, Ill., competed at the Future Business Leaders of America Southern Area Conference held at SIU-Carbondale. More than 400 students from across Southern Illinois attended. Five of those 11 students brought home awards. Shown above with Mrs. Cleland, left, adviser, are, from left, Aaron Denney, business communications, second place; Sarah Twitty, introduction to business, second place; Tim Laufer, technology concepts, first place; Melissa Seymour, personal finance, third place; and Stefan Gramenz, business math, third place.**

## Calendar of events

### May

- 2—SID Student Aid Golf Benefit
- 3—Scholarship Endowment Sunday
- 4—Board of Spiritual Care and Supervision, 9 a.m.
- 7—Prison Ministry Conference, Camp Wartburg
- 7—S.A.M.T.F. meeting, 7 p.m.
- 19—SID Lutheran Laymen's League meeting, 7 p.m.
- 25—Memorial Day holiday, district office closed
- 28—Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), 6:30 p.m. at Zion, Belleville

### June

- 2—Pastors Conference Committee Meeting, 9 a.m.
- 4—S.A.M.T.F. meeting, 7 p.m.
- 12-13—Senior High School Youth Gathering, Carlinville
- 17-19—All-Illinois Administrators Conference, Bloomington
- 20—Board of Missions, 9 a.m.
- 25—Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), 6:30 p.m. at Zion, Belleville

### July

- 2—S.A.M.T.F. meeting, 7 p.m.
- 16—LWML District Board of Directors, 9:30 a.m.
- 25—SID Board of Directors, 9 a.m.

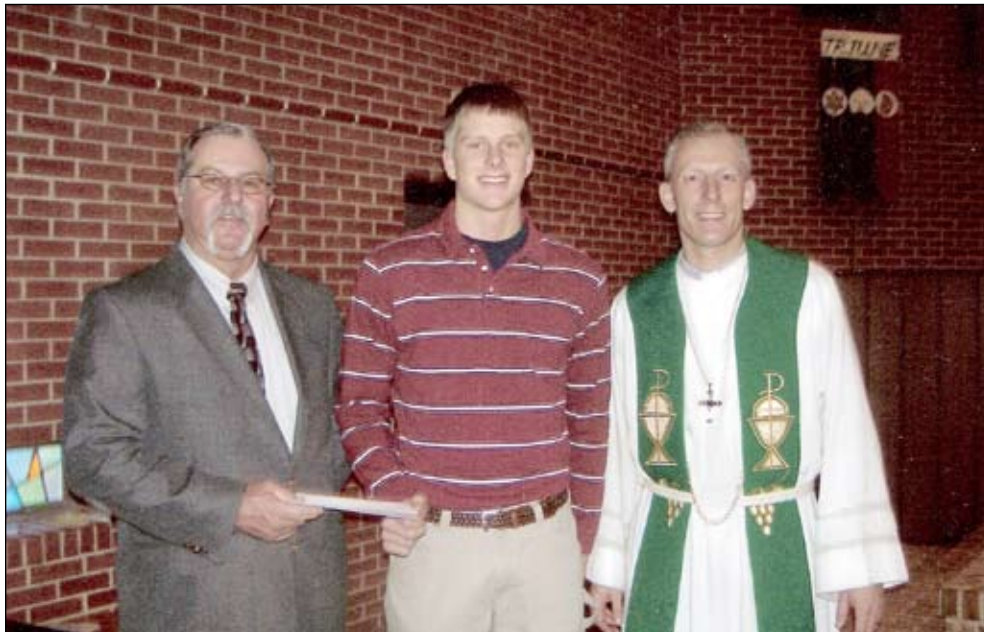
# CHURCH/PEOPLE

## Church/People News in Southern Illinois

Congratulations to **Matthew Palm, Trinity, Hoffman**, recipient of the Willis Scholarship for 2008.

The scholarship is awarded to the student with the highest grade-point average for his or her high school career and must be enrolled full-time in college.

Matt attends Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Ill., on an academic scholarship from the university. He is the son of Phillip and the late Judy Palm of Hoffman.



**Matthew Palm, center, received the Willis Scholarship for 2008. Pictured with him are Robert Zimmerman, chairman of the board of education, and Pastor Stephen Krenz, all of Trinity Lutheran Church, Hoffman.**

## Faith Sharing: a new feature

**Jashira Bolden** is a fourth-grade student at **Unity Lutheran School in East St. Louis**. Jashira raised \$250 in December 2008 to buy Christmas presents for women and children at the Holy Angels shelter in East St. Louis.

This was not a school chapel project or a project driven by Christian parents. Jashira, of her own accord, went to the local Krispy Kreme doughnut shop. After the manager explained the store's fundraising program, Jashira typed a letter, which she shared at school and her aunt's church.

With the \$250 she raised, Jashira bought underwear, socks, lotion, and diapers for the babies. She and her friends wrapped the gifts, and everyone at the shelter was blessed by her efforts.

Jashira wrote thank-you letters to everyone who bought doughnut cards, telling them about the little boy who "hugged me and would not let me go"!

"... And his faith was made complete by what he did" (James 2:22b).

Jashira was putting her faith into practice, something she has done many times in her young life! The staff at Unity has witnessed Jashira's unselfish actions and bold wit-

ness for several years—molded by daily "Jesus Time"—and pray that she continues to use her God-given talents to bring others to faith in Jesus!

*Have a Faith-Sharing story? Send your notes to the SAGE, 2408 Lebanon Ave., Belleville, IL 62221 or e-mail [sidsage@siddl-cms.org](mailto:sidsage@siddl-cms.org).*



**Jashira Bolden, a fourth-grade student at Unity Lutheran School in East St. Louis.**