www.cidlcms.org

the GatePost

"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved" John 10:9

Newsletter *of the* Central Illinois District *of* The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

2026: Issue 5

In This Issue...

1 "Thanksgiving" to Start an Evangelistic Conversation
2 From the President's Desk
3 Confronting the Idols of our Culture
4-5 Illinois and the Federal Education Tax Credit: A Guide
6 Small Church Summit
7 Celebrating Our Teachers
8 Faithful Shepherds
9 Installations
10 Official Notices
11 Strengthening a Home for Campus Ministry
11 2026-27 CID Youth Bible Bowl
12 CID-CEF Certificate Rates
13 LWML News
14 A Dollar for Missions News
16 Lutherans For Life Essay Contest
17-18 Camp CILCA Programs

Making Disciples for Life

November 6, 2026

"Thanksgiving"

to Start an Evangelistic Conversation

November is Thanksgiving month. Our national day of Thanksgiving prompts us to think in a variety of directions. Yet has it ever occurred to you that Evangelism could be one of those directions?

Often, the hardest thing for us in telling the Good News about Jesus is getting the conversation started — that is, beginning to talk in terms that can eventually lead to a Gospel presentation, however brief. Thanksgiving can be a key to doing just that.

You can tell a nonchurched person that one thing your church has done for you is to give you an opportunity to say "thank you" to God for His blessings, and to do so regularly. For you need to thank the One Who gave you so much! Even the nonchurched have a sense that saying "thanks" is appropriate. Usually, no one will step in and try to argue with you at this point, saying that you don't feel grateful after all or that church does not really help you in this way.

Now, this is not the way we Christians would start to reflect on what church has done for us if we were talking among ourselves. In the "in group" circle, we can best appreciate that what God truly does for us in church — giving us the forgiveness of sins on account of Christ and life in His name — is of far greater importance than anything we do for Him, such as giving Him our thanks. Still, we do well to start with nonchurched people in terms they can readily understand. They too have been schooled from little up to say "thank you."



This suggestion comes from CID's Witnessing Helps, sets of suggestions to help you 1.) begin an evangelistic conversation, 2.) listen discerningly to nonchurched people, 3.) make a simple statement of the Gospel, and 4.) defend the resurrection. See https://cidlcms.org/outreach-witness-ministry.html

Witnessing HELPS

Your "church testimony" (as distinct from a personal testimony) can go on from there. You can say that another thing your church does for you is to give you resources for living. For it is vital, in a confusing and

continued on Page 3



From the President's Desk

Rev. Mark Eddy, CID President
meddy@cidlcms.org

Supporting *God's Mission Here*

Our Central Illinois District will soon be getting in touch with all of you to introduce **"Strengthen our Hands: Witness – Connect – Disciple,"** our long-awaited CID mission funding campaign.

The theme comes from Nehemiah's prayer for God's help for His people in Jerusalem to rebuild the broken-down walls of the city, to protect God's temple there. When he heard about the dire conditions in Jerusalem, the first thing he did was to pray (see Neh. 1). He admitted that their sins led to their plight, reminded God of His promises, and asked, "give success to Your servant today" (v. 5-11). Then he went to Jerusalem to organize the rebuilding of the city. When he arrived and told the Judeans his plan, they answered, "Let us rise up and build." And Nehemiah concluded, "So they strengthened their hands for the good work" (2:18). Each family took responsibility for a small part of the wall. There were lots of opponents, who spread lies to get the people to drop their hands from the work. So, Nehemiah prayed again, "Strengthen my hands" (6:9). And God answered their prayer. The walls were rebuilt. God's people met in safety and spent a day listening to the Books of Moses and having them explained (chap. 8).

> **... the goal is to help each of our missions witness to everyone they meet, connect them to Jesus through God's Word, and so to be tools of the Holy Spirit ...**

Why do I tell you about this?

It is part of God's inspired record of how He provides for His people's needs. Christians today are like Israel of Nehemiah's day, "once not a people but now God's people, who had not been shown mercy but now have been shown mercy" (1 Pet. 2:10, quoting Hosea 1 & 2). We regularly pray to God who "caused all Scripture to be written for our learning" (LSB p. 308).

The District also regularly pays the pastors who do ministry at our district missions. People regularly receive the benefit of our mission to them. God provides for our workers through the regular mission offerings which CID congregations pass on to the District (and 30% off the top is passed on to the Synod). What we may not notice is that the buildings which CID bought with mission dollars in previous generations are aging to the verge of not providing a suitable place where our ministers can reach and teach the people whom they need to serve.

What does this mean?

The 2025 CID Convention "Resolved" "To Launch a Funding Campaign for Mission Support in the Central Illinois District." The goal of this campaign is "to raise $3 million: $1.5 million for proactive major repairs and upgrades to District-owned facilities ("Phase I") and $1.5 million for longer-range financial support through contributions to endowment funds for continued funding of these valuable District mission treasures ("Phase II")." By the grace of God working through His people in the District, we intend to provide for the immediate repair needs of our campus ministries and district office facilities, and to build endowments for our four campus ministries (at University of Illinois (Champaign), Illinois State University (Normal), and Eastern & Western Illinois Universities at Charleston & Macomb), for "Central Illinois Lutheran Deaf Outreach" (the district-wide deaf parish), and for Cristo Rey Lutheran Church (East Moline), our hub for ministry to Hispanics.



In the next couple months your congregations will be receiving more information about **"Strengthen our Hands: Witness – Connect – Disciple,"** to get to know the need better, and to offer you ways to help over and above your firstfruit offerings to your church. The goal is to help each of our missions witness to everyone they meet, connect them to Jesus through God's Word, and so to be tools of the Holy Spirit as He makes disciples of more children of God through faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior. May the Lord strengthen all our hands for His gracious work!



CONFRONTING THE IDOLS OF OUR CULTURE

Idolatry is a dead end. For idols take and take and take from you, then leave you with nothing. We willingly serve our idols, at times in frighteningly unthinking ways. Yet the worship and service of anyone or anything except the true God would leave us with far worse than nothing — under the wrath of the true God for eternity.

The true God says, "You shall have no other gods before Me." Representing Him in this world, the church is to take up the case against idolatry. Members of the church give people an answer for the hope that is in them on account of Christ. We defend the faith, and contend for it.

In this spirit, our Synod at last summer's convention adopted Resolution 1-10. This resolution noted the way Christian apologetics (the defense of the faith) "serves the saving Gospel, especially when it is used to demonstrate the futility of worldviews contrary to the Gospel and the importance of rejecting false faiths on the one hand, and when it supports the . . . objective truth, and urgency of the Gospel itself on the other."

A host of idols permeate our culture. Some are obvious, including false religions, atheistic philosophies, and expressions of the demonic. Others are more subtly pervasive in our culture, such as "the use of technology, the magnification of artificial intelligence, the worldly priority of career and success, the promotion of addictive states, the wholesale affirmation of separating what is created from the Creator, and the idol of power . . ." This list could be extended.

> **... idols take and take and take from you, then leave you with nothing.**

Therefore the Synod called on its Office of National Mission (ONM) to survey the forms of idolatry currently common in our society. ONM is to identify existing resources, and work with partners such as Concordia Publishing House, the Synod's two seminaries, the CUS universities, and others to develop new resources "for alerting the Church to cultural idols confronting Christians in this century so that congregations, schools, and individuals in the Synod may use these resources to witness to Christ and defend the faith."

Pray for the church "as she is confronted by the cultural idols of our day." Confide in God's Word of grace to free people from idols of all sorts. For finally only the crucified and risen Christ can cast down every idol throne, reign supreme and reign alone in our hearts.

And help the rest of us to identify and address the idols of today. Which idols from the culture especially present themselves to you and the people you know? Contact Dr. Ken Schurb at the District office, *kschurb@cidlcms.org* He is working on these matters right now, and would love your input.

"Thanksgiving" to Start an Evangelistic Conversation

continued from Page 1

wearying world, to have a place where you can get and keep your bearings, and receive strength to go on fulfilling your tasks and meeting your challenges. Now, again this comes nowhere near stating what treasures really lie there for us at church. To say it differently, while we are aiming at presenting the Gospel of Christ in our conversation, we have not done it yet.

For good measure, you can also take the points about church offering you a place to give thanks and providing you resources for living, and apply them to children. They also need to express gratitude. And they too need resources for living from day to day. Another thing your church has done for you is to give these opportunities to your children, and to all children.

But — and now you are really coming down to "brass tacks" — you can point out that easily the most important thing your church has done for you is that it keeps on getting you ready to die. Death is a problem even for your nonchurched friend. It is the wages of sin. In fact, you can quote the last verse of Romans 6: "The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Now you are poised to speak both God's Law and His Gospel, as needed.

By the way, in the subsequent conversation you can mention that this does not make the Christian faith out to be a "pie in the sky, by and by" business. Confiding in Christ against even the prospect of death itself has a marvelously freeing impact on our lives from day to day in the here and now. It turns out that those who are heavenly minded are in fact of the greatest earthly good.

Thanksgiving was the starting point for the whole talk. Maybe this time of year is an opportune time to take this tack with someone, and start an evangelistic conversation.



Illinois and the Federal Education Tax Credit: *A Guide*

A new federal program starting January 1, 2027, lets taxpayers donate to education scholarship organizations and get the full donation back as a federal tax credit. Anyone in Illinois can donate, but Illinois students can receive the money only if Governor JB Pritzker opts the state in before then. He has not decided yet.

Where Things Stand *(as of October 20, 2026)*

- Governor Pritzker is still undecided. His office says he is reviewing the new federal rules and will decide based on what best supports working families, students, and public schools. In 2025, his office raised concerns that the credit could reduce funding for schools that lose enrollment.
- About 31 states have opted in. Several Democratic-led states, including Minnesota, Oregon, New Mexico, and Hawaii, have opted out.
- Republican legislators have filed bills (SB 3850, SB 3776, HB 4099) to opt Illinois in through legislation; none has passed.
- **Deadline:** The state must opt in before January 1, 2027, to participate in the program's first year.

How the Tax Credit Works

- **Who can donate:** Individual taxpayers can give to an approved Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) starting January 1, 2027.
- **How much:** The credit covers up to $1,700 per person per year. Under Treasury's proposed rules, a married couple filing jointly could each claim it, for up to $3,400.
- **Dollar for dollar:** A $1,700 donation reduces your federal tax bill by $1,700. You claim it when you file your 2027 return in 2028.
- **Only if you owe federal tax:** The credit is nonrefundable. It can lower your tax bill to zero but won't create a refund. Roughly 40% of U.S. households owe no federal income tax, so they can't benefit as donors.
- **No state budget cost:** The money comes through the federal tax system, not Illinois' budget.
- **The catch for Illinois:** Illinois residents can claim the credit whether or not the state opts in. If Illinois stays out, their donations can only go to scholarship groups in the roughly 31 states that have joined.
- **Opting in isn't permanent:** States decide each year.

Illinois Lutheran Scholarship Fund, Inc. (Our Lutheran SGO)

Illinois Lutheran families now have a scholarship-granting organization of their own. Over the last few months, the three Illinois Lutheran districts have worked together to form the **Illinois Lutheran Scholarship Fund, Inc.,** a nonprofit established in the State of Illinois to serve as the scholarship-granting organization for Illinois LCMS schools. If the State opts in, then our SGO will be ready to support our Lutheran Schools.

Looking for more information and/or would like to demonstrate your support, visit the following website: optinforillinoiskids.com. The website is an advocacy campaign urging him to say yes. This guide explains what the program is, what each side argues, and what it could mean for your family.

continued on Page 5

Opt in for Illinois Kids

Looking for more information?

Want to demonstrate your support?

Visit the website optinforillinoiskids.com

The website is an advocacy campaign urging Governor Pritzker to say yes.

Illinois and the Federal Education Tax Credit: A Guide

continued from Page 4

How It Could Work:
Donations, Schools, and Student Applications

Donors' money goes into a scholarship fund, then toward a family's school costs. No state or school district money is involved. These steps follow the proposed federal rules Treasury released on October 1, 2026; final rules could still change.

The Path of a Donation

1. **A donor gives.** Starting January 1, 2027, a taxpayer gives cash to an approved scholarship-granting organization (SGO), such as the Illinois Lutheran Scholarship Fund. The limit is $1,700 per person, or $3,400 for a married couple filing jointly.
2. **The donor gets the credit.** The donor claims the full amount on their 2027 federal tax return, filed in 2028. The credit only reduces tax actually owed; it is not refunded.
3. **The fund pools the money.** The SGO keeps donations in a separate account and must spend at least 90% on scholarships.
4. **Families apply.** Parents apply to the SGO, which checks eligibility and decides award amounts.
5. **The school is paid.** Tuition and other school charges are paid directly to the school. Other approved expenses are reimbursed to families with receipts.

For Donors

- You choose which approved fund receives your gift.
- You cannot direct a donation to a specific child, including your own.
- You can give to the Illinois Lutheran Scholarship Fund under this program only if Illinois opts in and lists the fund. Otherwise, Illinois donors can only give to funds in other participating states.

For Schools

- Schools do not apply to the government for money. They receive scholarship payments on behalf of enrolled students.
- Each SGO must be a 501(c)(3) public charity, pass an annual financial and program audit, and give scholarships to at least 10 students who don't all attend the same school.
- If Illinois opts in, the state must send the IRS its list of approved SGOs, due by February 15, 2027 under the proposed rules.
- States cannot limit which type of school students may attend, so religious schools such as LCMS schools can take part.



The new **FEDERAL EDUCATION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM** allows public and private school students to access literacy tutoring, high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), after-school programs, transportation, K-12 tuition, dual credit, college counseling, and other vital services at school. The program does not touch the state budget, but it could unlock up to $2 billion for Illinois students.

- Scholarships can cover tuition, tutoring, special-needs services, books, supplies, computers and similar education costs.

For Students and Families

Who is eligible:

- A K-12 student who lives in Illinois and is eligible to enroll in a public school.
- A household whose prior-year income is at or below 300% of the area median income, adjusted for family size. Treasury estimates about 95% of children qualify.

How to apply:

- Apply directly to the scholarship fund, not to the IRS or the state.
- Expect to show proof of income, such as pay stubs, a tax return or a W-2.
- Returning recipients and their siblings get priority. Each fund may also set its own priorities, such as a lower income limit.
- Award amounts vary by fund and depend on donations received and the student's costs. The $1,700 figure is the donor's limit, not a set scholarship amount.
- Applications are not open yet. If Illinois opts in, ask your Lutheran school when the fund will begin accepting applications.

Small Church Summit

ACCENTUATING THE POSITIVE



Instead of dwelling on negatives, the winter Small Church Summit (SCS) will take a decidedly positive approach to small church life. We have invited representatives of several small congregations to tell us about their congregations' life and work. They will not avoid all talk about bumps along their respective roads, but they will tell how they have met various challenges. Here is an opportunity for *your* congregation to learn from other Central and Southern Illinois District churches.

The first of two SCS winter meetings will be at Our Savior, Washington (1209 Kingsbury Rd, Washington, IL 61571-1212) on Saturday, January 30 or (if weather is bad then) the following Saturday, February 6. At this meeting we will hear from representatives (that is, pastors and laypeople) of Salem, Chandlerville and St. John, Bath and also from representatives of the tri-point parish St. Paul, Varna / St. John, Washburn / Zion, Wenona.

On Saturday, February 13 (or if weather is bad then) February 20, the second SCS for winter, 2027 will be at Trinity, Nokomis (204 N Pine St, Nokomis, IL 62075-1230). Invited to address this meeting are representatives from Signal Hill, Belleville and Bethany, Fairview Heights, and also representatives from Bethlehem, Ferrin.

For both of these meetings: sign-in will be from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. Opening devotion will be at 10:00. Lunch will be available at noon. Closing prayer will be at 2:30 p.m. There is no charge, but we do ask you to register in advance (see sidebar).

The churches invited to present are all on the smaller side. Nonetheless, they rejoice in Christ, in the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and in their life together as God's people. They have been able to meet new challenges and/or start new initiatives. After their representatives speak, there will be a "whole group" question-and-answer time.

At sectional presentations in the afternoon, the same church representatives will be back, available for additional conversation with you. Other sectional offerings include:

- **Avoiding burnout** – Rev. Patrick Gumz of CID staff
- **Reaching inactive members** – former SID president Rev. Timothy Scharr
- **Resources available for your use** – Mr. Trip Rodgers of CID staff

Questions? Contact Dr. Ken Schurb at the CID office, *kschurb@cidlcms.org*

A couple of important "standing reminders" about SCS:

- **Don't send only one participant from your church!** Send at least two or three, so they can attend all the sectionals between them, and have a discussion in the car on the way home.
- **If you think your church is small, you're invited. And all are welcome!**

REGISTER NOW!

Register by following this link:

https://forms.gle/t7p6VkR1o1rEWq7t5

Deadlines:

January 22, 2027 for Washington meeting

February 5, 2027 for Nokomis meeting

All are welcome!



Celebrating Our Teachers

This year, 46 teachers across 14 of our Lutheran schools reach a milestone anniversary of service, together bringing about 670 years of faithful teaching to our classrooms. From preschool rooms to high school halls, these educators have shared the love of Christ with generations of students, day after day and year after year.

We give thanks to God for each of them. Their patience, creativity, and steady faith shape not only what our children learn but who they become. **Please join us in congratulating this year's honorees:**

35 Years

- **Sherri Jesgarz,** Trinity Lutheran School, Stewardson

30 Years

- **Becky Heppe,** Our Savior's Lutheran School, Springfield
- **LaJean Harkins,** Our Savior's Lutheran School, Springfield

25 Years

- **Debra Bowles,** St. James Lutheran School, Quincy
- **Lisa Matejka,** Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington

20 Years

- **Angie Rush, Janey Darlington,** and **Linda Hall,** Bethel Lutheran School, Morton
- **Emily Craine,** Concordia Lutheran School, Peoria
- **Ann Fuelberth,** Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Pekin
- **Rich Harkins** and **Katie McCulley,** Lutheran High School, Springfield
- **Traci Riddle** and **Kara Teske,** St. John's Lutheran School, Buckley
- **Brett Moll** and **Carrie Coon,** Trinity Lutheran School, Springfield

15 Years

- **Karen Duke** and **Traci Suttles,** Bethel Lutheran School, Morton
- **Sally Armbrust,** Lutheran High School, Springfield
- **Cassandra Hunt,** Mt. Calvary Lutheran Preschool, Galesburg
- **Alissa Mercier** and **Carmen Yagow,** Our Savior's Lutheran School, Springfield
- **Jamie Aeschliman, Julie Higgins,** and **Cortney Schmidgall,** Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington

10 Years

- **Allison Richter,** Bethel Lutheran School, Morton
- **Mandi Miller,** Lutheran High School, Springfield
- **Mark Yoshimasu,** St. John Lutheran School, Champaign
- **Abby Dunt, Karen Grotbo,** and **Angella Riddle,** Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington
- **Kami Gumz,** Trinity Lutheran School, Springfield

5 Years

- **Marcail Allen,** Altamont Lutheran Interparish School, Altamont
- **Heidi Burchette,** Bethel Lutheran School, Morton
- **Melissa Drozd,** Concordia Lutheran School, Peoria
- **Emma Radcliff, Milennah Mulkins, Kelsi Stutzman,** and **MyKayla Schrock,** Immanuel Lutheran Preschool, Charleston
- **Kaylee Bultemeier,** Our Savior's Lutheran School, Springfield
- **Sarah Barrett,** St. John Lutheran School, Champaign
- **Sara Brewer,** Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington
- **Julie Orrick** and **Karina Williams,** Trinity Lutheran School, Springfield

Staff Recognition

- **Mary Hendricks,** office manager at Altamont Lutheran Interparish School, celebrates 25 years of service to her school family

To every teacher on this list: thank you for answering the call to serve. Your faithfulness in the classroom is a gift to our students, families and congregations.

If you see one of these honorees this month, take a moment to say congratulations and thank you. A short note, a kind word or a prayer means more than you might think.

"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."

- Colossians 3:23

Faithful Shepherds

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."
– Jeremiah 3:15 (KJV)

2026 Pastoral Ordination Anniversaries

(as of October 2026)

God promises to give His people shepherds who will feed them with His Word. Our pastors keep that promise in view every day. They preach Christ crucified and risen, baptize and teach, bring the Lord's Supper to the sick and homebound, comfort the grieving and care for the souls entrusted to them.

This year we give thanks to God for 33 pastors who are marking an anniversary of their ordination into the Office of the Holy Ministry, from five years to 65. Together they have given more than 1,000 years of faithful service to Christ and His Church.

Please join us in thanking the Lord for these servants of the Word and in congratulating them on their anniversaries.

65 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Frank Winter** · Ordained September 9, 1961

60 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Henry Berg** · Ordained January 1, 1966
- **Rev. Gary Fortkamp** · Ordained July 24, 1966

55 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Wray Offermann** · Ordained June 14, 1971
- **Rev. Ivan Peterson** · Ordained June 6, 1971

50 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Richard Becker** · Ordained November 1, 1975
- **Rev. Robert Hagen** · Ordained July 18, 1976

45 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Michael Koschmann** · Ordained July 19, 1981
- **Rev. Douglas Meyer** · Ordained June 7, 1981

40 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Robert Frank** · Ordained June 22, 1986
- **Rev. David Spaeth** · Ordained July 27, 1986

35 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Joseph Eckman** · Ordained June 16, 1991
- **Rev. Peter Glock** · Ordained July 14, 1991
- **Rev. Barry Long** · Ordained October 5, 1991
- **Rev. Chad Lueck** · Ordained September 1, 1991
- **Rev. Richard Salcido** · Ordained June 9, 1991
- **Rev. Matthew Versemann** · Ordained July 7, 1991

30 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Glenn Niemann** · Ordained June 7, 1996

25 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Matthew Berndt** · Ordained June 10, 2001
- **Rev. Shawn Boylan** · Ordained March 18, 2001

20 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Jonathan Boehne** · Ordained July 9, 2006
- **Rev. Earl Brown** · Ordained June 25, 2006
- **Rev. Jeffrey Caithamer** · Ordained August 13, 2006
- **Rev. Aaron Mueller** · Ordained January 15, 2006
- **Rev. Michael Stoerger** · Ordained July 9, 2006
- **Rev. Nathan Woolery** · Ordained July 23, 2006

15 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Jonathan Buescher** · Ordained July 31, 2011
- **Rev. Michael Feldmann** · Ordained June 26, 2011

10 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Mark Gearig** · Ordained July 10, 2016
- **Rev. Matthew Jukola** · Ordained June 19, 2016
- **Rev. Glen Triplett** · Ordained July 3, 2016

5 Years in the Ministry
- **Rev. Justin Cullen** · Ordained May 30, 2021
- **Rev. Kyle Ronchetto** · Ordained June 6, 2021

To each of these pastors: thank you for answering the Lord's call, for faithfully proclaiming His Word and administering His Sacraments, and for the many hours spent at bedsides, in classrooms and at the font and altar. Your ministry has been a blessing to our congregations, our schools and our district.

If you see one of these pastors this year, take a moment to thank him and to keep him and his family in your prayers.

Almighty God, Lord of the harvest, we thank You for the pastors You have given to Your Church. Strengthen them in body and spirit, guard them in Your truth, and fill them with joy in their calling. Bless their families, uphold them in times of trial, and make them faithful stewards of Your mysteries, that through their ministry many may come to know Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd. In His name we pray. Amen.

Installations



Rev. Matthew Albright Installation

Rev. Matthew Albright was installed on Sunday, October 11, 2026, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Peoria.

Front Row *(on right)* - Rev. Jeffery Anderson, Bethel, Morton

Middle Row *(left to right)* - CID President Mark Eddy; Rev. Matthew Albright, Redeemer, Peoria; Rev. Chip Winter, Redeemer, Peoria; and Rev. Ron Miller, Emeritus

Back Row *(left to right)* - Rev. Mark Nelson, Trinity, Peoria; Rev. Daniel Bishop, St. John's, Pekin; Rev. Dennis Durham, Emeritus; and Rev. Kenneth Hoover, Emeritus



Rev. Kyle Ronchetto Installation

Rev. Kyle Ronchetto was installed on Sunday, October 18, 2026, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Stewardson.

Front Row *(left to right)* - Rev. Michael Burdick, St. John, Effingham; Rev. Kyle Ronchetto, Trinity, Stewardson; CID President Mark Eddy; and Rev. Gary Fortkamp, Emeritus

Back Row *(left to right)* - Rev. Dean Herberts, St. Paul, Wheeler / St. John, Dietrich; Rev. Earl Brown, Emeritus; Rev. Steven Rutherford, Holy Trinity Lutheran High School, Effingham; Rev. Justin Cullen, Faith, Sullivan; Rev. Nathan Woolery, Holy Cross, Shelbyville; and Rev. Andrew Herzberg, St. John's, Mattoon



ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO CONSIDER CHURCH WORK!

Christ's church will continue until He returns, and that church will continue to need church workers.

Set Apart to Serve (*SAS*) is an initiative of the LCMS to recruit church workers. Together, we pray for workers for the Kingdom of God and encourage children to consider church work vocations. Here are three easy ways you can participate in *SAS*:

1. Pray with your children for God to provide church workers.

2. Talk to your children about becoming church workers.

3. Thank God for the people who work in your congregation.

To learn more about *Set Apart to Serve*, visit *lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve*.

SET APART TO SERVE
LCMS CHURCH WORK RECRUITMENT

Offical Notices

(as of October 2026)

Ordained

Calls Out of District (Accepted)

- **Trey Dille,** St. John, Effingham, to Missouri, September 6, 2026
- **Noah Kerstein,** Faith, Lincoln, to Iowa East, September 27, 2026
- **Harold Minton,** Our Savior, Milford, to New England, October 11, 2026
- **Jacob Moore,** St. John, New Berlin, to Southern Illinois, October 11, 2026
- **Mark Gearig,** St. Paul's, Decatur, to Indiana, October 18, 2026

Calls Into District (Accepted)

- **Rev. Stephen Rutherford,** Holy Trinity Lutheran High School, Effingham, July 31, 2026
- **Matthew Lee Albright,** Redeemer, Peoria, October 11, 2026
- **Kyle Ronchetto,** Trinity, Stewardson, October 18, 2026

Retired / Candidate Status Changes

- **Rev. David Daniel,** Faith, Monticello – Active to Candidate, September 17, 2026

Transfers

- **Rev. Kent Umbarger** (Emeritus) to Iowa East, February 18, 2026

Called to Glory

- **Michael Seidenstricker,** February 11, 2026
- **August Lubkeman,** June 6, 2026
- **Thomas Radtke,** July 10, 2026
- **Gail Heimgartner,** July 25, 2026
- **Glenn Strohschein,** August 12, 2026



Save the date for the ILLINOIS PRO LIFE MARCH

April 20, 2027

On April 20, 2027, concerned citizens from all over Illinois will gather in Springfield for the annual Illinois Pro-Life March. Please make plans to be a part of this gathering along with your fellow LCMS brothers and sisters in Christ!

More details will be forthcoming in early 2027.



Strengthening a Home for Campus Ministry



At University Lutheran Church and Student Center, serving the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, students and congregants gather for the Divine Service, Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. The Central Illinois District's **"Strengthen Our Hands"** campaign will help sustain this campus ministry at the largest university in Illinois. Preserving the building that supports this mission is the major building project in the campaign.

The sanctuary was completed in 1953 and the Student Center followed in 1964. A condition assessment conducted earlier this year documented needed repairs, particularly in the Student Center. Many building elements remain in serviceable condition, but deteriorated roofing and damaged masonry require immediate attention.

Inspectors found that the Student Center's aging roof has reached the end of its useful life. Holes, open seams, and failing attachments at the roof edges allow water to enter the walls. Once water enters masonry, repeated freezing and thawing can break brick faces and weaken mortar joints, creating further openings for moisture. The assessment also documented corrosion of steel supports above windows.

Some wall cracks have a different explanation. Concrete, brick, and block expand and contract differently as temperatures change. Where connected building components lack enough room to move independently, those differences place stress on the walls. The engineers identified this movement as a cause of internal cracking damage and recommended addressing it as part of the repairs.

The project scope includes roof replacement and certain architectural, masonry, and structural repairs. The funds raised will cover the preparation of construction documents, bidding and contracting, materials and labor, providing construction administration, and the construction and repair work itself.

As year-end approaches, please prayerfully consider a special gift toward this work. Please also remember the congregation, its students, and those preparing the project in your prayers. Caring for this building supports the continuing work of proclaiming Christ on campus. Through these repairs, we help preserve a place where students can hear God's Word, receive His gifts, and find fellowship with His people for years to come.

Donations for the University Lutheran project can be made at unilu.raiselysite.com or by mail to the Central IL District Office.



2026-27 CID Youth Bible Bowl

Sunday, April 12, 2027 at Camp CILCA

"The Lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" *(Genesis 12-35; 49:1-50:13)*

Start planning now for who will guide your youth (grades 6-12) in the study of this part of God's Word, and what resources you can use. The District Bible Bowl (Sunday, April 12, 2027) is limited to two teams per circuit. So, if your circuit would like to hold a preliminary Bible Bowl to determine which youth will go to District (and [more importantly] to get more young people learning God's Word), you may contact either District President Mark Eddy, at *meddy@cidlcms.org* or CID Administrative Assistant for Education and Youth, Trip Rodgers, at *trodgers@cidlcms.org*. They have rules and guidelines for holding a Circuit Bible Bowl. We'll also get you on our list of participating circuits and congregations to keep you in the loop. We plan to get the questions to circuit Bible Bowl coordinators in February. You may also phone (217) 793-1802, or mail 1850 North Grand Ave. West, Springfield, IL 62702.

CHURCH EXTENSION FUND, INC.
Central Illinois District–LCMS

More options. A clearer path for your investment.

Competitive certificate rates* for 6-month, 1-, 2-, 3-, and 5-year terms.

6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	5 Year
2.30%	3.70%	3.90%	3.50%	3.50%

Choose a term that fits your investment horizon and ladder your investments with greater flexibility.

Your investment supports churches, schools, and agencies across our district.



*Rates are subject to change; confirm current rates before investing.

Find the application to invest at cid-cef.org

This is not an offer to sell nor a solicitation to buy Notes. The offer is made solely through and by the Offering Circular, which you should read carefully before making an investment decision. The Notes are subject to certain risk factors as described in the Offering Circular. Notes are offered only in states where authorized. CID-CEF is a religious, nonprofit organization; therefore, its Notes are not insured by the FDIC, SIPC, or any other governmental agency. Notes are not savings or deposit accounts or obligations of a bank.

Lutheran Women *in Mission* News

CENTRAL ILLINOIS DISTRICT

Great News! The first mission grant of $30,000 for the CID Student Worker Scholarship Fund has been funded. Praise and Thanks to God!

The LWML Fall Retreat theme was 'A Time For'. With the Bible verse, *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven* (Eccl 3:1), this retreat had us focus on Time for God, Time for Me and Time for Others. It showed us that TIME is God's GIFT to each of us.

As we enter a full holiday season, we need to remember and reflect on these times God has given us. We celebrate with thankfulness the times of harvest, pilgrims and turkey and family gatherings. We celebrate the wonder of the birth of the Christ Child and all the blessings that come in those times, particularly as we gather in churches with our church families.

The ladies of your LWML district are busy ladies. Gathering mites in various ways to support our mission of spreading this Good News of salvation. Taking care of local needs of the community through ingatherings, various collections, etc. Even cookies and baked goods. Always with the gospel driven want and need to serve others.

May you be blessed this holiday season with TIME to sit and enjoy God's precious gifts to you. Faith, Family, Friends and those celebrations, whether large or small. All to God's Glory and with humble gratitude and thankfulness. Take the TIME to revive your soul with hymns and carols of the seasons. Glory to God in the Highest and Peace on Earth to Men.

– Cheryl Long, CID LWML District President



To God be the Glory as we Serve Him with Gladness.



find more at cidlcms.org

WitnessingHELPS

Four Witnessing Helps sheets accompanied by two-minute introductory videos are available at https://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-witness-ministry.html

A Dollar for **Missions** News

Supporting Ministry Across Central Illinois



Through the generosity of congregations and individuals across the Central Illinois District, Dollar for Missions continues to provide important support for mission and ministry opportunities throughout the district.

In 2026, Dollar for Missions funded five projects that addressed a variety of ministry needs. These included travel support for Hispanic ministry in Beardstown; a new cast aluminum sign and sanctuary flooring replacement at Wittenberg Student Center at Illinois State University; furniture and books for Immanuel Student Center at Eastern Illinois University; and technology and instructional resources to support Deaf Ministry.

Looking ahead to 2027, four additional projects totaling $96,800 have been approved for funding:

- **$75,000** for masonry repairs and roofing work at University Lutheran in Champaign
- **$10,000** for a kitchen remodel at Immanuel Student Center at Eastern Illinois University
- **$10,000** for Deaf Ministry community workshops
- **$1,800** for continued travel support for Hispanic ministry in Beardstown

These projects demonstrate how even small gifts, when combined across the district, can make a meaningful difference. From maintaining ministry facilities to equipping campus ministries and expanding outreach opportunities, Dollar for Missions helps strengthen the Church's witness in Central Illinois.

Thank you to the congregations and individuals who continue to support Dollar for Missions. Your generosity helps provide the resources needed to share the Gospel and serve our neighbors throughout the district.

PRAYER

O Lord, open the hearts of your people to support the proclamation of the Good News about Jesus in ways large and small. Bless the Dollars for Mission that support mission work in unusual ways. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DFM Online

You can support DFM through online giving. Many people no longer carry cash but still want to support the Central Illinois District's mission work. One-time and recurring donations are now available online at

https://www.aplos.com/aws/give/LCMSCentralIllinoisDistrict/D4M

or by using the QR code above.

All new recurring gifts will be matched by a special one-time gift, up to $20,000.

find more at cidlcms.org

You can always find out more about DFM, including the present project at any time, at https://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-a-dollar-for-missions.html





Not Ashamed of the Cross

Immanuel Lutheran Church • Tuscola, IL

With support from a CID CEF Ministry Outreach Grant, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tuscola recently hosted a conference for their community and beyond. Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller spoke on Christian confession in a confused age, and what it looks like to bear witness to Christ in a world without hope.

Funded with support from a CID CEF Ministry Outreach Grant

Planning Gospel outreach? The CEF would like to help.

cid-cef.org • (217) 793-1802



© 2021 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

First Sunday in Advent

The First Sunday in Advent, which marks the beginning of the new church year, will be commemorated on Sunday, November 29, 2026.

Advent, a season of repentance, waiting and watching, looks forward in hope. Our Christian faith rests on the hope that Christ, who came in the flesh in history to accomplish our salvation, will also return in the same way to be our judge on the last day and bring us into eternal life.

https://www.lcms.org/events/first-sunday-advent





CID is on Facebook, Instagram AND YouTube

Come find us **@cidlcms**! Our pages are filled with prayer and encouragement for you to share with those around you. Join us to keep up to date on District happenings and learn about new and exciting things coming soon!

Lutherans For Life *2027 Illinois Essay Contest*

Sponsored by the LFL Council of Federation Presidents

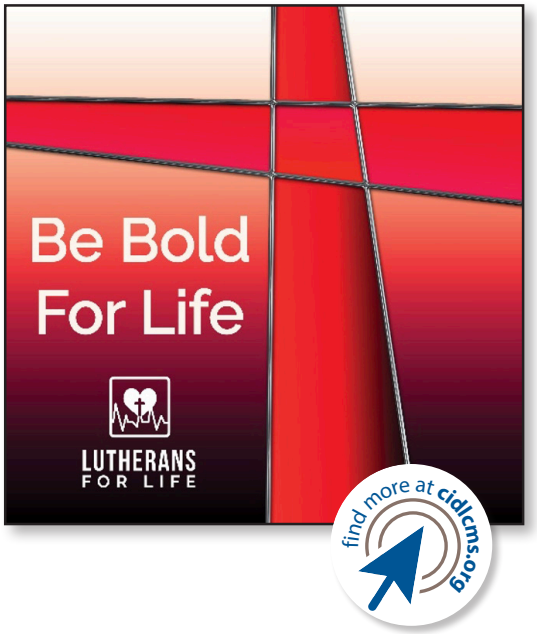
For Students in Grades 6-8 and 9-12

Any student in a Lutheran school or Lutheran congregation (e.g., confirmation class, youth group, Lutheran home school) is eligible when validated by their teacher or pastor, along with parental consent.

Contest Guidelines

Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the theme **"Be Bold For Life"** using Psalm 31:24, "Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!"

1. Examples of topics the essay could deal with are – but are not limited to – abortion, disabilities, adoption, foster care, infanticide, physician-assisted suicide, hospice care, sexual purity, etc. For support or resources on the sanctity of life, visit lutheransforlife.org.
2. The first page of the essay must include the student's name, grade, school or church, a personal mailing address, email address, and phone number (of the student or parent).
3. All entries must be submitted by a teacher or pastor and include their contact information.
4. **Grades 6–8** should submit essays up to 400 words. **Grades 9–12** should submit essays up to 750 words. The word count does not include the title, footnotes, or bibliography.
5. Entries must be submitted digitally using Microsoft Word or Google Docs *(PDF files or other formats will not be accepted)*. Email your entry to **Cathy Benning** at *cathy.benning.os@gmail.com* by March 15, 2027.
6. The omission of any of the following required items will cause disqualification of the essay:
   a. The essay must include the entire theme and entire theme Bible verse as part of the written text.
   b. Each essay must include a title. Using the required theme as a title is acceptable but does not replace using the theme and verse within the essay.
   c. The essay must be in complete agreement with the Lutherans For Life mission to "Equip Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life".
   d. A Bibliography listing sources used is required.
   e. Exceeding the appropriate word count is not acceptable.
7. Essays should make good use of standard essay writing components, including introduction and conclusion, main points, organization, style, mechanics, sources, and bibliography.
8. There will be a $200 first-place award and a $100 second-place award for each of the two categories. The first-place winner from each category will advance to the national contest.
9. The national award for the winning entry in each category is $500 for first place, plus free conference registration to the 2027 Lutherans For Life conference for the student and his/her parents, one-night stay at the conference hotel for the student and his/her parents, $200 travel expense reserved for conference travel only, and a framed certificate. The second-place award is $250 and a framed certificate.
10. All entries, including exclusive copyrights, become the property of Lutherans For Life.



Visit the CID website for additional information, AI guidelines, and essay structural elements.

https://www.cidlcms.org/education-essay-contest.html

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE





Register Today!

Joyful Hearts Christmas Retreat

Friday and Saturday, December 11-12, 2026

Camp CILCA welcomes campers of all ages with developmental disabilities for a 24 hour Christmas party! Campers are partnered up with a high school or college-age volunteer who will help them have a merry Christmas with activities like baking, decorating, singing, and more! Register at www.cilca.org.

Dauntless Souls Reunited Retreat

Friday, January 1, 2027

Check-in at 2 pm in the Dining Hall and pick-up at 7 pm. Cost is $25 unless you register after December 3rd, then it is $35. Dinner provided. Bring appropriate clothing for UC (weather permitting). This event is intended for students in grades 6th through freshman year of high school. You did not need to attend camp last summer to come to Dauntless Souls Reunited. Register at www.cilca.org.

J.C. Reunion

Friday and Saturday, January 1-2, 2027

Were you a Junior Counselor at CILCA last summer? Arrive Friday at 1 pm to drop off your items in Retreat Center and leave Saturday at 11 am. Bring appropriate clothing for UC (weather permitting). Cost is $10 unless you register after December 3rd, then it is $20. Dinner and breakfast are provided. Five volunteer hours available for helping with Dauntless Souls Reunited. Only J.C.s from summer 2026 are able to attend. Register at www.cilca.org.

Summer 2027 Programs

Camp CILCA is a great place to get away from the ordinary and experience God's grace in His creation. Campers can get involved in a variety of activities: hiking, games, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, archery, creek walking, crafts, basketball, volleyball, disc golf, fishing, and more. Campers also have opportunities to grow in their Christian faith through Bible studies, campfire songs and worship. Use the underlined links on Page 18 for more information on summer programs or check out our website www.cilca.org.

Sign-up now at www.cidlcms.org to get *The GatePost* and *News You Can Use* emailed to you.

Central Illinois District LCMS

1850 North Grand Avenue West
Springfield, IL 62702-1626

***The GatePost* for The Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is a supplement to congregational newsletters.**

Submit all articles to the Editor:
Lewis "Trip" Rodgers
1850 North Grand Avenue West
Springfield, IL 62702-1626
Email: *trodgers@cidlcms.org*

Layout and Design by:
Deverman Advertising
Pekin, Illinois







TIERED PRICING

We believe every child should experience the joy of camp, regardless of finances. To keep camp affordable while maintaining quality, we offer tiered pricing - allowing families to choose what works best for them and, if able, help support the true cost of a Camp CILCA experience.

- **Tier A** prices reflect the TRUE COST of a camp experience.
- **Tier B** prices are partially subsidized by donors.
- **Tier C** prices are significantly subsidized by donors.

Prices below are listed Tier A/Tier B/Tier C.

SUMMER PROGRAM

The **Central Illinois Lutheran Camp Association** (CILCA) exists to foster and strengthen faith in Jesus Christ and relationships with others in a unique outdoor setting. CILCA strives to reconnect Christians to Christ and creation. Registration ages are based on the grade **completed** during the 2026-2027 school year.

DAY CAMP

Tiered Pricing: $200/$150/$125

1st - 8th Grade

- June 3 & 4 - *$60*
- June 7-11
- June 14-18
- June 21-25
- June 28-July 2
- July 6-9
- July 12-16
- July 19-23
- July 26-30

MINI WEEKS

Tiered Pricing: $200/$150/$125

- June 2-4: **Pathfinders I** (1st-4th)
- June 6-8: **Joyful Hearts** (13 yrs & older)
- June 8-10: **Joyful Hearts** (13 yrs & older)
- June 27-29: **Intrepid Hearts** (9th-12th)
- June 30-July 2: **Intrepid Hearts** (9th-12th)
- July 6-9: **Pathfinders II+*** (1st-4th)

***$225/$175/$150**

GENERATIONAL CAMPS

- June 4-5: **Generations I** (4 yrs & older) - $75 per person
- June 20-22: **Family Camp** (all ages) - $100 per person
- June 25-26: **Generations II** (4 yrs & older) - $75 per person

FULL WEEKS

Tiered Pricing: $450/$375/$300

- June 6-10: **Joyful Hearts** (13 yrs & older) *$375*
- June 13-18: **Dauntless Souls I** (6th-8th)
- June 13-18: **Art, Drama, Athletics** (5th-8th)
- June 20-25: **Bold Spirits I** (4th-6th)
- June 27-July 2: **Intrepid Hearts** (9th-12th)
- July 11-16: **Dauntless Souls II** (6th-8th)
- July 11-16: **Survival Week** (6th-8th)
- July 18-23: **Bold Spirits II** (4th-6th)
- July 18-23: **Aqua Week** (4th-6th)
- July 25-30: **Night Owl** (6th-8th)



WE NEED YOU!

9th-graders and up, serve as a Junior Counselor or Joyful Hearts volunteer and make lifelong camp memories for free!

- Joyful Hearts Volunteer - **June 6-10**
- J.C. Training - **May 16 or June 1**

Find in-depth details on each camp & register on our website!

Ages based on grade completed.

WWW.CILCA.ORG

REGISTER FOR CAMP TODAY!