

# PenPALS

NEWSLETTER

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January 2024



*"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly..."*

*-Rev. Jonathan Manor*



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CPH *Set Apart to Serve* Curriculum



### ***Set Apart to Serve Church Work Curriculum***


In partnership with Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) and Concordia Publishing House (CPH), the LCMS Office of Pastoral Education is thrilled to announce the release of a new curriculum dedicated to supporting the church as it seeks to raise up the next generation of faithful, full-time church workers.

The curriculum, a project of SAS, is now available at no cost to all LCMS schools. Find out more in this edition of PenPALS.



# THE BLESSING OF CONTINUING EDUCATION



 “LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY, TEACHING AND ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER IN ALL WISDOM, SINGING PSALMS AND HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS, WITH THANKFULNESS IN YOUR HEARTS TO GOD. AND WHATEVER YOU DO, IN WORD OR DEED, DO EVERYTHING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, GIVING THANKS TO GOD THE FATHER THROUGH HIM.” *Colossians 3:16–17*

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Temperatures in the single digits with high winds and “feels like” temps below zero, it was not the most pleasant of environments for the 2024 Symposia Series at Concordia Theological Seminary a few weeks ago. And yet for me, it was more than pleasant. I enjoyed sitting in Sihler Auditorium, the seats full with pastors and commissioned workers and laity listening and learning from a variety of presentations focused on the themes of “Courage and Encouragement: Exhortations from the Prophets and Apostles” and “Seminex at the Half-Century”. I loved being shoulder to shoulder with my brothers and sisters in Christ in Kramer Chapel to receive the Lord’s gifts of absolution, his Word, and his precious body and blood. The chapel was so full that ushers were walking the center aisle looking for empty seats. And I was blessed to talk about ministry and personal joys and challenges with fellow pastors and their wives, the seminary faculty and staff, and others gathered in Fort Wayne that week.

This learning and these interactions reminded me of my need to be refreshed and renewed both professionally and personally. They also reminded me of many of the reasons that the PALS program exists: to gather around the Word – to reflect upon ministry – to study pertinent topics that foster growth – to share what’s happening in the personal lives of pastors, their wives and families as they transition from seminary life to parish life.

The Symposia Series at CTSFW that I was able to attend with some of you is just one of the many opportunities for continuing education offered by our seminaries, colleges, districts, and circuit gatherings. I pray that as pastors in your first years of ministry you would establish early habits of continuing education through

PALS gatherings, and you would continue to seek out those opportunities throughout your time in ministry and beyond. It will serve you well professionally and personally, and it will be a blessing to your congregations and members as you serve those entrusted to your care.

Please know that in the PALS office, we are here to support you and encourage you as you serve as facilitators, and as you participate as pastors and wives. If there are barriers that you are experiencing to participation, or if there are any ways that we can help foster an environment in your congregation or your PALS group that would enable you to participate more fully, please do not hesitate to contact us. You are all in our prayers as you facilitate and as you participate.

Yours in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

*Jonathan*

Rev. Jonathan Manor, Director of PALS and Continuing Education



## NEWS FROM THE PALS FIELD

### THANK YOU, ROBERTS

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Having served since 2017, Pastor Guy and Emily Roberts are retiring from their service as PALS facilitators.

Pastor Roberts recently accepted a call to serve as Senior Pastor at Peace Lutheran Church in Arvada, Colorado, and is no longer able to serve as a PALS facilitator for the Minnesota North District. What a blessing it has been to have had the Roberts' serve so many PALS families throughout the years.

We thank God for the faithful service of **Pastor Guy and Emily Roberts** and ask His blessing upon their transition to their new congregation in the Rocky Mountain District.





## WELCOME BROWNS

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We are blessed to welcome new Minnesota North District PALS facilitators, Pastor Scott and Tammy Brown.

Former PALS participants, **Pastor Scott and Tammy Brown** have agreed to serve as facilitators for their Minnesota North District. The Browns come highly recommended by their former facilitators, Pastor Guy and Emily Roberts.

Pastor Brown serves as the sole pastor at Ebenezer and St. James Lutheran Churches in Alexandria and Parker's Prairie, Minnesota. We are excited to have the Browns on board. What a blessing.

## PALS GATHERINGS

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*"PALS is a great, safe space for community and friendship with people who understand the circumstances of ministry." -PALS participant*

### *Missouri District*

Missouri District East PALS facilitators, **Pastor Jacob and Michelle May** met this past fall for a PALS event. The group met separately (pastors/wives) and together as they worked through the PALS course, *"Building a Long-Term Ministry."*

Participants shared, *"So nice to be with other pastors to share the load of ministry and speak into others' contexts."* *"Good support network."*

PALS facilitators for our **Missouri District West** group, **Pastor Bernard and Katherine Ross** led a PALS retreat for their group over a Friday afternoon through Saturday morning during one of the coldest weekends (-10) yet this winter! The group used PALS courses, *"Finding Balance & Setting Boundaries"* as well as *"Thinking About Stewardship."*

The group truly enjoyed shared meals as well as time in worship and discussion.

### *Texas District*

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Stephen and Ursula Sohns**, hosted a PALS retreat this month. The group met in **Spring, Texas** and all were blessed to be hosted by the Sohns' in their home throughout the event. Thank you Pastor and Ursula!

Participants enjoyed time in Bible study (Rahab and the spies), a book study (Boundaries), discussion around the Christian counseling community, as well as strategic planning as a family.

## Rocky Mountain District



**Pastor David and Ginny Vanderhyde** led their group through a winter PALS retreat this month. The group met at an Airbnb in **Larkspur, Colorado**. The group enjoyed a wonderful time together in conversation, prayer, study, and fellowship.

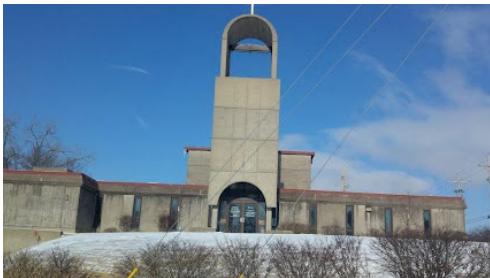
One participating pastor shared, *“Mentoring and support from the PALS facilitators has mightily blessed me and my spouse in these early years of our family’s life and ministry.”* And another shared, *“A blessing to spend time with those who ‘get it’ and be unfiltered and honest.”* Also, *“PALS is a place to be open and honest and is therefore a place of encouragement and meaningful relationships.”*

## Iowa East District

PALS facilitator, **Pastor Dan Krueger** met with PALS pastors and wives in the Iowa East District enjoying a time for discussion and study around the topics of baptism and marriage with special focus on casuistry issues that arise with cohabitation and other issues pertaining to marriage. Childcare was truly appreciated, allowing for time for conversation with other pastors’ wives and pastors.

One participant noted, *“Chances to gather and be encouraged are always beneficial.”* Another shared, *“...very helpful for new pastors. I’m thankful it’s available.”*

## Kansas District



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Andrew and Miriam Wehling** met with PALS pastors and wives in the Kansas District at **Immanuel Lutheran Church in Lawrence, Kansas**.

Pastors worked through PALS course, *“Making Pastoral Referrals”* by Dr. Bev Yahnke while wives studied, *The Mighty & the Mysterious: a study of Colossians* by Heidi Goehmann. Later in the day, pastors and wives joined together to discuss session 3 of PALS course, *“Finding Balance and Setting Boundaries”* by the Flemings.

## RELEASE OF NEW CPH SAS CURRICULUM

*In partnership with Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) and Concordia Publishing House (CPH), the LCMS Office of Pastoral Education is thrilled to announce the release of a new curriculum dedicated to supporting the church as it seeks to raise up the next generation of faithful, full-time church workers.*

The curriculum may be used with early childhood students through adulthood. Units address what the church is, who our LCMS church

workers are, how the church cares for its workers and how the church creates a culture of church work formation and recruitment.

Each curriculum kit includes:

- A welcome letter;
- Student books for early childhood, grades 1–3, 4–6, 7–8; high school and adult materials as digital deliverables;
- A booklet about church work titled *God’s Calling for Your Life: An Explanation of Church Work*;
- A set of five posters about church work; and
- A variety of digital support materials, including leader’s guides.

Before the curriculum is released Synodwide, **this curriculum is being offered to our LCMS schools at no cost**, made possible by the generosity of LCEF and our six Concordia universities. There is no cost to order. Visit [cph.org/set-apart-to-serve](http://cph.org/set-apart-to-serve) to place your age-specific order during this pre-launch period.

