

PenPALS

NEWSLETTER

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January 2022

"Dear Pastor"

"...on us has a Light shined..."

-Dr. Jim Baneck

News from the PALS Field

Thank you Gards

Welcome Heinzs AND Groths!

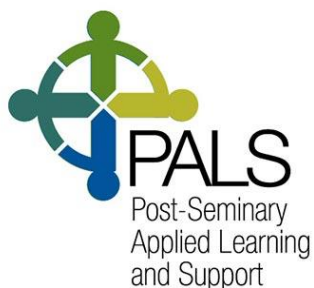
PALS Gatherings

Resources

Gift from LCMS Life Ministry

Life Together as Synod series

Preach the Word Module 10



INTRODUCING SEMINARY STUDENTS TO PALS

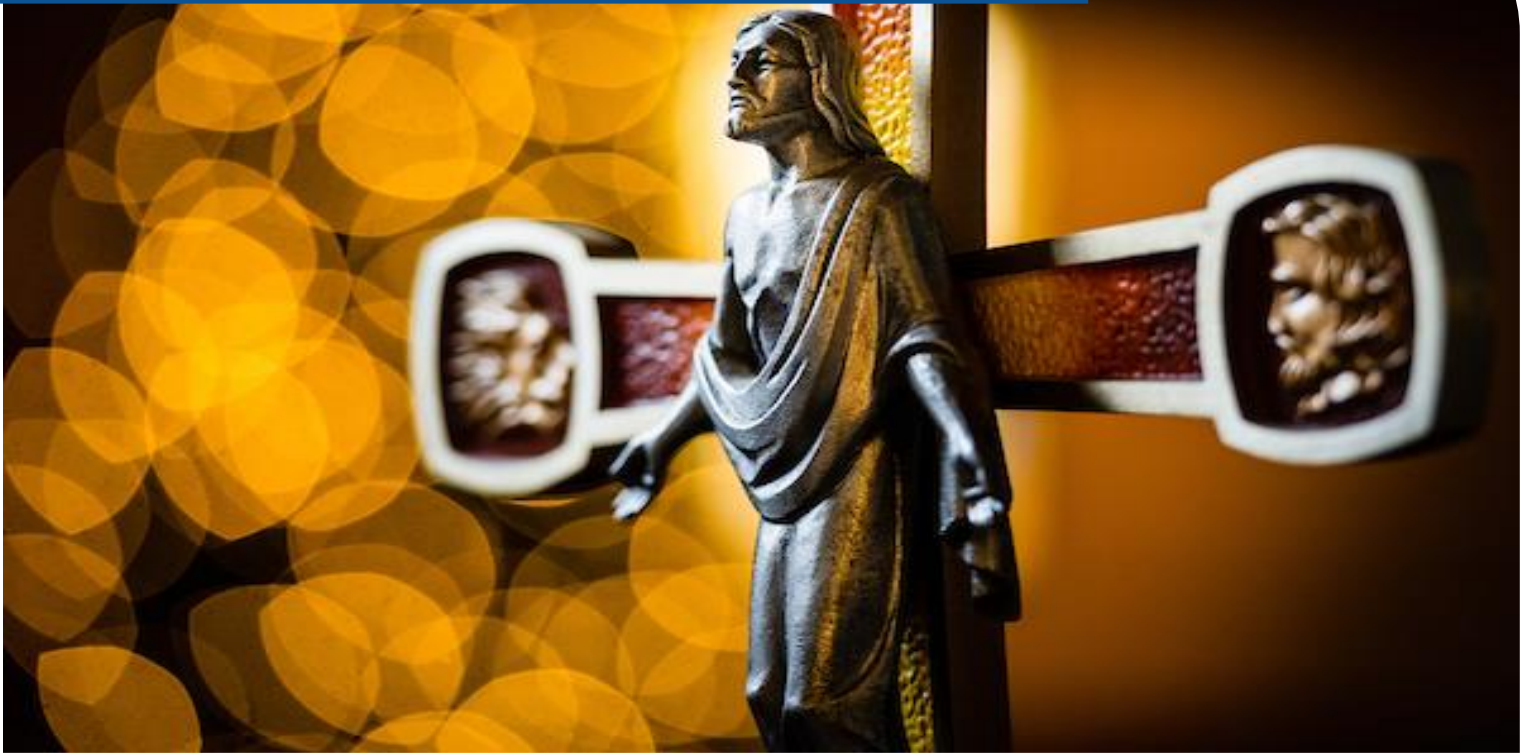
Pastoral candidates and their wives will soon be introduced to PALS:

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis – Sunday, February 27 *dinner and presentation*

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne – Wednesday, May 11 *luncheon and presentation*

Please keep these future PALS pastors and their wives in your daily prayers.

Arise, Shine



“ARISE, SHINE, FOR YOUR LIGHT HAS COME” ISAIAH 60:1

Dear Pastor,

We live in a world of deep darkness. Nothing has changed since the time of Isaiah who describes people walking in darkness (Is. 9:2), which goes all the way back to the fall. You, too, are witnessing and experiencing this darkness.

We are hearing from several LCMS pastors – new and veteran – who face the effects of living and serving in this world of darkness and sin. These include the stressors of COVID, faithfulness to the Lutheran Confessions, navigating wokism, financial strains, loneliness, and depression.

LCMS pastors are bearing crosses not of their own choosing. Gustaf Wingren writes, “Bearing one’s cross has to do precisely with the suffering that we do not choose for ourselves, the trials and difficulties that are imposed on us from the outside, that we have no control over whatsoever.”ⁱ

Sometimes, it is God who gives us the cross. It is Jesus who said to His disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” (Matt. 16:24).

Paul Gerhardt writes:

When life's troubles rise to meet me,
Though their weight may be great,
They will not defeat me.
God, my loving Savior, sends them;
He who knows all my woes
Knows how best to end them.
(LSB 756:2)

Richard Eyer writes, "As much as parishioners may want to see the hand of God in nature's beautiful sunrises, moving stories of conversion, or success in parish programs, it is in the cross of Christ and in bearing their own crosses that God chooses to reveal his heart to them." ⁱⁱ What then is the solution? Walther von Loewenich writes, "What kind of advice can Luther give in such cases? None other than that one must cling to the Word. And the Word, for Luther, is nothing else than Christ." ⁱⁱⁱ

It is the Word made flesh to whom we cling. This Word is the light of the world. This Word is the light in the darkness of your world and mine. Isaiah's Epiphany words to you are these: "Arise shine for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!" St. Paul writes, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." (Eph. 5:14). And Simeon professes, "For my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." (Lk. 2:30-32).

Do not despair, dear Christian. Though we yet walk in a land of deep darkness, on us has a light shined, and that Light is Jesus Christ, your light and salvation.

In the name of Jesus,

Jim

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

ⁱ Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Evansville, IN: Ballast Press, 1994), 52-53.

ⁱⁱ Richard C. Eyer, *Pastoral Care Under the Cross: God in the Mist of Suffering* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994), 26.

ⁱⁱⁱ Walther von Loewenich, *Luther's Theology of the Cross* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982), 136-37.





God's blessings to the Gards

Rev. Dr. Dan and Annette Gard are retiring from their service PALS facilitators for the **Indiana District**.

We are incredibly thankful for the time they spent caring for new pastors and pastors' wives in their district, especially during such a challenging season. We pray for their health, peace, and joy in Christ as they continue to serve Him in ways He provides.

WELCOME Heinz Family

We are pleased to announce that **Pastor Rich and Kristi Heinz** will be joining us as our new **Indiana District** PALS facilitating couple. Pastor Heinz serves as pastor at **Trinity Lutheran Church** in **Lowell, Indiana**. We know Pastor and Kristi will be true blessings to the families they serve in their district.



WELCOME Groth Family

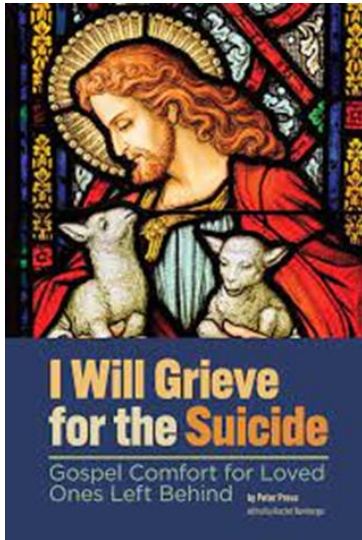
Pastor David and Jacklyn Groth have agreed to serve as PALS facilitators for the **South Wisconsin District**. Pastor Groth is a veteran PALS facilitator, returning to service-so glad to have him back! He serves as sole pastor at **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** in **Watertown, Wisconsin**.



Recent PALS Activity

The **Ohio District** PALS group met for a winter gathering led by PALS facilitators, **Pastor Stephen and Heidi Lutz**. The group enjoyed the working through the PALS course, *Finding Balance and Setting Boundaries*. Participants gathered Friday evening for fellowship and games, and studied, worshiped and enjoyed the day's events on Saturday. One pastor shared, *"PALS provides a respite to focus on God's gifts to us as pastors and families and to listen for His direction and will."*

Pastor Mark and Lynn Boxman, Kansas District (West) facilitators met with **Pastor Kenton and Darla Abbott** (others were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts and illness). *"2 on 2 time with Kenton and Darla Abbott was wonderful. A very good day of study and encouragement with a pastor and his wife who are humbly serving with compassion, joy and faithfulness."*-Boxman. The couples enjoyed working through the new *Life Together as Synod* videos. *"Very educational. Sparks good conversation about how important our life together is."*-Boxman. Thank you Abbotts for hosting the event in your home!



I WILL GRIEVE FOR THE SUICIDE

Each PALS facilitating couple received a copy of the book, [I Will Grieve for the Suicide](#), by Rev. Peter Preus, from LCMS Life Ministry.

“Suicide has been a difficult topic in Christ’s church for millennia. While this book may not be an easy read, it is an important one and I pray that it may be a blessing to you.” – Deaconess Tiffany Manor, PALS facilitating wife and Director, LCMS Life Ministry.

Check out <https://www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy/life-ministry> for a digital edition of the book. We also encourage you to see the Life Library (under Resources) for a new Bible study by Rev. Preus, “Gospel Relief for the Despairing.”

LIFE TOGETHER AS SYNOD

An informational video series on our mutual commitment to confession, mission and good order. <https://resources.lcms.org/life-together-as-synod-video-series/>

Life Together is a **PALS Pilot Project**.

The continued production of LTS is very dependent upon the comments and critique of our PALS facilitators, pastors, wives, and congregations.

We ask every PALS group to watch the first 3 short videos, use the Talk Sheets, and submit feedback using www.lcms.org/survey/LTS

Thank you so much!

JUST RELEASED

Preach the Word-Module 10 Catechetical Preaching by Rev. Peter Bender

In this module, the Rev. Peter Bender, pastor of Peace Lutheran Church and Academy in Sussex, Wis., and director of the Concordia Catechetical Academy, discusses the task of catechetical preaching and emphasizes the importance of learning the texts of Scripture and the Small Catechism by heart.

Watch it with two other peers, on your own, with your circuit, or however works best to discover this rich resource in preaching the Word!

“And how are they to preach unless they are sent? So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:15, 17).

