

# THE *Pen* PALS



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## Called and Ordained Servant of the Word

*If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.” John 20:23*

Dear PALS Family and Friends,



If you're reading this as a pastor, can you remember the first time you spoke the Absolution in the Divine Service? “Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” Wow! What holy words! What a great responsibility it is to declare God's forgiveness of sin from your own frail human lips! For that matter, what a great and holy responsibility it is to baptize God-created flesh into His holy kingdom, or feed the very flesh and blood of God into hungry hearts!

This spring, I had the joy of sitting down with about twenty-four candidates from Ft. Wayne and about thirty-six from St. Louis. When I asked what made them most anxious about their first call, the resounding theme came back, “All of the pastoral responsibilities will be solely on our shoulders!” No longer are they field workers or vicars under a supervising pastor; now *they* will be the pastor, accountable stewards of the mysteries of God.

What a joy it is for all of us to receive a new group of PALS pastors once again this spring! They are soon to enter the ministry with anxiety and excitement. Can you imagine the butterflies and anticipation? As these men soon enter the ranks as called and ordained servants of the Lord, along with their wives and families, I look forward to joining you in helping them navigate this transition. Let's team together in helping these green, naïve, and eager young men and their families move into this new vocation.

- Our PALS office will send letters both to congregations receiving a new graduate as well as to new candidates, encouraging support for and participation in the PALS program.
- District Presidents will encourage their candidates to be involved in PALS.
- District Presidents will keep in touch with their facilitators as to how best serve our new pastors.
- Facilitators will contact their new candidates, introducing themselves and welcoming them to PALS.
- Facilitators will make every effort to participate in the ordination and/or installation service of the new candidates.

What an exciting time of year it is for fourth year seminarians and their families, for District Presidents and Districts, for congregations, and for us here at PALS! May God bless our brand new 2018 pastors and may He use PALS to help them transition into their first call!

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

## PALS Seminary Presentations

Each year, candidates at each seminary and their wives are invited to a presentation on the PALS program. Graduates are encouraged to participate in PALS gatherings offered in their district as a true means of support, encouragement, continued learning, and fellowship during the transition from seminary to parish ministry.

We appreciate the time given to us by our seminaries during the final days before Call Day and Graduation.



## Exciting News from the PALS Field

- Pastor Bill and Janice Hessler will be giving a short PALS presentation on April 28 to representatives of the congregations in the Michigan District who will be receiving seminary graduates. What a wonderful opportunity to bring PALS to our congregations, encouraging support for their new pastor and his family! We appreciate the time the Hesslers will take to prepare and present.
- The Wyoming District PALS group enjoyed a dinner hosted by district president Rev. John Hill as well as a presentation by Rev. Darrell Debowey (husband of former PALS facilitator Candice Debowey).



*“Rev. Debowey has done a great deal of research in the areas of bioethics, etc. He also holds degrees in microbiology and worked in research before attending the seminary. He has a wealth of information and experience.”*

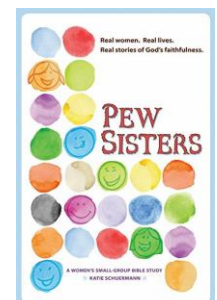
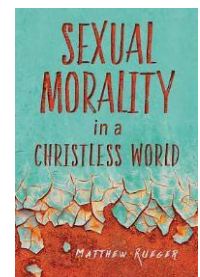
– Pastor Kenneth Mars, WY District PALS Facilitator.



- Pastor Phill Andreasen invited author Matt Rueger to discuss his book, Sexual Morality in a Christless World as a recent MNS PALS gathering.
- Central Illinois District Wives Facilitator has this to share from a recent gathering:

*“The ladies really seemed to enjoy doing the first session of Pew Sisters. We had a good discussion and they want to continue going through the book!”*

–Kassie Weaver, CI District PALS Facilitating Wife





## **PALS Facilitator Training Conference “Encourage One Another”**

**The event is scheduled for July 31-August 1.** ALL Facilitators, new and veteran, are ENCOURAGED to join us. We would love *every* facilitator to be able to receive ENCOURAGEMENT-and be equipped to ENCOURAGE PALS participants.

The revised conference schedule includes more time for “table talk” between new and returning facilitators, PALS curriculum training, evaluation and revision-as well as ample time for “best practice” sharing.

PALS Facilitating couples will receive registration information and conference agenda in the coming weeks. PALS funds the conference and all travel expenses. We pray every facilitator will be able to join us in our endeavor to strengthen our PALS program, encourage our facilitators, and prepare for another year of service to our new pastors.



### **PALS Kansas District East Facilitator Accepts Call**

Pastor Jim Bender, Kansas District Facilitator, has accepted a call to serve at Trinity Lutheran in Hudson, Wisconsin, a Minnesota South District congregation. We pray for Jim and Sally as they share their gifts with a new parish and continue their service in His kingdom. We are sorry to let them go, but

know the Lord will provide new KS District East Facilitators to serve alongside Pastor Mark and Lynn Boxman (KS District West) in the Kansas District.

