

PenPALS

NEWSLETTER

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-Dr. Jim Baneck

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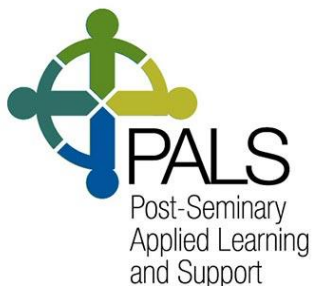
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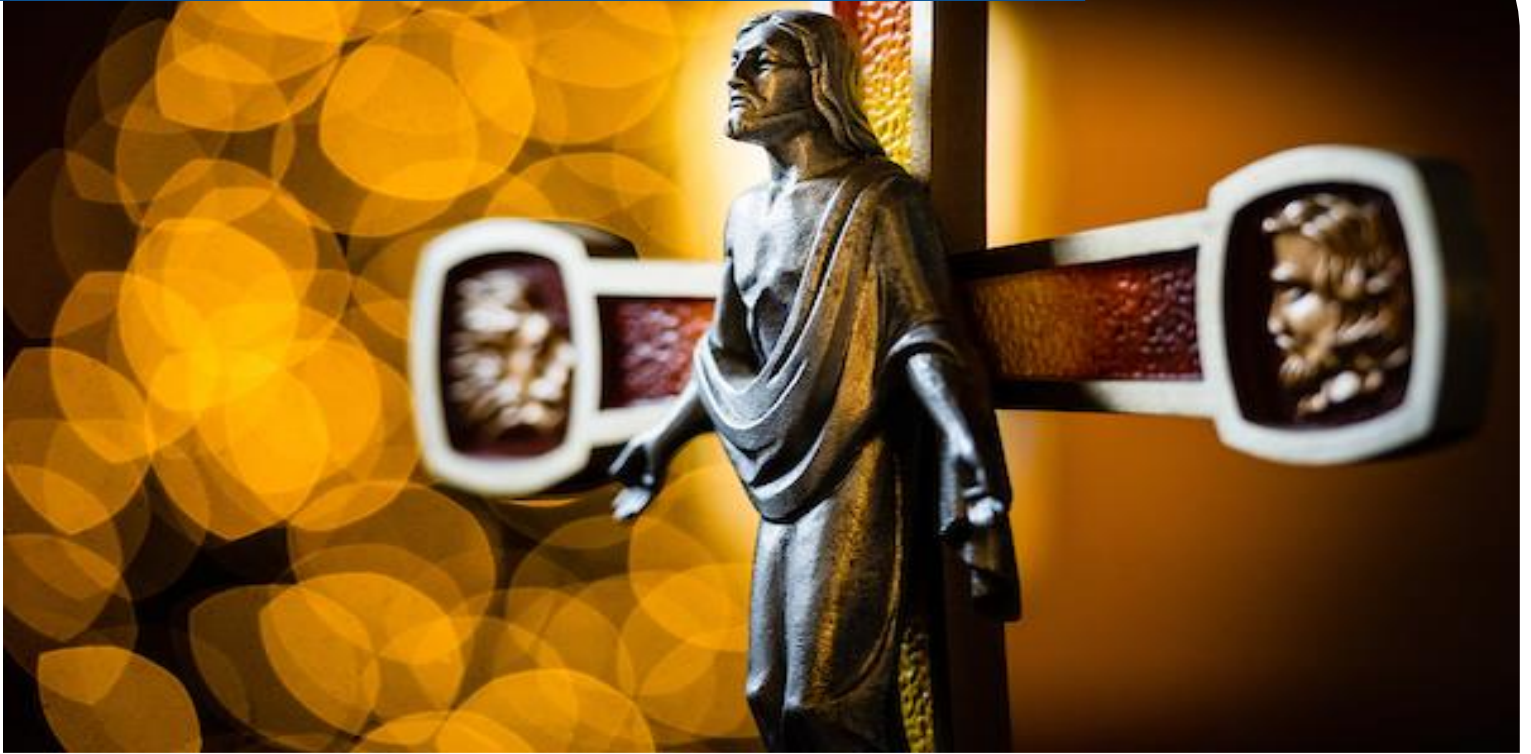


THE FIRST 3 MODULES COMING SOON!

Modules 1-3 of *Life Together as Synod* are in the final production stages. Please read the article on the next page and see how you play an important role in evaluating these modules for use of a possible wider audience.

Facilitators, you will receive an email with links to materials as soon as this first set is complete. After viewing as a group, please offer your feedback as part of your meeting evaluation.

Life Together as Synod



“THE APOSTLES AND THE ELDERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER TO CONSIDER THIS MATTER.” ACTS 15:6

Dear Friends,

This may sound like a silly question, but what do you know about The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? In interviews with seminarians over the last several years, I am told they are not very familiar with how we live together under a mutual commitment to confession, mission and good order.

The word “Synod” comes from two Greek words: σύν ὁδός (syn hodos), literally meaning “with” “the way.” Σύν ὁδός can also mean “assembly” or “meeting.” The Latin word for “synod” is *concilium* or “council.”

A form of the word “synod” is used in Acts 15:6. The Church was called together to discuss a theological matter or Old Testament law and salvation. Acts 15:6 is also used in the Preamble of the Synod Constitution and Bylaws to explain the reason for the formation of a Synodical Union.

Despite our challenges and debates through the years, our forefathers did a very good thing in forming a synodical union. Our purpose for having this union is the same as it was in 1847 when the LCMS began: “Committed to a common confession and mission, congregations join with one another in the Synod to support one another and to work together in carrying out their commonly adopted objectives. The Synod is organized to work in support of and on behalf of congregations to assist them in carrying out their ministries as they seek to serve our Lord Jesus Christ, the members of His body, and the world which stands in need of the Word and the impact of His redeeming love” (Bylaw 1.1.1).

But what *is* our common confession and mission? How *do* we join together? How *do* we support one another and work together? What *are* our commonly adopted objectives?

I invite you to participate in the *Life Together as Synod* PALS Pilot project, an informational video series on our mutual commitment to confession, mission and good order. The pilot project includes the first ten modules of potentially 30 or more to follow, depending on your review and evaluation. I am asking every PALS group to view each of the upcoming *Life Together as Synod* modules. Each module consists of a 3-5-minute video and a 1-page Talk Sheet discussion.

As a pilot project, PALS is preparing a special electronic survey/evaluation to be completed by each PALS participant (pastor and wife!) after the completion of each module. By viewing and evaluating these modules, you are helping the PALS office/LCMS Office of Pastoral Education refine and continue an excellent resource to be used by the entire Synod.

The world is very noisy with many distractions. Satan and this evil generation will do everything they can to pull us apart, to divide us, and conquer us. Surely Christ is the head and cornerstone of the Church. With Christ as the head, it is good to be a body of believers with a common confession to serve Him, one another, and our neighbor. It is good to join forces, and do together, for the sake of the Gospel, what would be very difficult to do alone.

Thank you for your participation. I'm looking forward to hearing what you say about *Life Together as Synod*!

The projected completion of these videos is:

October 2021

1. Preface to our Life Together as Synod
2. The History, Confession, and Purpose of Synod
3. The Confessional Position of Synod, Doctrinal Resolutions, Statements, Agreement, and Review

January 2022

4. Objectives of the LCMS 1-5
5. Objectives of the LCMS 6-10
6. Membership in the Synod

April 2022

7. Relationships in the LCMS
8. The Office of the Holy Ministry
9. Districts of the Synod
10. District Presidents

In the name of Jesus,

Jim

Rev. Dr. James Baneck, Executive Director of
Pastoral Education





WELCOME Nitzels!

We are pleased to announce that **Pastor Chris and Heather Nitzel** have joined our PALS facilitator family. They are serving the **Iowa District West** PALS families.

Pastor Nitzel serves St. Paul Lutheran Church in Hartley, Iowa. Heather teaches 2nd grade at Iowa Great Lakes Lutheran School.

Recent PALS Activity

Pastor Charles and Brenda Schmidt led their **Nebraska District** PALS group over a 2-day event hosted by the district office in Seward. The group worked through PALS course *Transition from Seminary to Parish*, and wives enjoyed studies using the books *Joy: a study of Philippians* by Deb Burma and Lorna Dobson's book, *I'm More than a Pastor's Wife*. Schmidt shares, "I commend **President Snow** for all of his support of the program." President Richard Snow and staff worked with the Schmidts to coordinate the district new worker orientation, "Seasons of Change" with the first PALS event of the year.



The **New England District** PALS group met over the course of 2 days for a gathering around the PALS course topic *Pastor's Life of Prayer* and discussed the call process and deliberation. The group enjoyed fellowship, meals, and casuistry led by PALS facilitators, **Pastor Jonathan and Deaconess Tiffany Manor**.

The **Missouri District (East)** PALS group met for a combined Zoom and in person event held August 27-28. **Pastor Wayne and Crystal Huebner** led PALS couples through a discussion of maintaining healthy boundaries, and used portions of Lorna Dobson's book, *I'm More Than a Pastor's Wife*. **Deaconess Kristina Paul** served as a guest presenter on the topic of boundaries. The group enjoyed worship together at the close of the event. Babysitting provided was greatly appreciated! One participant noted, "I really appreciated time to discuss ministry life and some of its challenges. I love the idea of meeting and continuing to get to know people in a similar stage of ministry. The hybrid format worked very well for our family."

New facilitators **Pastor Steve and Ursula Sohns** enjoyed a "get to know you" dinner with their **Texas District** PALS group. What a blessing to have this opportunity to develop relationships with other pastors and pastors' wives so new to their roles. We thank the Sohns' for putting the event together!

The **Kansas District (East)** PALS group enjoyed a Saturday together early this month led by **Pastor Timothy and Marie Roth**. Participants appreciated the time for fellowship, study of PALS course *Transition from Seminary to Parish* and worship together. Marie shared, "Our group very naturally fell into fellowship together. They had all previously met at the new worker orientation for the district



last month. We also had amazing babysitters that allowed the wives to relax and join in discussion.”

The **Central Illinois District** PALS group enjoyed a weekend together over the Columbus Day weekend. **Pastor David and Kassie Weaver** led their group through the PALS course *Transition from Seminary to Parish*, worship, and fellowship time. One PALS pastor shared, “PALS is a time and place where you can relax and be bold with your questions.”

Pastor Guy and Emily Roberts gathered the **Minnesota North District** PALS group together earlier this month for a Fall Retreat. One PALS wife remarked, “PALS is a great way to help me process the transition from seminary and adjust the what “normal life” is like now!” The group used the PALS course *Transition from Seminary to Parish* and enjoyed fellowship at the hotel, meals together, and worship at **Prince of Peace in Baxter, Minnesota**.

The **Rocky Mountain District** PALS group met at an air bnb for a fall PALS retreat in Breckenridge, Colorado. **Pastor David and Ginny Vanderhyde** prepared and hosted a wonderful event facilitating meals together, time for study as pastors (*Pastoral Care and Ethics at Life’s End*) and wives (*Parenting in the Pew*), as well as ample time for casuistry. PALS pastors led devotions and worship. “This has provided wonderful support for my first few years of ministry.” -RMD PALS Pastor.

Pastor Kirk and Lori Clayton met virtually with their **Southern Illinois District** group this month. The group enjoyed time in casuistry as joys and struggles were shared. What a blessing to receive this encouragement, support, and insight from peers and such seasoned mentors. Thanks Claytons!



PRAYER REQUESTS

Some issues from our PALS family have come to our attention and we wanted to share them with you so you could include them in your daily prayers.

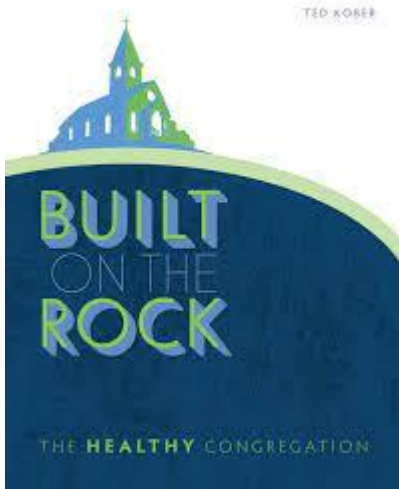
- ✠ Please pray for the family and congregation of Pastor Brian Homann (CTSWF '21) who are mourning his death, yet not without hope, for death is swallowed up in victory. “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” I Cor. 15:57.
- ✠ PALS participants, Rev. Mike and Jo Stein and St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Beecher, IL at the loss of their church building due to a fire on Sept. 19.
- ✠ New Jersey District PALS facilitators, Rev. Daniel and Jerusha Fenco (facilitators) whose house flooded and was destroyed from Hurricane Ida on Sept. 1.

RESOURCES



PALS COURSE SPOTLIGHT

Built on the Rock: The Healthy Congregation by Ted Kober, CPH. *Book Study.*



In Built on the Rock, Ted Kober, an expert in Christ-centered reconciliation, offers church leaders and members an effective prescription for building and sustaining healthy congregations.

Rather than basing his concepts on the alluring wisdom of psychological theories or business management theory, Kober prescribes a return to the foundations of the Christian life: looking to Jesus, dwelling in God's Word, and living as reconciled children of God in mutual confession and forgiveness.

We encourage you to use this as a possible PALS book study or suggested topic for a PALS meeting. The book includes many case studies, discussion questions at the close of each chapter, and room for notes on each page. A complimentary copy is provided to each facilitating couple.



There are some great resources for **Church Worker Appreciation**. Check it out!
<https://resources.lcms.org/general/ways-to-show-your-gratitude-and-support-for-church-workers/>