

Church Simple: The speaking church

“The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man ...” (Gen. 2:15-16; capitalizations added).

We should not discount the fact that God spoke to Adam and then to Eve in the Garden. Not only did He command Adam what to do and what not to do, He chased after Adam and Eve with words—His own, His very powerful words.

Adam and Eve were God’s conversation partners, with God speaking and this couple praising and repeating what their good Lord said. When the couple’s repetition of God’s speaking was not correct (Gen. 3:2-3), God spoke the word of absolution in Gen. 3:15—the Seed (Jesus) would crush the serpent’s head.

The point for this article, however, is this: As God speaks, so does His Church. His Church speaks what has been given to her to speak, that is, the word of absolution. And as God converses with the Church in the divine service, so also the Church dialogues with the world. For God Himself originally created all of humanity to be His conversation partners. He desires everyone everywhere to be in conversation with Him.

Because people are born in unbelief and are without the capability of speaking to God by faith, it is necessary for God to start the conversation. He does so by commissioning His Church to speak in His behalf. “The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me” (Luke 10:16). And in Luke’s Gospel once more: “Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations” (24:47).

This proclamation of the Gospel is the Good News that God has declared sinners righteous—justified (Rom. 4:5). The doctrine of justification (that is, God reckons sinners righteous through the blood of Christ) is the content of the Church’s conversation with sinners—all sinners—everyone, everywhere.

In the divine service, God initiates the conversation through His called servant, the pastor, when His Word is preached. The baptized respond as prompted by the Holy Spirit through the Word with their prayers, praises and offerings of all that they have.

Then His servants, the baptized, are God’s mouth. They initiate conversations with those who have ears to hear. These conversations more than likely are not inside but outside the church, usually on the turf of the unbeliever.

Both the pastor and the laity are authorized to speak the word of absolution and forgiveness, each in their own vocations. Dr. Charles Arand and Dr. Robert Kolb of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, write: “The Word in the mouth of the called servant of the Word, the pastor, is the same Word that the Holy Spirit places in the mouth of all believers. In their mouths it has the same power as it does in preaching and formal absolution. It forgives sins, defies evil and bestows life and salvation” (*The Genius of Luther’s Theology*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, p. 188).

God speaks, the Church hears. And God continues to speak through His Church, seeking more conversation partners.

Rev. Randall Golter
District President



Experience seminary life

Want to learn more about the vocation of pastor or deaconess? Then make plans to join Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS), Fort Wayne, Ind., for its **Prayerfully Consider** campus visit Oct. 21-23.

Men and women of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) who are considering a life of service as a pastor or deaconess will have the opportunity to visit with faculty, staff and student body, worship with the seminary community in Kramer Chapel, learn about financial aid possibilities and see what the Fort Wayne area has to offer you and your family.

There is no fee for the visit. On-campus meals and housing also are provided free of charge.

For additional information or to register online, go to www.ctsfw.edu/pcv. You also may call 260-452-2155 to speak with a member of the CTS admission staff.

Send news to Jan Hoener

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*Please attach JPEG images
to e-mail messages.*

MISSION FOCUS

Deaf ministry

“So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17 NIV).

The heart language of the deaf community is American Sign Language (ASL), the third most common language in the United States after English and Spanish. For many deaf people, ASL is their first language and English the second. ASL is a unique language in that it is all visual, with no inflection or tone. It is the only language where you can learn the alphabet and immediately communicate.

Today, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has 63 primarily deaf congregations in 25 states with an estimated 8,000 profoundly deaf communicant members. There also are another 200 “hearing” congregations that offer a regular interpretive ministry for the deaf. Fewer than a half-dozen pastors who serve those churches are able to sign.

While the number of full-time pastors serving deaf churches has declined, the LCMS has seen an increase in the number of deaf pastors, deacons, deaconesses and lay leaders who use ASL to communicate the Gospel message. This has happened in part because of programs such as Deaf Pah, a training program for laypeople that can be completed on the Internet, with a DVD or by watching “live streamed” videos.

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., also offers a special program, the Deaf Institute of Technology. This course of study addresses the church’s need for deaf missions and provides several ministry models for meeting those needs. One of those models is raising up leaders who are themselves deaf to teach the deaf world.

The seminary also supports hearing churches with interpreted ministries through their summer Church Interpretive Training Institute (CITI).

The Rocky Mountain District has a rich history of deaf ministry, particularly in the congregations of Immanuel (Colorado Springs, Colo.), Trinity (Denver, Colo.), St. John (Denver, Colo.) and Mount Hope (Boulder, Colo.).

Six years ago, Pastor George Hesse came to serve Mount Hope in Boulder, a congregation that is very supportive of his ministry outreach to the deaf. He felt the call to become involved with this special-needs ministry while at the seminary, even before he began to lose his own hearing. He is one of those half-dozen pastors who can sign as an aspect of his congregational ministry. As he teaches, he uses a combination of the language of ASL, pantomime and facial expres-

sions in an effort to convey the meaning of his words.

Using ASL is not simply translating from English to sign language, as it uses different word orders and grammar rules. For example, teaching a deaf study of the Gospel of Luke often becomes a two- or three-hour study, with each word and verse needing to be translated and explained. Church services are a mix of interpretive signing and translating.

With many new technologies there come some wonderful new ways of communication, such as text messaging, video phones, Twitter and Facebook. While useful, these means of communication also can be very isolating. People still need that basic human touch and personal connection. Helen Keller once said, “Being deaf is more isolating than being blind.”

In August 2011, Mount Hope Lutheran Church in Boulder will host the Mid and West Deaf Gathering. The gathering will include three days of workshops, social events, services and guest presenters who will interpret for the hearing. One item to be discussed will be how to offer a service specifically for the deaf on a consistent basis.

How can you help? Pray for all people, as there are many who are “hard of hearing” when listening to the Word of God. Pray that He opens the ears and hearts of all.

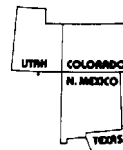
For more information on developing or supporting ministry to the deaf, contact Pastor Hesse at Mount Hope at 303-499-9800.

Igniting Church and Culture for Christ raises initial funds

As of early August, more than \$45,000 had been raised in gifts and pledges in the initial stage of the special appeal, Igniting Church and Culture for Christ. One of those pledges was for \$25,000, which will be made over a period of five years. It’s exciting to see funds being gathered for sharing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus through national and international missions.

All congregations of the district have been invited to participate in this special appeal. The congregational phase of Igniting Church and Culture for Christ began this fall.





The goal of this special appeal of the Rocky Mountain District is to raise \$2 million in gifts and/or pledges over the next five years for mission work over and above the regular budget of congregations.

All individuals in the district are invited to participate in this exciting appeal to further accomplish the work our Lord gave us to do, that is, to bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth, beginning in our own communities.

For further information regarding the Igniting Church and Culture for Christ special appeal, contact your local congregation, visit the website at www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org, or call the Rocky Mountain District office at 303-695-8001.

Cambodians report on mission work

A great, spiritually uplifting event took place on July 4 at Mount Hope Lutheran in Boulder, Colo. Dr. Fungchatou Lo, LCMS World Missions coordinator for Cambodia, and Pastor Kosal Hun, the pastor and school master of Cambodia Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Battambang made the long trip from Cambodia to report on the mission work being done there. Pastor Peter Sok, who planted and built the first Lutheran church and school in Cambodia, flew in from Stockton, Calif., to share the podium with Dr. Lo and Pastor Hun.



Pastors Hun and Lo (left), traveling from Cambodia, were joined by Sok, who came from California, to report on important mission work in Cambodia.

communities. Because of the restrictions on any religious instruction imposed by the governments of Vietnam and Laos, potential pastors and church leaders in

those countries are brought to Cambodia for religious training. Upon returning home with the Gospel message, they evangelize through the underground church at great risk to themselves and their families. Pray for them.

On the following Sunday, Pastors Hun and Sok presented and gave their personal, moving testimonies to Cambodia Trinity's sister congregation, Shepherd of the Rockies Lutheran, Bailey, Colo. Afterward, Pastor Hun traveled with Dr. Lo through Minnesota, Nebraska and Iowa, once again reporting on their ministry activities to churches in those states.

A gathering of listeners

"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father" (Matt. 16:17).

Matthew, who was there, mentions this most amazing event. Had Peter heard the voice of the Father? Jesus says, "Yes!" The blessed truth and Good News that grounds the Christian faith—Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of the living God—is not a human construction or idea. The Truth is revealed to the world through human beings who hear the Word.

The Master, later in his earthly ministry of training hearers, reveals that "sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice" (John 10:3-4).

We of The Evangelical Lutheran Church Without Walls marvel as we accept this reality. We, us, people made of flesh and blood, are the sheep who "hear his voice" and "recognize his voice." Our hearing and recognizing translate into following the Shepherd as He leads us to the places He is going.

In our experience, however, hearing-recognizing-following are not automatic. The "flesh and blood" in us keeps us from listening. We discovered that we need to be trained—made to be learners—before we are able to hear-recognize-follow. For us, this is ongoing. We are learning to listen, preparing to follow the Savior as He approaches people who need to know Him.

Indeed, we are a humble gathering of listeners! How may we be of service?

Craig W. Henningfield
Church Without Walls missionary/coach
303-725-6760

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Lietzau ordained and installed

Pastors of the Sandia North and South circuits (northern New Mexico) gathered on Sunday afternoon, July 11, at Faith in Christ Lutheran Church, Albuquerque, N.M., for the ordination and installation of candidate Elisha Lietzau.

Rocky Mountain District Regional Vice President Pastor Doug Escue conducted the Rite of Ordination. Sandia North Circuit Counselor Pastor Ed Maas officiated over the Rite of Installation.

Lietzau is a spring 2010 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.



Participating in the service were Pastor John Raess, Pastor Randy Walquist, Pastor Escue, Pastor Andrew Byars, Pastor Lietzau, Pastor Warren Graff, Pastor Maas, Pastor Doug May, Pastor Alan Coleman and Pastor John Heffelfinger. Other pastors present but not shown were Pastor Phillip Spomer and Pastor John Plump.

Gethsemane members welcome Rev. Timm

Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School in Northglenn, Colo., welcomed their new administrative pastor, Rev. Gary Timm, at his ordination and installation service on Sunday, July 18.

Rev. Roger Schlechte led the service. Rev. Jeff Johnson from Trinity Lutheran Church in Cleveland, Ohio, was guest preacher, and Rocky Mountain District President Randall Golter ordained and installed Rev. Timm



Pastors attending the ordination and installation of Rev. Timm (center) were, from left, Bob Sharp, Vicar Stephen Weems, Roger Schlechte, Norman Raedeke, Joe Burnham, Jeff Johnson, Tom Teske, Dean Boernke, President Golter, Kurt Schilling, Bruce Matzke, Paul Roggow, John Larson and Tom Mroch.

in the presence of his new congregation.

Timm grew up in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and spent eight years as a computer programmer. During those years, God led him to discuss Jesus with many of his neighbors and coworkers—so many that he realized he needed a career change.

In 1999, Timm joined The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Jewish mission organization, The Apple of His Eye Mission Society. He spent seven years in New York City where he handed out tens of thousands of Gospel tracts and spoke with thousands of everyday people about Jesus being the long-awaited Messiah.

Eventually, the Lord led Timm to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, where he received his master of divinity degree in May. Rev. Timm and his family are excited to have been placed in the Denver area, and they are equally excited to get to know the people of Gethsemane Lutheran Church and School.

A special offering was taken at the ordination and installation service for Community of Faith United (COFU), a local mission and ministry outreach based in Northglenn, Colo.

New pastor for new Hispanic mission in Las Cruces

It is an exciting time in Las Cruces, N.M. Mission Lutheran Church is celebrating the establishment of a new mission to reach out with the Gospel to Hispanics in southern New Mexico. Rev. Mario Lozano had been serving his vicarage at Mission Lutheran for the past two years and in May was called to plant this new Hispanic mission congregation.

Rev. Lozano was ordained and installed

July 25 at Mission Lutheran by Circuit Counselor Bill Heithold and Rev. Juan Hormachea, Hispanic Ministry facilitator for the Rocky Mountain District. Eleven pastors and more than 200 people attended a special ordination and installation service which involved many of the people that Rev. Lozano has been pastor-



Pastor Juan Hormachea and Pastor Bill Heithold ordain Mario Lozano. The new mission, Rey de Reyes (King of Kings), is moving forward. The members are remodeling a mobile home for temporary use as a sanctuary and office. They are looking for land to purchase for their new church while raising the funds to build.



ing along with others that share in the joy of his call.

God has been blessing this new mission church. A piano and organ have already been donated as well as pews for the new church. However, many items are still needed and donations are being accepted, both in-kind and financial contributions.

The Rocky Mountain District has been very supportive of the new mission plant and Mission Lutheran Church is generously subsidizing this new mission on a declining scale, anticipating that the new mission will be able to provide more of



To prepare the mobile home for use as a temporary sanctuary and office, old flooring and walls were removed and replaced with new.

its own support each year and be independent in three years. With God's providence, Rey de Reyes will eventually join the family of LCMS congregations, extending the Lord's kingdom into the Hispanic community.

Currently, 35 to 40 people worship at Rey de Reyes. Until the mission can find a new worship location, they will continue to meet at Mission Lutheran. Contact and donations may be made through Mission Lutheran.

Rev. Lozano says, "I feel blessed by all the support that everyone has shown to me and Rey de Reyes. God is in control." We ask your continued prayers for this new fellowship of believers.

The trip of a lifetime to Israel and Jordan

**by Ken Kester and Harriet Oehlkers,
Peace Lutheran Church, Arvada, Colo.**

After two years of meticulous planning, two groups of Lutherans from Colorado and Florida met June 15 in Tel Aviv, Israel, to begin a 16-day journey in Israel and Petra, Jordan. Seventy-two Lutherans ages 14 to 92, including four LCMS pastors, came together to walk in Jesus' footsteps. The pastors were Dave Ahlman of Peace Lutheran Church in Arvada, Colo.; Bob Steunkel, retired pastor at University Lutheran Chapel in Boulder, Colo.; Bob Steinke of Faith Lutheran Church in New Port Richey, Fla.; and Richard Arndt, who retired in the New Port Richey area.

The group walked in Jesus' footsteps along the shores of the Sea of Galilee where He often preached,

including on the Mount of the Beatitudes where the people were amazed when Jesus taught "as one who had authority and not as their teachers of the law" (Matt 7:28-29 NIV). In Capernaum, the center of His Galilee ministry, Jesus lived for an extended period, healing the sick, preaching in the synagogue and performing miracles (Matt. 4:13). At Tabgha, Jesus fed the 5,000 (Matt. 14:14-21) and made a post-resurrection appearance. In the Jordan River near Jericho, John the Baptist baptized Jesus (Mark 1:9-11).

The travelers' vantage point on the Golan Heights provided a glimpse into the NATO facility, Syria and Lebanon. The group was reminded that "peace" is still an elusive term in the Middle East and that we have much to be thankful for in our own country. The site at Masada reminded them that God is our Rock and our Fortress (Ps. 18:12). Qumran revealed the Dead Sea Scrolls to the world in the same year that Israel became a nation.

Petra ("cleft in the rock") was constructed by the Nabateans in circa 100 B.C.



Seventy-two people from Colorado and Florida grew closer to Jesus by walking in His footsteps.

as a center for caravan trade. Made popular by the Indiana Jones movies because of its magnificent structures, Petra also was a burial ground with tombs for the Nabateans, Greeks and Romans. Later, the site became a religious center for Christians and Muslims.

Jerusalem, with its approximately 500 churches and synagogues, is considered to be the geographical focal point of Judaism and Christianity. Jerusalem was paramount in Jesus' ministry. The New Testament tells of Jesus' frequent visits to Jerusalem, including His triumphal entry (Palm Sunday) followed by the crucifixion and resurrection (Easter Sunday). Eating the Last Supper, praying to His Father in the Garden at Gethsemane, being arrested by the Romans, tried by Pontius Pilate and condemned to die on the cross—imagine reading the Scripture about these events and then walking in Jesus' footsteps!

This was certainly the journey of a lifetime for 72 believers. *Shalom!*

OPPORTUNITIES

What is DAP?

The Debt Assistance Program (DAP) was formed by resolution of the Rocky Mountain District (RMD) at its convention in 1997. Those attending recognized a growing trend among synodically trained pastors—these men were graduating with increasing educational debt loads. To help pastors in the RMD, the adopted resolution authorized a debt assistance fund. From this beginning, an endowment fund was formed that would allow bequests and gifts to be contributed and managed by a committee, with oversight by the RMD Board of Directors. Today the district's DAP is one of the most successful of similar programs in Synod.

The trend that the 1997 convention recognized has since mushroomed. The cost of higher education has increased faster than every other component of the cost of living, except perhaps for medical care. Universities and the government make borrowing easy. So each year, more and more men complete their eight years of undergraduate and seminary education with higher and higher educational debt. The problem of repayment is compounded by the new pastor's salary often being paid at the low end of the suggested scale.

The district's Debt Assistance Program exists to help our pastors repay debt incurred for their education. Please consider a gift to the RMD Debt Assistance Program, either for current use or for investment in the endowment fund for future use. To make a contribution, contact the district office at 303-695-8001 and someone will be glad to assist you. Above all, please pray for all our pastors and the work they have to do.

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14).

Another way to love your neighborhood by Pastor Chris Matthis, Immanuel, Englewood, Colo.

A few years ago, I shared with you about how our congregation rejoiced that a new family joined our church and was baptized as a result of our door-to-door prayer canvas of our neighborhood. At that time, we went out two-by-two to visit residences in our neighborhood and offered to pray for our neighbors' needs and concerns, similar to Jesus' commissioning of the 72 in Luke 10.



Now I want to share with you a new outreach effort I am beginning to use. A few weeks ago, I visited the five businesses closest to my church. I introduced myself as the pastor from the Lutheran church. I asked how our congregation could be a better neighbor to them and offered to pray for them. While one business was closed and one seemed confused by my offer, I received a favorable response from the other three.

At one business, the receptionist told me she had just found out that a member of her family was diagnosed with cancer, and she allowed me to pray with her. Another business owner told me that our church was already a great neighbor and asked me to pray for the homeless people in Englewood. A third business turned out to be a Christian organization that trains missionaries to serve our U.S. military personnel overseas. We spent time praying for each other's ministries, and I offered the use of our church parking lot for their training sessions.

This approach may or may not result in direct attendance at my church, but it may help our community to know that our church cares about them and loves them.

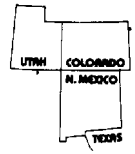


I recently preached on these words from Jeremiah: *"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare"* (Jer. 29:7). The Hebrew word for "welfare" here is *shalom*, which means "peace, wholeness, health and well-being." More and more I am challenging my members to seek the shalom of our community by loving the people in it. But to this end, I myself must model this love and concern for Englewood and Littleton.

In addition to visiting your commercial neighbors, I encourage you to try to meet with your mayor or city council members, your local police and fire department and to learn what the needs of your community are and how your congregation can partner with the city to meet those needs. Please pray for me and Immanuel as we begin to carry out this kind of living and loving in our city. And I will pray the same for you!

Rocky Mountain District Office
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www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org



Rocky Mountain District calendar

October

- 5 Administrative Conference in Breckenridge, Colo.
- 6-8 Professional Workers Conference in Breckenridge, Colo.
- 9 LWML rally—Northern Zone at Messiah, Longmont, Colo.
- 16 LWML rallies—Four Corners Zone at Our Savior, Pagosa Springs, Colo.; South Central Zone at Holy Cross, Highlands Ranch, Colo.
- 24 Denver area Reformation Festival at Peace, Arvada, Colo., 4 p.m. (5675 Field St.)
- 24 The Lutheran Chorale concerts: 3 p.m. at Evergreen Lutheran Church in Evergreen, Colo.; 7:30 p.m. at St. John Lutheran Church in Denver, Colo.

November

- 1-2 RMD Board of Directors meeting

Calls in the district

PLACEMENTS

- Elizabeth Schanbacher, Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, Ill., to Immanuel, Roswell, N.M.
- Jenny DiGiorgio, Concordia University Nebraska, Seward, Neb., to Immanuel, Loveland, Colo.

CALLS EXTENDED

- Ascension, El Paso, Texas, to Rev. Vernon Schindler, Zion, Sioux Falls, S.D.
- Immanuel, Paonia, Colo., to Rev. Duane Daeke from Reedsburg, Wis.
- Trinity, St. George, Utah, to Fred Jesgarz, Trinity, Manistee, Mich.

CALLS ACCEPTED

- Fred Jesgarz, Trinity, Manistee, Mich., to Trinity, St. George, Utah.
- Josh Keithley, Family of Christ, Colorado Springs, Colo., to Beautiful Savior, La Vista, Neb.
- Mari (Buss) Koester, St. John, Napa, Calif., to St. John, Denver, Colo.
- Matthew Luevano, Child of God, St. Peters, Mo., to Christ, Albuquerque, N.M.
- Rev. Duane Daeke from Reedsburg, Wis., to Immanuel, Paonia, Colo.
- Rev. Vernon Schindler, Zion, Sioux Falls, S.D., to Ascension, El Paso, Texas.

CALLS DECLINED

- Rev. Jim Kretzmann of Taylor, Texas, to Sangre de Cristo, Taos, N.M., and Christ our Savior Lutheran Church, Angel Fire, N.M.
- Jim Nash, Trinity, Sterling, Colo., to Trinity Lutheran Church, Garden City, Kan.

CHANGE OF STATUS

- Bethany Steiner, Grace, Sandy, Utah, to candidate status.

REMOVED/RESIGNED FROM ROSTER

- Deborah Gehhardt, non-candidate status, Sandy, Utah.

TRANSFERS

- Rev. Norman Laesch, emeritus, RMD to Pacific Southwest District.

Contemplating becoming a pastor or deaconess?

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, invites prospective students and their guests to attend “Contemplate ...” to be held Oct. 7-9 on the seminary campus.

Designed for those who are college age or older, the visitation event provides an effective means for learning more about life in the Concordia Seminary community and the preparation that leads to service as a pastor, missionary, chaplain or deaconess in the LCMS.

Thursday’s activities include check-in, campus tours, a welcome reception and dinner. After dinner, participants will hear a presentation on the formation for ministry and meet the student ambassadors.

Paired with a current student, participants will attend chapel and observe classes on Friday. Sessions will focus on the spiritual and personal aspects of the decision-making process, as well as provide opportunities for presentations on the academic program, resident field education, vicarage and internship years, financial assistance and housing (including married and single student housing tours).

There is no charge to attend “Contemplate ...,” and all meals and lodging are provided free of charge. Round-trip transportation to Concordia Seminary from the airport is provided.

For more information, contact the admissions office at 800-822-9545 or admissions@csl.edu. The seminary will host a second “Contemplate ...” event on March 10-12, 2011.



Lutheran Church Extension Fund

Rev. Roger Krause named Consecrated Stewards District Coordinator

Rocky Mountain District LCEF welcomes Rev. Roger Krause as the new coordinator for Consecrated Stewards in the district.

Rev. Krause will serve the district by assisting the guest leaders and promoting Consecrated Stewards. For congregations interested in participating, Krause will make the initial presentation to members, giving them an overview of the stewardship program.

“My goal is to help congregations and their members grow in their understanding of what it means to be a steward of the Lord Jesus,” Krause said. He added that he prays that Consecrated Stewards participants learn how to “better live their lives in a way that reflects what the Lord would have them do.”



Consecrated Stewards is a grace-motivated program that encourages people to give back to the Lord according to the blessings they have received. Krause said that stewardship is something most congregations are familiar with and talk about, but Consecrated Stewards focuses on the joyful gift of giving, including the giving of one’s time and becoming involved in the life of the congregation.

“The program stresses that it’s not about the need of the church, it’s about the need of giver to give in response to what God has done for us,” Krause said. “That’s the key thing that we’re trying to help individuals and congregations understand.”

Pastor Appreciates “Christ-Centered Approach”

Participants applaud Consecrated Stewards’ emphasis on the Bible instead of budgets. The Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Centennial, Colo., congregation has used the Consecrated Stewards program and pastor Dr. Bradley Stoltenow said it is different from other programs. He said other stewardship emphases “completely miss the point of stewardship as the joyous activity of every Christian in the management of life and life resources for the glory of God.”

The Shepherd congregation began Consecrated Stewards in 2008—as the country entered a deep recession—and quickly began exceeding its stewardship goals.

“Consecrated Stewards emphasizes the opportunities Christians have to manage all of their resources for the benefits of others,” Stoltenow said. “No guilt trips, no ‘if you love Jesus’ appeals—just a Christ-centered approach to individuals, families, and the congregation to extend the Gospel.”

Consecrated Stewards...

- Is founded on our Lutheran understanding of biblical stewardship principals.
- Focuses on the biblical principals of grace-motivated giving not on church budget activities.
- Helps awaken in Christians the Spirit-led desire to make a free and joyous response to the grace of God in Jesus Christ.
- Is easy to organize and implement.
- Can be used any time of year.
- Uses a trained “guest leader” to train, motivate, and assist congregation leaders in maximizing results.

For More Information

Congregation leaders seeking more information about Consecrated Stewards can contact Rev. Roger Krause through the LCEF District office at (303) 695-8001 or consecratedstewards@rm.lcms.org.

www.LCEF.org