



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

NED NEWS

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Spring 2020

It Was the Worst of Times... And It Got Worse

Forgive the broad distortion of the words of the famous author. But in these COVID-19 days it seems at times that not only does it not improve but things actually get worse. I have heard explanations of this world-wide pandemic as Jesus' final preparations to fulfill the Book of Revelation before His return. Some would read it as God's punishment of the human race for ignoring Him and continuing in blatant sin against His ways and His decrees. Some have told me it is all random and no real reason exists for its appearance among us any more than one could discern any divine origins for the Black Plague or the Spanish Flu of 1918.



As Christians we believe that the Lord is in ultimate control of things. So in that sense nothing happens without His knowledge and approval. But in my heart, I do not believe that Jesus created the Coronavirus; more evidence exists that it is the result of man's distorted efforts. As far as punishment goes we Christians believe from God's Word that the Father exacted all His punishment for sin on the cross as the sin of humanity and yours and mine was laid upon the shoulders of Jesus. If wrath was ever shown from God to humanity it was in that Good Friday suffering and death of Jesus. So, it is not God unleashing His fury on mankind for sin, even though, yes,

there will come a judgment day for those who persist in unrepentance and lack of faith. In all honesty, perhaps the best answer is that Christians trust in the Lord even when we have no answers as to the origins of our plights, worldwide or personal. We know that Jesus for our sake does what He does in love, though admittedly it is hard to see love shining through the events of the last two months. But the God of love has His ways and His purposes and our Savior has a plan. All I know is that if He is willing to let me come with Him I want to be part of that plan of Jesus as He reveals it to us, or even if He does not choose to reveal all things at this time.

That is why the primary concern of our churches, our District, and our Synod is one of providing care and the love of Jesus to those who are suffering or who have lost loved ones. Jesus is the only answer that lasts and continues to strengthen us during these days and in the days to come. Our District has also reached out to all our church workers and congregations with offers of help. You can contact District Headquarters and speak to myself (your phone call will be forwarded to me as I abide by the stay-at-home regulations set up by the government) or to Business Manager Brenda Bacon who

coordinates grants from “Soldiers of the Cross” or can help secure monies through the generosity of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund of which she is our District Vice President. I have also sent out the contact information for any church workers who many need to discuss their hurts and fears with trained counselors of our District; all matters are kept confidential. I am in weekly contact with

NED NEWS is published for members and friends of the LCMS churches throughout New England.

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THE MISSION OF NED is to encourage and assist its congregations in their ministry of Word and Sacrament to build up the body of Christ and to make disciples of all peoples.

Please keep all articles under 250 words. All submissions are considered available for use by the New England District for any district communication piece including digital and print.

The next deadline is July 15

Email submissions to NEDcommunications@ned-lcms.org

Digital photos need to be high resolution and unedited (no reformatting or cropping) NED Staff and Editors reserve the right to edit articles and submissions for clarity and space.

Synod and I have forwarded message upon message sent to me by Synod to our congregations and Church Workers. We are also regularly taking the pulse of our workers with surveys as to how our congregations are surviving in these days and if there are workers who are in desperate need.

It is also my belief, based on current research and knowledge of our Pastors and other servants, that up to Easter all could function on adrenalin alone. My concern is for the days after Easter. For those who have dealt with stress upon stress unabated for so long there comes a “crash” and a church worker can only exist so far with that. We are here to help as we pray the virus abates among us and life eventually returns to whatever the “new normal” is. But what if it does go on as they say it might throughout 2020 and even beyond in its effects. That too is what we’ll be about in the days to come.

Rev. Pres. Timothy Yeadon
New England District LC-MS

Deaconess Tiffany Manor has accepted a call to the Lutheran Church-Missouri offices in St. Louis, MO. In her new role as Director of Life Ministry, she will consult and give input on the subject matters regarding life issues, and work as part of the Office of National Mission to develop resources and ministry aids.



We wish Tiffany all the best in her new position in Synod!

An Opportune Time for Revitalization

Jesus told His disciples that they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The Church stayed rather close to home in the beginning. In fact, the Church remained close to home until persecution resulted in the death of Stephen and all but the Apostles were scattered (Acts 8:1). As a result of persecution, the Church expanded outward and had to accomplish its mission in ways that maybe were unforeseen, unimagined, and not desired. There was a shakeup in the Church that was thrust upon it but the Gospel continued to be preached, the Sacraments administered, and converts brought into the fold.

Today, we find ourselves in a position that was unforeseen, unimagined, and not desired. We could hole up at home and lament our poor situation, but I have seen and heard of so many innovative ways of continued preaching by the pastors of our New England district and an expansion of new ways of carrying out the ministry's mercy and life together by our congregations. Perhaps this *anfechtung* (trial) is causing a revitalization among our congregations where need was not previously perceived. Just as the Church was chased out of Jerusalem, perhaps we are being chased out of our comfort zones and forced to find new ways of bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to our communities, our states, our region, and even to the ends of the earth.

The Church Planting & Revitalization Committee is very interested in what you are doing and how it might bring about a furtherance of the Gospel among us. What new opportunities are being created and what new ways are you finding to share the saving message of God's grace, providing mercy to those in need, and caring for one another as the body of Christ. And we encourage you to look for innovative ways to accomplish the Church's mission without compromising the truth. God embolden you as His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which He prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them (Eph 2:10). Peace be with you.

Rev. Timothy E. Sandeno is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Gorham, ME and chairman of the New England District Church Planting and Revitalization Committee.

Lutheran Heritage Foundation

The Lutheran Heritage Foundation (an LCMS recognized service organization) provides free resources to you and your church for sharing the Gospel with neighbors and friends who don't speak English as a first language. Books like Luther's *Small Catechism*, devotions and children's Bible storybooks are available in more than 100 languages – and also make excellent gifts when going on short-term mission trips! To search LHF's Publications Database, go to www.LHFmissions.org/Publications.



Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> new england district

2020 LCEF Outreach Ministry Grants Awarded

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is a nonprofit ministry of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). LCEF is blessed by strong investors and faithful borrowers. It's a partnership that is working and has been blessed by our Lord. Part of that blessing is to be able to use our fiscal year-end operating results to offer \$1,000 or \$500 Outreach Ministry Grants to congregations, schools, and other LCMS organizations within the New England District.

Qualifications included that each Outreach Ministry Grant conduct a specific local outreach/evangelism project, activity or event to reach lost people for Christ. Each project, activity or event was to reflect the goals of the LCEF mission statement – *To support the church in fulfilling its mission of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ by being a Christ-centered servant partner of the LCMS, ensuring that funds and services are available now and in the future.*

The following are the 2020 recipients:

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| ➤ Holyoke, MA – First Lutheran | Cribbage for Christ and Singing Ambassadors |
| ➤ Westminster, MA – Our Savior Lutheran | Living Nativity |
| ➤ Cheshire, CT – Cheshire Lutheran | Lassie Come Home...To Cheshire |
| ➤ Groton, CT – Faith Lutheran | “Sowing Gospel Seeds” |
| ➤ Madison, CT – L/C of Madison | Community Open House Outreach Effort |
| ➤ Middletown, CT – Grace Lutheran | Lifeguard Ministry |
| ➤ Graniteville, VT – Williamstown Lutheran | Bibles for Every Neighbor |

A total of \$4,000 was awarded to our ministry outreach recipients.

Congratulations to all recipients! The LCEF New England District staff looks forward to offering these ministry grant opportunities in the future.

LCEF's JOYFUL RESPONSE

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) offers an electronic giving platform called Joyful Response for accepting online gifts through your website, a mobile phone app, ACH or text-giving. This platform is available for LCMS congregations, schools and registered service organizations (RSOs). If you are not currently set up to take electronic payments, please contact Brenda Bacon at 413-783-0131 ext. 10 or Brenda.Bacon@lcef.org.

For additional information, please visit LCEF's website at <https://lcef.org/joyful-response> .

Ed Schneeflock installed as Vicar at Our Savior Lutheran Church – Westminster MA and is serving at Christ Lutheran Church – Troy, NH

A year ago, even six months ago, the idea that I might be serving as vicar here in Troy at Christ Lutheran Church was not in my mind at all, but here I am. The process that has brought me here has seemed like a whirlwind sometimes, So much is new, so much is different. In all that rush, and what has sometimes seemed like chaos, there is both the foundation of Christ and His church, and things I have learned and experienced as I have grown in Christ. One of the key things—no the key thing in my decision to pursuit this course, is that the Word of God must be proclaimed.



What must be proclaimed? It is not that Jesus was a good man, nor a good teacher, nor able to pull off a miracle when he needed to. No, He was not just a good man who really irritated the Pharisees; the fundamental truth is and must be proclaimed that Jesus suffered and died that we might live. The truth will always take us to the Cross. The Old Testament scriptures look forward to the Cross; the New Testament first continues that journey and then flows from Christ's work on the Cross.

"I am determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2)
Vicar Schneeflock

On Easter Sunday, Pastors Phil Booe, Scott Schuett, and Gem Gabriel (left to right) conduct a joint drive-in worship service at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lebanon, CT. Using loudspeakers and an FM radio transmitter, the circuit five pastors led the liturgy from the parking lot for dozens of cars filled with parishioners eager to gather safely amid coronavirus restrictions. Four congregations attended the two services including Christ Lutheran of Hebron, Our Redeemer of New London and Hope Lutheran of Storrs. The service included Word and Sacrament and special music on guitar by Pr. Gabriel. Pr. Schuett's sermon, *Get Your Minds Where They Belong*, exhorted listeners to resist fixating on worldly woes due to COVID-19 and instead "set their minds on things above" (Col. 3:2). Pr. Schuett also proclaimed that Christ's blood has redeemed us all, even from death, and that our salvation is found in Jesus alone.



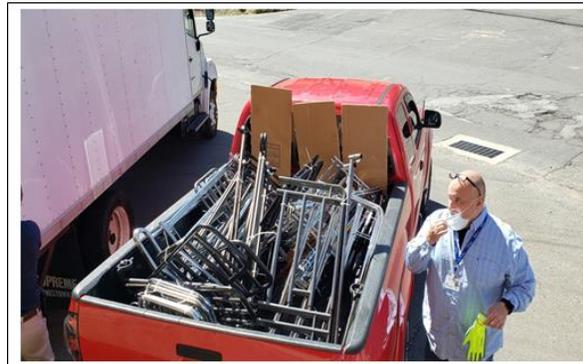
Orphan Grain Train Assists Bristol Hospital During Pandemic

On April, 6, Volunteers for the Orphan Grain Train's (OGT) New England Branch assisted Bristol Hospital employees in loading needed supplies for the Hospital's use during the COVID-19 pandemic. The items included 36 Hospital Beds, 36 Bed Rails, 38 Mattresses, 21 Mattress toppers, 31 Hospital Style Patient Monitors, 10,000 gloves, and boxes of Isolation Gowns and disposable Bed Pads.

All these items have been received as donations and OGT volunteers have picked them up to store in the warehouse to assist those in need. After doing 35 shipments throughout the world and to hard hit areas in the United States, it is wonderful to be able to help an organization like the Bristol Hospital in a time of need.

Other shipments have gone to missions in a number of countries e.g. Liberia, Nicaragua, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, Liberia, Nepal, the Philippines, Ghana and the Republic of Georgia, as well as Appalachia and hurricane relief for Puerto Rico, Florida and North Carolina. The Branch also helps those locally in New England, giving medical items that have been donated to individuals in need and thru the visiting nurse and hospice care organizations of the area. It has also helped with a shipment to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission.

The effort is an Outreach Ministry of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and OGT is a 501(3)(C) charity affiliated with the church and supported locally by Holy Trinity Lutheran in Terryville and Immanuel Lutheran in Bristol and St. Johns in Waterbury and is open to all who want to help others. For more information, please call Holy Trinity at 860-582-0723 and/or check out the OGT.org website.



CTSFW Continuing Education in New England

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), offers a number of continuing education sites across the country. While we provide the framework for these classes, local pastors in your district serve as the site coordinators, choosing the topic, teacher, time, and location (usually their home church). Classes are open to both church workers as well as lay people. The link below will take you to the registration page, where you can also find more information:

July 7-9 in Westminister, MA (Our Savior Lutheran Church)
Using the Catechism in the Congregation
Prof. John Pless

The 2017 Catechism has numerous features that have the potential of enhancing the use of Luther's Small Catechism in the congregation. This course will explore the guiding principles behind the revision, implications for catechetical pedagogy, the use of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions in the revision, and devotional aspects of the Synod's new catechism. www.ctsfw.edu/ctsfw-events/continuing-education/westminister-massachusetts

LWML

from Pass It On newsletter of the LWML New England District

A Message on COVID-19: The LWML-NED Board of Directors having cancelled our District Convention are counseling us to follow the guidelines set out by the state and federal authorities. We, Lutheran Women in Mission can take a proactive approach! Look around you and be of service to those who need help in your church and community. There are those that need help buying groceries, picking up medication, getting their mail, etc. Together, we can meet these current challenges and, with the Spirits help, find opportunities that the Lord puts before us as we serve His people and share His Gospel.

Please continue to save and remit your Mite donations. Our mission grants to share the love of Christ locally, nationally and internationally continue even in the midst of COVID-19. Send Mites to: Susan Lastowski, LWML-NED Treasurer, P.O. Box 626, Holyoke, MA 01041

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New England District Circuit and Regional Breakdown

REGION I

REV. JAMES BUTLER, VICE-PRESIDENT

CIRCUIT NO. 1

- CIRCUIT VISITOR — Rev. Don Colageo, Immanuel Lutheran, Manchester, NH
- Pastor Christopher Bartell, Regeneration Lutheran, Exeter, NH
- Pastor Edwin Harkey, Trinity Lutheran, Keene, NH
- Pastor George Ruwisch and Associate Pastor Bryan Stecker, Grace Lutheran, Nashua, NH
- Pastor Dagan Siefert, Our Redeemer Lutheran, New Ipswich, NH
- Pastor David Mueller, Good Shepherd, Peterborough, NH
- VACANT, Christ Lutheran, Troy, NH
- Pastor Paul Nielsen, Hope Lutheran Church, Bangor, ME
- Pastor Timothy Sandeno, Redeemer Lutheran, Gorham, ME
- Pastor Paul Nielsen, Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Waterville, ME
- Pastor Calvin Kemp, Williamstown Lutheran Church, Williamstown, VT
- Pastor Matthew Rasmussen, Community Lutheran, S. Burlington, VT

CIRCUIT NO. 2

- CIRCUIT VISITOR — Pastor Paul Gramit, Trinity Lutheran, Clinton, MA
- Pastor Timothy Knapp and Associate Pastor Eric Sahlberg, Mt. Calvary Lutheran, Acton, MA
- Pastor Jonathan Manor, Lutheran Church of the Savior, Bedford, MA
- Pastor David Jacoby, Messiah Lutheran, Fitchburg, MA
- Pastor Jeremy Pekari, Messiah Lutheran, Lynnfield, MA
- also serving Messiah Lutheran is Specific Ministry Pastor Dave Brezina
- Pastor Steve Vekasy, Trinity Lutheran, W. Roxbury, MA
- Pastor Jeffrey Jensen, Our Savior Lutheran, Topsfield, MA
- Pastor Peter Gregory, Our Savior, Westminster, MA

CIRCUIT NO. 3

- CIRCUIT VISITOR — Pastor Paul Lantz, Lutheran Church of the Cross, Hanover, MA
- Pastor James Hopkins, First Lutheran, Boston, MA
- VACANT, St. James Lutheran, Canton, MA
- Pastor James Butler, St. Luke's Lutheran, Dedham, MA
- Pastor Steve Law, Lutheran Church of Wollaston, Quincy, MA
- VACANT, Lutheran Church of The Way, Raynham, MA
- Pastor Joe Nollet, Christ Lutheran, Scituate, MA
- Pastor Leon Schultz, St. Paul Lutheran, Providence, RI
- VACANT, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Smithfield, RI

REGION II

REV. SCOTT SCHUETT, VICE-PRESIDENT

CIRCUIT NO. 4

- CIRCUIT VISITOR — Pastor Ralph (Butch) Lanphar, Trinity Lutheran, Springfield, MA
- VACANT, St. Paul's Lutheran, New Hartford, CT also served by Specific Ministry Pastor Kevin Mongeau
- Pastor Jim Rice, Trinity Lutheran, Easthampton, MA
- Pastor Randall Bessette, First Lutheran, Holyoke, MA
- Pastor D. David Riley, St. John's, Westfield, MA
- Pastor Michael Coons, Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Enfield, CT
- Pastor Randall Pekari, Our Savior, South Windsor, CT
- VACANT, Good Shepherd, Suffield, CT
- VACANT, Lutheran Church of the Deaf, W. Hartford, CT

CIRCUIT NO. 5

- CIRCUIT VISITOR — Pastor Phillip Booe, Christ Lutheran, Amston, CT
- VACANT, Hope Lutheran, Storrs, CT
- VACANT, Trinity Lutheran, Ashaway, RI
- Served by Pastor Bob Mikulastik, Prince of Peace Lutheran, Coventry, CT
- Pastor Timothy Gordish, Faith Lutheran, Groton, CT
- Pastor Scott Schuett, Redeemer Lutheran, Lebanon, CT
- Pastor Volker Heide, Lutheran Church of Madison, Madison, CT
- Pastor Greg Dwyer, Zion Lutheran, Manchester, CT
- Pastor Mark Valigorsky, St. Matthew's, New Britain, CT
- Served by EIIT Pastor Gem Gabriel, Our Redeemer Lutheran, New London, CT
- Pastor Paul Scheyder, Christ Lutheran, Niantic, CT
- Pastor Steve Bartell, Bethany Lutheran, W. Hartford, CT

REGION III

REV. ROBERT BEINKE, VICE-PRESIDENT

CIRCUIT NO. 6

- △ CIRCUIT VISITOR — Pastor Mark Clow, Grace Lutheran, Middletown, CT
- Pastor Kevin Karner, Immanuel Lutheran, Bristol, CT
- Pastor Scott MacDonald, St. John's Lutheran, Meriden, CT
- Served by Pastor Kevin Mongeau, Shepherd of the Hills, Morris, CT
- VACANT, St. Paul Lutheran, Naugatuck, CT
- Pastor Christian Bunzel, Trinity Lutheran, New Milford, CT
- Pastor Joel Kotila, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Terryville, CT
- Pastor Robert Hass, Zion Lutheran, Wallingford, CT
- Pastor Joel Kotila, St. John's, Waterbury, CT

CIRCUIT NO. 7

- ▲ CIRCUIT VISITOR — Pastor Rob Morris, Christ the King, Newtown, CT
- VACANT, Holy Cross Lutheran, Trumbull, CT
- VACANT, Zion Lutheran, Bridgeport, CT
- Pastor David Rowold, Cheshire Lutheran, Cheshire, CT
- Associate Pastor Christopher Chandler, Immanuel Lutheran, Danbury, CT
- Pastor Justin Smith, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, New Fairfield, CT
- Pastor Evan Scamman, First Lutheran, Greenwich, CT
- Pastor Robert Beinke, St. Peter's Lutheran, Norwalk, CT
- Pastor Jacob Benson, Zion Lutheran, Orange, CT

