



DISTRICT NEWS

OKLAHOMA

Witnessing for Christ

Thank You!

The 49th Regular Convention of the Oklahoma District now belongs to the ages! I personally want to thank everyone for reelecting me to a fourth three-year term with such a strong vote of confidence.



Rev. Barrie Henke
District President

I often think that my presidential election is a demonstration of God's sense of humor!

Those who attended the convention enjoyed a new facility in Edmond, reacquainted with old friends, made new friends and enjoyed uplifting speakers and presentations. The theme focused on the commission given by our risen Lord Jesus Christ in St. Luke 24:48: "You are witnesses of these things!" The whole convention focused on this key verse.

The clergy of the Kingfisher Circuit did a marvelous job in tying together each phrase of that verse in showing how those words impact our own life of witnessing. Our essayist, the Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Kloha, brought out the important truth that as witnesses of the resurrected Christ, we are gathered and going: gathered together to worship and grow, only to be equipped to go into the

world as Christ's witnesses, beginning with where we live.

The Oklahoma District convention was a demonstration of the Church Militant in action, intent on doing the work of Christ while on this side of eternity. But we were also reminded by the Rev. Marvin Henschel that our hope is to be in the Church Triumphant in heaven where we shall rest from our labors. Under the theme, "Blest Indeed!", he graciously recalled those workers in our district who have claimed the promised crown of glory since our last convention.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who died in the Lord from now on.' 'Blessed indeed,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.'"

— Rev. 14:13



**BLESSINGS
TO YOU**
Saints of Oklahoma!

The convention is over, but the work of witnessing entrusted to us in Christ's earthly Church is before us! Roll up your sleeves and pray as you keep your eyes heavenward!

Unfamiliar Territory

The Oklahoma District convention occurred on a monumental weekend for Oklahoma — the anniversary of the

Land Run for the Unassigned Lands, April 22, 1889. Orlando was along the northern border for that Land Run, and later was along the southern border for the Cherokee Strip Land Run held on Sept. 16, 1893.

Obviously, Orlando was the recognized hub of the territory! And since it was situated at the extreme end of several counties, in years to come no one would maintain the roads! The land runs brought many thousands of people to an unfamiliar territory with unfamiliar weather and plagued with unfamiliar dangers. But they were willing to risk their whole life and livelihood in order to become part of this new but unfamiliar territory.

There were German Lutherans from Russia who came down from Halstead, Kan., to stake their claim. There were my mother's maternal and paternal grandparents — the Emerson and Montgomery families — who came from Kansas and Missouri to stake claims. None of them had any idea what the future would hold for them, but they were willing to be surprised! They were willing to work hard in building a living in this new land.

So it is with witnessing for Christ. The territory may be both unfamiliar to you and uncomfortable for you. But as Christ's called, gathered and going people, we have been given great power that emboldens our witness — the Holy Spirit. If we prayerfully yield to His leading, then prepare to be amazed! He

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Henke to continue as president

At the 49th convention of the Oklahoma District, held April 20-21 in Edmond, the Rev. Barrie E. Henke of Edmond was elected, on the first ballot, to his fourth term as president.

Also elected were:

- › **The Rev. David R. Nehrenz** of Norman, first vice-president;
- › **The Rev. Kory B. Boster** of Sallisaw, second vice-president; and
- › **The Rev. Gregory W. Brown** of Woodward, third vice-president.

The elected officers were installed at the close of the convention.

The theme of the convention, also used as the basis for LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison's sermon during the opening Divine Service, was Luke 24:48: "You are witnesses of these things."

Resolutions adopted at the convention included:

- › **REACTIVATING ONGOING AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST** (O AFC) in Oklahoma by charging the district evangelism

executive to develop a leadership team during the first year of the triennium and, during the second and third years, begin holding O AFC weekend events and encouraging participation in national O AFC events.

- › **INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI—SYNOD IN OKLAHOMA** by appointing a committee to produce a video and other resources that the congregations of the district may use to make their communities aware of the LCMS and the Good News it has to share.
- › **ADOPTING A DISTRICT HANDBOOK**, bringing to fruition a charge by the 2006 convention to the district Board of Directors.
- › **AMENDING THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION** to meet the requirements of the 2016 Synod Convention Resolution 9-02A, "To Assure Uniformity of Relationship and Asset Disposition Language in Governing Documents of Corporate Agencies of Synod."

- › **RECONFIGURING VISITATION CIRCUITS IN THE DISTRICT** to maximize the number of pastor and lay delegates that can attend the 2019 Synod convention.

- › **AMENDING THE DISTRICT BYLAWS TO ALLOW FOR MEANS OF VOTING** for members of the district Board of Directors other than by an in-person meeting.

Resolutions were also passed:

- › asking the Synod in convention to grant a lay vote to every congregation (where currently those in multi-congregation settings share the vote);
- › to change the way electoral circuits are formed by allowing district boards of directors to move congregations rather than combine visitation circuits to form electoral circuits;
- › to provide financial reports to the Synod in a format easily understood by those unfamiliar with financial terminology;
- › and to encourage the congregations of Synod to support financially the work of Synod, including with unrestricted giving.

— Submitted by Rev. W.R. Rains,
district secretary

Welcome to Oklahoma!

Call Day was held at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, on April 24 and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., on April 25. Concluding students received their pastoral and diaconal calls, and second-year students received their vicarage and internship assignments.

The Oklahoma District received three vicars.



From Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Joshua Brakhage was assigned to Holy Trinity, Edmond, and Jason Steffenson was assigned to First, Ada. From left, Jason and Anna Marie Steffenson, Rev. Barrie Henke (Oklahoma District president) and Suzanne and Joshua Brakhage.



David Keating, a student at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., will serve his vicarage at Trinity Lutheran Church, Norman.

Women in Mission convene in Lawton

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) Oklahoma District celebrated its 90th anniversary during its 55th convention, held April 13-14 in Lawton. "Great is Thy Faithfulness" was the theme for the convention, and faithfulness was evident throughout the convention — during activities, speakers, and worship services.



Servant activities began Friday and items were assembled to give to local organizations and Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST) Ministries. Gifts from the Heart were gathered for a Lawton homeless shelter and food pantry. As attendees assembled they brought their mites from vintage mite boxes gathered throughout the state for a 90th anniversary offering.

Alice Brauer, long-time missionary to India, was showered with birthday cards from LWML women across the district. An offering was also collected for her continued work. LWML has supported her throughout the years with mission grants and donated items for her mission work.

Speakers included our own Oklahoman, Patti Ross, LWML president, who brought greetings from the national Board of Directors. Cindy Steinbeck from California was the Bible study leader for both Friday and Saturday. Her study was inspiring and thought-provoking.

Former LWML presidents Linda Reiser and Virginia Von Seggern gave a brief history of their experiences during their terms of office, which included interesting facts and humor. The Rev. Dr. Brent Smith, mission development counselor at Mission Central in Mapleton, Iowa, brought news from the mission field in various locations.

Descendants of the charter members of Oklahoma LWL were honored by President Dianna (Just) and the convention attendees. Skits from the decades brought laughter as several groups brought back memories of our past.

Delegates voted for a mission grant goal

of \$104,600 for the 2018-20 Biennium and selected 20 mission grants.

The 90th anniversary and closing worship offerings raised more than \$6,000 for five Oklahoma District missionaries. The opening worship offering, silent auction and live auction of LWML bears raised more than \$4,000 for mites, giving us a great start toward our mission grant goal for the biennium.

All of this added up to a great convention and LWML looks forward to another 90 years of service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Great is Thy Faithfulness!

— Submitted by Doris Schmall and Betty Reichert

ELECTED OFFICERS



- ▶ Vice President of Christian Life
Peggy Grunow
Holy Trinity, Edmond
- ▶ Vice-President of Communication
Kasey Meyer
St. Paul, Texhoma
- ▶ Vice-President of Gospel Outreach
Beverly Bahr
Zion, Stillwater
- ▶ Recording Secretary
Sarah Yauk
Zion, Buffalo
- ▶ Treasurer
Jonith Grundman
Holy Cross, Lawton
Rev. Martin Herzberg
Zion, Lahoma

LWML ... a history of love and service

Beginning in the 1850s, Oklahoma women of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) established local auxiliaries to meet people's needs. These were extraordinary women! They mended clothes for seminarians; equipped hospitals; established schools and convalescent and retirement homes; helped orphanages and residences for people with disabilities; gathered clothing, furniture and food for indigents; and eventually branched into funding mission endeavors at home and abroad.

In the 1920s, women from LCMS churches coordinated their efforts by uniting in state and regional leagues. The first Lutheran Women's League (LWL) society was established at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Apache, on Jan. 17, 1923. This led to the movement and establishment of the Lutheran Women's League of Oklahoma.

On March 11, 1928, LWL of Oklahoma began and was the first district to have such an organization. The first convention was held in 1929 in Norman and 1,000 mite boxes were distributed. In 1942, the LCMS approved the establishment of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) throughout the nation. This organization has raised more than \$100 million dollars for missions in 71 countries and five continents.

Confirmation celebrations



Those confirmed at **First Lutheran Church, Ponca City**, on Sunday April 29, are, from left (front row) Alexis Hunter, Max Engster, Jacey Burden; (middle row) Kylie Mayers, Anna Siemers, Aubrie Fredricks and Janie Heitman. In back are the Rev. Jeremy May and Don Young, confirmation instructor.

— Submitted by Mr. David Birnbaum, First Lutheran School principal



Confirmation at **Messiah Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City**, was held on April 8. From left (front row) Naia Shepherd, Kelsie Novotny, Payton Woolery, Shaylin Chandler; (back row) Emma Fruendt, Avery Parsells, the Rev. Mark Muenchow and Robert Probst.

LCEF



Program makes saving money fun

Often we struggle to find the most appropriate gift to show our love to family and friends. What about giving a gift that continues to give? Consider beginning a Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) investment for your children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews. The investment will grow along with them, while providing funds for Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod churches, schools, universities, child-care centers and other ministries to expand the Kingdom.

Join the Y.I. Club with a Y.I. StewardAccount®

With an investment of just \$25 to open the Y.I. StewardAccount, your young investor becomes a Y.I. Club member with special fun activities that grow with three different age levels.

Y.I. StewardAccount features:

- ▶ Minimum of \$25 to open account.
- ▶ Premium interest rate of 3.5 percent on balances up to \$1,000.
- ▶ Savings grow with the child, but are accessible.
- ▶ Checks and debit card available to custodian.
- ▶ Debit card available at age 16
- ▶ Interest compounded and paid monthly.
- ▶ Opportunity to make additional investments with checks or Y.I. Stamps.

If you would like more information about LCEF's Young Investor savings account, contact Jeffrey Maltz, district vice-president, at 785-230-4112 or jeffrey.maltz@lcef.org; or go to lcef.org/young-investors-club.



We congratulate those in Oklahoma District congregations who are celebrating 50 years or more!

June

Bartlesville, Redeemer

Fred and Jackie Malone
51 years, June 3

Nolan and Marilyn Jones
56 years, June 11

Larry and Glenda Heideman
54 years, June 14

Lewis and Becky Trentman
55 years, June 16

Ralph and Lois Bergstad
52 years, June 17

Ken and Cheryl Byam
53 years, June 20

Cushing, Our Redeemer
Ronald and Judith Bush
50 years, June 22

Edmond, Holy Trinity
John and Patricia Steffens
56 years, June 1

Wayne and Carolynne Bechler
56 years, June 2

Neil and Carol Ford
50 years, June 2

Keith and Helen Aanes
58 years, June 5

Bill and Sue Lockard
63 years, June 11

William and Jan Fraase
59 years, June 13

Dennis and Rita Paul
50 years, June 14

Ray and Clara Hasselwander
55 years, June 15

Bill and Susan Foster
50 years, June 16

Robert and Carlene Namken
60 years, June 19

Richard and Connie Lewellen
57 years, June 23

Bill and Carol Rice
51 years, June 24

El Reno, Trinity
Robert and Sharon Palmer
58 years, June 18

Enid, St. Paul's

Ralph and Barbara Kroll
55 years, June 1

Ray and Sharyn Mueller
50 years, June 8

Gerald and Mary Ann Hoeltzel
61 years, June 22

Rev. Ken and Carole Wade
54 years, June 28

Jere and Carole Courter
56 years, June 30

Fairmont, Zion

Bob and Carolyn Gash
59 years, June 14

Guthrie, Our Savior
Marvin and Lois Backhaus
67 years, June 2

Miami, Mount Olive
Clyde and Connie Bossman
52 years, June 4

John and Sherry Thomas
51 years, June 7

Norman, Trinity

John and Freida Depe
59 years, June 7

Nancy and Norman Parker
61 years, June 9.

John and Ruth Turcotte
59 years, June 28

Oklahoma City, Immanuel
Bill and Betty Mahan
69 years, June 26

Oklahoma City, Messiah
Merle and Merle Mauck
73 years, June 2

Skeetz and Ruella Yates
63 years, June 2

Henry and Denise Spielmann
61 years, June 17

Okarche, St. John's
Allen and Margaret Kochenower
58 years, June 4

Skiatook, Shepherd of the Hills
Rev. David and Marilyn Helmer
54 years, June 28

Stillwater, Zion

Ernest and Twilla Dirks
68 years, June 2

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer
Frank and Wendy Metz
50 years, June 8

Woodward, Trinity
Larry and Gwen Meier
52 years, June 5

Bill and Vura Moser
55 years, June 15

Broken Arrow, Trinity



Lynn and Freida Burton
53 years, June 5

Blackwell, Trinity



Ron and Esther Bersche
54 years, June 6



Joe and Loretta Bersche
59 years, June 7

Norman, Trinity



Rev. Dr. Howard and Valerie
Kramer
70 years, June 27

Boise City, Hope



Jay and Pam Carson
50 years, June 16

Perry, Christ



George and Darlene Alley
67 years, June 16



James and Peggy Gottschalk
63 years, June 25



Bruce and Martha Henke
54 years, June 23

CELEBRATIONS

Ponca City, First



Karel and Sharilyn Blubaugh
54 years, June 10



Glen and Barbara Mayer
55 years, June 30

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer



John and Sally Neas
52 years, June 10



Marvin and Rose Carbiener
61 years, June 22

Bartlesville, Redeemer
Daryl and Vickie Doughty
51 years, July 7

Jere and Bonnie Smith
63 years, July 23

Breckinridge, Immanuel
Gerald and Judy Roggow
55 years, July 7

Edmond, Holy Trinity
Gary and Linda Johnson
50 years, July 1

Roger and Linda Bradford
50 years, July 3

Richard and Patricia Glasser
58 years, July 10

Marvyn and Audrey Olson
59 years, July 11

Fairmont, Zion
Robert and Verla Helberg
52 years, July 8

Mustang, Christ
Rev. Earl and Joan Phillip
55 years, July 27

Oklahoma City, Messiah
George and Carol Williams
62 years, July 1

Rev. Marvin and Shirley Henschel
59 years, July 18

Hugh and Dorothy Simpson
61 years, July 28

Ponca City, First
Merle and Jonie Paynter
65 years, July 11

Stillwater, Zion
Edward and Julaine Eick
62 years, July 15

Buddy and Joyce Harrell
54 years, July 25

Tulsa, Grace
Loren and Bev England
58 years, July 10

Broken Arrow, Trinity



Bill and Marilyn Ninke
51 years, July 29

July

Perry, Christ



Jim and Linda Kukuk
69 years, July 4



Calvin and Kathryn Harman
65 years, July 6

Ponca City, First



Howard and Margaret Nelsen
67 years, July 8



Glen and Sharon Hoecker
50 years, July 5

Shawnee, Redeemer



Emil and Dorothy Sandstrom
66 years, July 5



Don and Marilyn McCollough
58 years, July 24

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer



Norman and Bernie Zanter
53 years, July 3



Harold and Colene France
53 years, July 24



Roger and Nancy Witte
54 years, July 26

Tulsa, Lutheran Church of Our Savior



Larry and Eileen Wigger
72 years, July 21

Belated

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer



Bob and Jean Paulsen
62 years, April 21

Send news



Deadlines:

- › August issue— June 15
- › September issue—July 15
- › October issue—Aug. 15
- › November issue— Sept. 15
- › December issue—Oct. 15

Send to:

› jhedrickokdistrict@gmail.com

or

› Janice Hedrick, PO Box 70, Owasso, OK 74055

Phone: 918-396-9629



BIRTHDAYS

We congratulate those who are celebrating 90 years or more!

June

Fairmont, Zion

Norma Ruth Miller
92 years, June 5

Norman, Trinity

Rev. Dr. Howard Kramer
94 years, June 3

Oklahoma City, Messiah

Jerry Mauck
91 years, June 25

Delphine Zajic
93 years, June 26

Okarche, St. John's

Elaine Roth
92 years, June 4

Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer

Kate Morrissey
96 years, June 23



Blackwell, Trinity

Erma Benson
95 years,
June 10



Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer

Berniece Rowland
93 years, June 26



Skiatook, Shepherd of the Hills

Peg Robison
94 years,
June 26

July

Breckinridge, Immanuel

Eileen Bentz
96 years, July 1

Covington, St. John's

Marie Fischer
92 years, July 7

Enid, St. Paul's

Kathleen Gray
92 years, July 21

Lawton, St. John's

Lee Hansen
96 years, July 2

Richard Matthys
91 years, July 14

Norman, Trinity

Evelyn Ninman,
97 years, July 27

Oklahoma City, Messiah

Rita Malan
93 years, July 30

Dellora Elise Manske
96 years, July 30

Oklahoma City, Zion

Olinda Berry
99 years, July 24

Perry, Christ

Bob Ewy
90 years, July 20

Tulsa, Our Savior

Eileen Wigger
93 years, July 11



El Reno, Trinity

Viola Constien
91 years,
July 31



Perry, Christ

Marjorie Martin
94 years,
July 9



Perry, Christ
Dorothy Vasek
91 years, July 30



Tulsa, Christ the Redeemer
Al Teegarden
93 years, July 25

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

provides the right opportunities, the right timing and the right words! All we are asked to do is to give joyful witness of the redeeming work of our risen Lord Jesus Christ, and the impact that truth has had on our life and eternity. It may seem rather simple — well, it is!

KISS Principle

God always uses the KISS Principle with His people: **Keep It Simple, Saints!** The Gospel message is not complicated, but simple for proclamation. Like the pioneers of early Oklahoma who came into unfamiliar territory, so it is with us as we may enter unfamiliar spiritual territory in witnessing. Those early Oklahoma pioneers were richly blessed in spite of any hardships. God's promise is that our witness will also be filled with blessings, not only for us, but for those who are impacted by our witness.

Therefore, fellow saints, witness with joy, sincerity and compassion. In so doing, the Holy Spirit may use our actions to speak as loudly as our words. As it stakes His claim in the heart of those to whom we witness, then He will open our lips to speak of the glorious news of our risen Christ!

"You are witnesses of these things!" For this task we have been redeemed! To this task we have been called as saints of God! With the leading power of the Holy Spirit, let us be about growing Christ's Church!

Then we shall be "Blessed indeed!"

Challenges in your rural, small town church?

Conference will remind attendees to **'Have No Fear'**

Registration is now open for the 2018 LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission (RSTM) National Conference, to be held Nov. 8–10 in Kansas City, Mo., at the Hilton Kansas City Airport.

Under the theme “Have No Fear,” the conference will address the blessings and challenges facing contemporary rural and small-town congregations. The theme verse for the conference is Matt. 19:26: “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

The RSTM conference is open to anyone who serves, resides or has an interest in rural or small-town areas, with topics and resources specifically suited to the rural and small-town mission field. Congregations will be encouraged to become healthy churches, eager to bear witness for Christ, show mercy to those in need and develop a robust life together with fellow members.

Breakout topics for the conference include ministry to inactive members, stewardship, family ministry and outreach, hope during grief, opportunities with Recognized Service Organizations and other topics affecting rural and small-town congregations.

New this year are special tracks for Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) Disaster Training and Youth Ministry; these options have a limited number of seats and require attendance in all six sessions.

Registration and lodging

Registration cost for the conference is \$215 per person and includes all plenary and breakout sessions, materials, dinner on Thursday, and lunch and dinner on Friday. Special rates are available for couples, groups and those needing meals only.

Hotel reservations must be made separately from conference registration. The Hilton Kansas City Airport conference rate of \$106/single occupancy or \$114/double occupancy (plus applicable taxes) includes breakfast, complimentary self-parking and complimentary airport transportation on request.

To reserve a room, contact the Hilton Kansas City Airport at 816-8891-8900, ask for in-house reservations and request the LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission Conference rate. The deadline for reservations is Sept. 21.

Registration for the conference closes Sept. 15. Lodging grants are available for first-time attendees. For more information, or to register for the conference, visit lcms.org/rstm or contact RSTM Coordinator Amy Gerdtts at 888-463-5127.

It's time to submit nominations

67th LCMS convention is next summer, but the earlier, the better

The Oct. 20 deadline may seem a long way off, but the time is now to submit nominations for the 74 officer, board and commission positions to be elected at the next LCMS convention, July 20–25, 2019, in Tampa, Fla. Details on the positions are available at lcms.org/2019-nominations.

If every LCMS congregation submitted one nomination, there would be more than 6,000 total nominations. But four months into the process, only 226 nominations had been received. Of those, only half have been positively identified as willing to serve.

As outlined in Bylaw 3.12.3.4, nominations may be submitted by agencies and officers of the Synod, congregational and individual members of the Synod, and laypersons of the congregations of the Synod. While it may seem that there is still plenty of time to nominate, input is desired as soon as possible to allow time for the Committee for Convention Nominations to identify the best candidates.

Nominations for regional positions may come from anywhere in the Synod, but the nominee must reside in the designated region. The nomination process for president, first vice-president and regional vice-presidents will be conducted by mail with the nominating member congregations beginning in October.

The nomination form is available at lcms.org/convention/2019-nomination-form. It may be downloaded and sent via U.S. mail, or filled out electronically and emailed to ccn@lcms.org.

For more information on the nominations and elections process, go to lcms.org/convention/nominations-and-elections.



KEYNOTE speakers

The Rev. Timothy Koch, pastor of Concordia Lutheran Church, Cresbard, S.D., and Immanuel Lutheran, Wecota, S.D.

The Rev. Tom Schlund, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Algona, Iowa

The Rev. Dr. Robert H. Bennett, executive director of Luther Academy and visiting professor in Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Chaplain Craig Muehler, director of LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces