



DISTRICT NEWS

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS



LCMS/Erin M. Lunsford

IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS

Let the wise hear and increase in learning and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. **PROV. 1:5-7**



Rev. Timothy Scharr
District President

It took only months in pastoral ministry for me to discover a horrifying truth. Many Christians believe that ignorance is bliss.

Let me explain. People are content with a faith reduced to its lowest common denominator. “Jesus saves” was a sign a man in Toronto carried as he stood at a busy intersection. It is true, but it begs for more information. Who is Jesus? What does He save? Why is this important? I’ve heard the substance of the faith reduced to the familiar children’s song, “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so” Stop! That’s all I need for eternal life (well, maybe the rest of the song too).

For all practical purposes, Christianity is reduced to Jesus and me. When I die, I will go to heaven. Christianity is thought of as an eternal life insurance policy. Get baptized, confirmed. Maybe have

a church wedding. Baptize the kids. Let them get confirmed. Get on with life in all its variety: sports, recreation, work and so forth. I’ve done my part. Now it is up to God to do His. I go to church at Christmas just to make sure my “eternal life insurance premiums” are paid. Beyond that, who needs church? Only the super pious who have nothing better to do, and those who don’t really have a life. I’ve got places to go, things to do, a world to enjoy. Jesus loves me, right?

What horrifies me is the lack of interest in anything deeper in the faith or the Bible. It’s like this: “Pastor, I’m good with God. Why are you trying to teach me things that will hold me accountable, to a higher standard? Leave me alone. I’ll go to church when I have more time, or think I need it.”

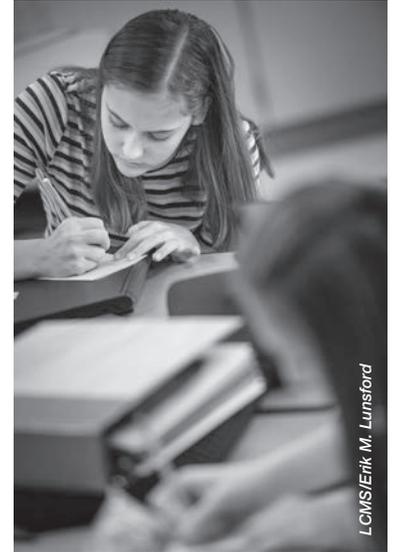
Ignorance is bliss. Or is it? Jesus has things to say about this:

“If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” **JOHN 8:31-32**

“Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.” **LUKE 11:28**

In these verses Jesus uses the words abide, hear and keep. The Lord wants us to continue in the things that you have learned. Hearing is an ongoing activity. It’s easy to forget. We all need reminding of even the simplest tasks. Parents continually tell children: “Wash your hands before you eat.” “Do you need to use the bathroom?” “Is your homework done?” We want children

See **MESSAGE**, page 8



LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

MAKING DISCIPLES in our schools

The theme for the 2022-23 school year is *Making Disciples for Life*.

Matt. 28: 19-20 says:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Lutheran schools are known for making disciples for life by the power of the Holy Spirit. This theme unites Lutheran schools in worship, witness and life together. Our Lutheran schools make disciples of children, families and friends in congregations and communities. The theme emphasizes that every aspect of life in our schools focuses on learning and living as disciples of Jesus.

The mission outreach of Lutheran schools brings opportunities to make disciples of all nations.

All schools in our district are now in session for the 2022-23 academic year. Much excitement is in the air about our new beginnings.

Very few of us will ever be in school again as a student, but as we look to the Word of God, we see that we are always to be in His school. We have never graduated from learning, studying and growing in His Word. Therefore, we are enrolled in God’s school as we trust in Christ. The goal of God’s school is that you become just like His Son, Jesus Christ. We are to do as He does and conform to the image of the Son.

Titus 2:22 says:

For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all people.

Grace is something that we have not worked for or earned. It is getting something good which we don’t deserve. We are saved through God’s grace. Titus writes that salvation has come for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives as we wait for our blessed hope.

We are all learning to be like Jesus. God is chang-



Jeffrey Fick
Schools and
General Executive

ing our habits, our mindset and our way of talking and living.

When school is in session, students no longer live free and easy lives: No more sleeping until noon, no more hours to fill time with their own interests.

When we become followers of Christ we enter His rules and standards and surrender our own. We are in His training, renouncing the devil and all his works and ways.

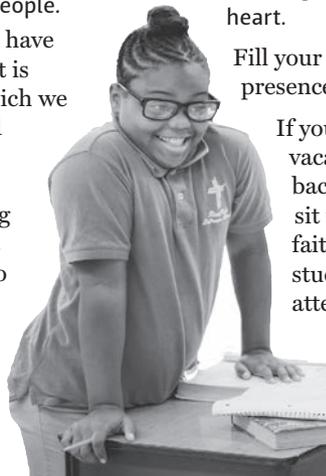
As students of Christ, we focus to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives. This means filling our lives with godly behavior. Follow the words of Ps. 37:4:

Delight yourselves in the LORD and, He will give you the desires of your heart.

Fill your life with His thoughts, presence and praises.

If you were on “summer vacation,” it’s time to get back to school! It’s time to sit under the Lord again by faithfully attending worship, studying His Word and attending Bible class.

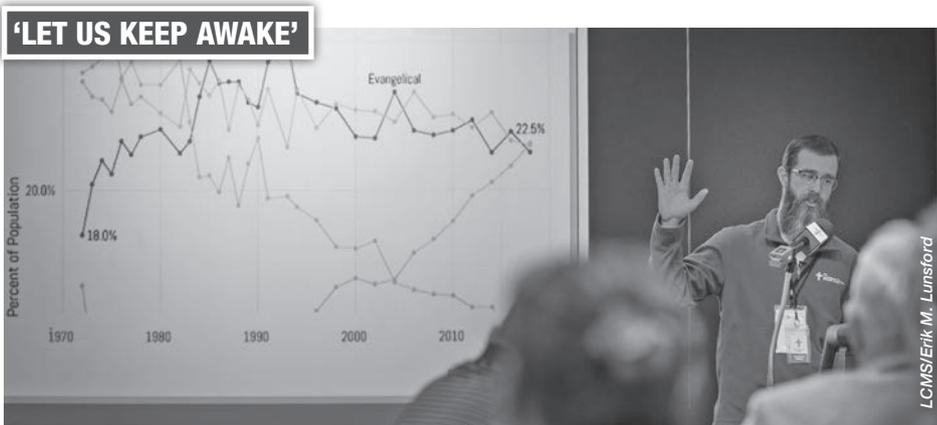
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. **PROV. 3:5**



Hearts for Jesus

The Southern Illinois District 2023 Hearts for Jesus mission will support Garuna Christian Schools & Kids, a ministry of the Garuna Foundation, which has established a system of Christian schools in Cambodia. At present, seven schools form the Garuna school system, serving more than 1,200 students in grades kindergarten through six. The goal of the school system is to provide a daily, year-round opportunity for children to learn about Jesus while also studying Khmer (Cambodian) reading/writing, math and basic English. These schools are in communities where only 2 percent of the population are Christians, and most have little or no knowledge of Jesus.

Garuna helps support the Cambodia Lutheran Church (CLC) by encouraging church plants and Bible studies at the school sites. Garuna Christian schools are built next to existing Lutheran congregations or new church planting sites. The schools are built with movable walls to allow for outreach activities for the community, such as Sunday schools, youth soccer, holiday events and more. In this way, the entire community can enjoy the blessings of an excellent education in a Christian school while learning of the love of Christ. Cheryl Ehlers, who served as an LCMS missionary for eight years (1993-2001), is Garuna director of Educational Ministries.



MDFL Fall Conference



Offers **in-person and online options**

IN PHOTO: The Rev. Heath Curtis, coordinator for LCMS Stewardship Ministry and pastor of Zion, Carpenter, and Trinity, Worden, makes a presentation during the MDFL Initial Gathering in 2020.

It's time to make your plans to attend the Making Disciples for Life (MDFL) Fall Conference, set for Oct. 10–12 at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis. In-person and online attendance options are available.

People today are influenced by many errant worldviews. This MDFL conference will focus on providing resources that equip Lutherans to faithfully share God's Word — a Word desperately needed by people who have been deceived by the false teachings of the world.

The conference theme, "Let Us Keep Awake," is based on 1 Thessalonians 5:6: "So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober."

Presentations will revolve around three primary themes:

- ▶ Awake as witnesses;
- ▶ Awake for our slumbering neighbors; and
- ▶ Confessing Christ in a world asleep.

The in-person portion of the conference is limited to 100 participants. The \$69 per person registration cost includes meals and snacks. Online participation is unlimited. The \$29 fee may be used by an individual, couple, family or group.

For both in-person and online registration, participants will have access to recorded sessions for 60 days after the conference ends.

Visit lcms.org/making-disciples-conference for more information and to register.

Considering being a pastor or deaconess?

There are several opportunities for prospective students to visit Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), this fall. Take part in a Prayerfully Consider Visit Oct. 13–15 or Christ Academy: College Oct. 27–30. Both programs provide an opportunity to explore the CTSFW campus, interact with students and faculty, experience fellowship and worship, and contemplate the vocation of pastor or deaconess. Find out more at ctsfw.edu/pcv or ctsfw.edu/ca.

Roe v. Wade is overturned



Now what?

This article appeared at LutheranLenses.com and was reprinted with permission.

God tells Jeremiah:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart." JER. 1:5

This means that before Jeremiah ever knew God, God knew Jeremiah. It also means that before you ever knew God, God knew you. Before the foundations of the world were laid, Jeremiah was set apart to be with God and to love and serve God. The same is also true for you.

God's purposes for you go back before your birth, before you were conceived and before the world was created. Long before you thought God was important, God thought you were important. Long before you ever heard the name of Jesus Christ, He had already committed to dying for you so that you could live a life truly worth living — a life lived in hope.

On June 24, in one of the most historic rulings of the last 50 years, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. This is a giant step toward protecting life, particularly the life of the unborn. It is a giant step toward honoring the

fact that God knows and has a purpose for each and every human being — a purpose formed before the creation of the world.

However, to be clear, the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* does not make abortion illegal. It simply puts the authority to ban, regulate or promote abortion into the hands of each state. This will both change and charge the political landscape of the United States. Our already deeply divided nation will now be more divided than at any point in recent history.

So what does this mean for us as Christian members of our society? What do we do and how are we supposed to act in light of this ruling?

First, we need to humble ourselves and pray. This is not the time for gloating. We are not called to create or exacerbate division. Our social media posts should declare "in your face." Instead, in our prayers, we can ask God to show us how to be a part of the solution, part of the healing our nation so desperately needs, healing that can only be found through the love of Jesus Christ.

The reality is that Jesus died for us all — He died for those who are feeling

challenged and hopeless because they are faced with an unexpected pregnancy. He died for the unwed mother, many of whom are now more scared than ever. He died for the father who may not have any say in whether his child will be given life. He died for those who have nowhere to turn. He died for those who feel like abortion is the only option. He died for those who are grieving the abortions they have had. The list goes on. First and foremost, we should pray and lift them all up before the throne of grace of our Lord and Savior.

Second, we need to find ways to truly support life. It is not enough to say that we support life. We need to put our money where our mouths are and actually support life. This means reaching out and supporting those who are faced with unexpected pregnancies, helping them to see life as a viable option. And that means we need to be there for women (and men!) who have decided to keep pregnancies viable. We need to be willing to walk alongside them and help them to prepare for their future.

This means that we, as individuals and as our congregations, need to love and support unwed mothers and fathers during pregnancy and especially after the child has been born. These young families, whether traditional families or not, need spiritual, financial and physical support. They need to know that someone is willing and eager to walk alongside them throughout their

Continued on next page



journey. We, as the church, should be leading the way in this arena. People need to know that we will be there for them for the long haul. They need to know that if they choose life, we will continue to support them in that choice. If more people believed this to be true, perhaps more people would choose life.

Third, we need to offer such support in a way that shows the unconditional love of Christ. Love is not love if there are stings attached. Love is not love if it is only given to those who love us. To love as Jesus loves is to live and serve with *agape* love, the sacrificial love that is given freely while expecting nothing in return. To truly support life means that we are to love and support those facing unexpected pregnancies regardless of their faith affiliations or lack thereof, regardless of how they see their future. Protecting life can have no qualifiers. Jesus died for the preborn child and we are called to be Christ's hands and feet in this world for everyone, not just those who look, think or believe like us.

So while June 24 was a historic day, the real work for the church is just beginning: the work to actually love and support those who may not see life as an option, and the work of loving and supporting those who will choose life. If we truly believe God's Word in Jer. 1:5, then we will recognize that God called us to be His church for such a time as this — to love and support those whom God has lovingly created and set apart.



Advocates for Life **ON THE WEB**

- sidadvocatesforlife.com
- facebook.com/sid.lcms.alt



Listen to the voices of joyful retirees:

- ▶ You need to plan what you will do next before you retire. Make sure your life has meaning and purpose.
- ▶ Before retiring, plan to reinvent yourself as one who gives back as much as you can.
- ▶ Forge strong relationships with family, friends, church members and even folks you did not know.
- ▶ Take time to meditate on what God is saying to you in His Holy Word.
- ▶ Life is not like waiting for the storm to pass; rather, it is about dancing in the rain.
- ▶ God has given me these extra years of living. My opportunity is to use them wisely, growing in faith, growing in service.

Survey says: Top 7 senior activities

Sedentary pursuits? Hardly! Seniors are staying active and engaged. How many of these activities do you enjoy?

1. Travel

Whether independently or in packaged group tours, seniors make up a significant percentage of all travelers.

2. Yoga

This is a great way to improve flexibility and muscle tone while easing joint and muscle pain, without the discomfort and possible injury that can result from other forms of exercise.

3. Volunteering

Giving back is the ultimate win-win: the recipient gets the help they need, and the giver gains incredible satisfaction from making a difference in another person's life.

4. Hiking

Of course you can do more than sit by the campfire. Hiking is a great way to enjoy nature's beauty while improving

your overall fitness.

5. Camping

Whether it's in a tent or a camper, who doesn't love spending time in the great outdoors?

6. Gardening

Few things are more satisfying than growing and nurturing plants that one day become beautiful (and in some cases, delicious).

7. Passing on memories

Whether Scrapbooking, recording stories on audio or video, writing blogs or sharing photos, recording memories is the perfect way to end an active day.

*Submitted by Dan Roth,
Southern Illinois District Older Adult
Advisory Committee*

CARING FOR MINOR CHILDREN



“Who would take care of our children? I am not sure anyone would be willing to accept that responsibility,” said Shelly to her attorney, Jim. “It’s not that they aren’t good children. They are all fine, but there are 11 of them! If something happens to Pat and me, who will take them?”

Personal guardian for minor children

One very important decision for you to make when creating a plan is to decide who would be the guardian of your minor children. When you write your first will, it is very possible that you still have minor children at home. While you may not have 11 children and face the challenge that confronted Shelly and Pat, this is still a very crucial and important decision.

Your guardian will raise the children, teach them values, select the schools they attend and perform the functions of a parent. If you do not have a guardian selected in a will, a court may select a person. That person may not share your cultural background, your religion, your general worldview, or any other aspects of the character that you think important for the person who raises your children. By selecting a guardian and an alternate in your will, you have a much better prospect of finding someone that you think is the right person to raise your children.

Two parents

If there are two parents, normally the survivor will be selected as the guardian of the children. But if both were to pass away, then it would be necessary to select a guardian.

Even if you select a guardian, there

could still be an objection or contest by other family members. The probate judge usually will approve your selection unless there is strong evidence that indicates the person is not qualified. For example, evidence of alcoholism, criminal background or a history of child abuse could lead the judge to select another person. However, in nearly all cases the person that you select is chosen because he or she is the best possible individual to raise your children.

Single parent

There are several reasons why a person may be a single parent in our society. A single parent may never have been married, there could have been a divorce, or the spouse could have passed away. In all three cases, it is especially important for single parents to have carefully selected a guardian.

Blended family

If you have divorced and remarried, it may be your desire to have your new spouse as the guardian for children from your first marriage.

Normally, children are placed with their biological parent. However, if you can show good reasons why it is in “the best interest of the child” for your new spouse to be guardian, the court may permit him or her to raise your children. It is desirable for you to write a letter that is retained with your will to explain your reasons why the biological parent is not a good choice and how your current spouse would be the best person to raise your children.

Property for your children

If you have a high level of trust in the

person selected to be guardian, it is possible to transfer property outright to him or her. However, if you choose to entrust a guardian with your property, you need to recognize that the guardian will have complete control and may choose to use the property for other purposes. This may be an acceptable solution if you have moderate resources, but if your property is substantial, a trust may be a better choice.

Trust for children

With a moderate to substantial amount of property, it is quite common to create a trust for the benefit of the minor children. One person is selected as trustee to manage the property. He or she then transfers the income and, if required, principal to the guardian. The combination of one person managing the property and the guardian raising the children provides checks and balances that achieve the best result for the children.

Reprinted from Crescendo Interactive, May 28, 2021.

Caring for your children is just one part of your Lifetime Plan for Giving. Contact Scott Radden, gift planning counselor for the LCMS Foundation, at 618-977-4049 or scott.radden@lfnd.org for more information on how to set up your personal Lifetime Plan for Giving and care for your children.

There is no charge for this service and all information is kept confidential.



Scott Radden

Historic gift presented to St. John's

On July 6, descendants of the missionary pastor who arrived in New Minden in 1846 paid a visit to St. John's and brought a priceless gift for the congregation.

C.F.W. Scholz, a young man of 23 when he emigrated from Germany, had trained as a dye maker. He quit his profession and after about 11 months of intense preparation, was sent to the United States to be a missionary pastor. He was married in July 1847 in St. Louis and then left for New Minden with his bride the next day. They moved into a 12' x 20' portion of the new timber-frame church/school/parsonage that originally sat north of the present-day church. That timber-frame structure is currently being rebuilt in a new location, having been flattened in the 2013 tornado.

Scholz's descendants came to see the progress on the "resurrection" of the building. They also visited the graves of three of the Scholz's infant children. Four generations of the family were represented.

Ruth Schnake, 91, of Effingham, Scholz's great-granddaughter, presented to St. John's an autograph book from the 1840s. When Scholz was a young journeyman dye maker and a student for the ministry, he traveled on foot through German lands. During this time, he had his relatives, friends and supporters write messages for him before he left Germany. A few pieces of color artwork are also included, as well as a wreath that his sister braided for him out of her own hair. (As far as we know, he never saw his siblings again after he left Germany in 1846.) Scholz's autographs include a message from one of his teachers, Rev. J.K. Wilhelm



▲ Ruth opens and explains the documents to Pastor Mueller.

◀ Four generations of Rev. C.F.W. and Charlotte Scholz's descendants visited St. John's. From left, (front) Laura Folliard (5th generation), Hinsdale, Ill.; Sara Folliard (6th, holding Lilly Reed, 7th), Hinsdale; (middle) Ruth Schnake (4th), Effingham; Carl Krause (5th), Lewisville, Texas; (back) Jim Folliard, Hinsdale; Kelly Krause Reed (6th), Denton, Texas; and Logan Reed (7th).

Loehe, who greatly supported the growth of Lutheran churches in America and the development of deaconess training. The autographs are on 71 small sheets.

Ruth also donated translations of all the comments and signatures. In the 1990s, Ruth and her husband, Ray, commissioned the translation by retired Rev. Ervin G. Meseke, who happened to have served St. John's (1968-73).

"Until a few weeks ago we did not even know this autograph book existed," said Rev. Tim Mueller, St. John's pastor. "We are very blessed to receive it. It fits per-

fectly with the theme of this reconstruction project.

"We want to call it the 'Jesus Sends You Missionary Chapel.' Not only did a missionary pastor preach and teach there, but he (C.F.W.) and his family also lived there for six years. These are real-time messages from his supporters and loved ones that he treasured as he took leave of them for the new world. Most of them he never saw again. We hope to display copies of some of the pages so that people who visit the chapel will be inspired to consider 'To whom is Jesus sending me? How can I share His love with others?'"



What's your 80?

The LWML of Messiah, Lebanon, celebrated the Lutheran Women's Missionary League's 80th anniversary by collecting 80 jars of peanut butter that were donated to the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), Food Bank. CSL students and their families use the Food Bank for the blessing of free groceries and household items. In thanksgiving for 80 years of the LWML, the organization has asked "What's Your 80?" Members, groups and zones have been encouraged to reflect God's love by blessing others with 80 of something, remembering events from the last 80 years and more. Visit lwml.org/80.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

to grow into adults who keep these good habits and then pass them on to their children. It's never a one-and-done thing. People would rightly look at you as peculiar if you declared, "I washed my hands once in eighth grade. I'm good to go."

Holy Scripture is like a treasure box. There are riches to be discovered everywhere. No matter how many times I read a passage, new insights emerge. New applications are discovered. Why? Because it is a living (Heb. 4:12) and dynamic (Rom. 1:16) Word. The Holy Spirit continually opens our minds to see and behold new things.

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!" **ROM. 11:33**

Ignorance is *not* Bliss.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

PROV. 1:7



Lutheran Witness District Supplement

Deadline for the November 2022 issue is Sept. 15.

Send news and photos to:
SID.Lutheran.Witness@gmail.com
or LCMS Southern Illinois District
2408 Lebanon Ave.
Belleville, IL 62221



Please ensure all photos sent are high resolution (300 dpi).