

PenPALS

NEWSLETTER

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May 2024

A Word from the Director

“As we all take this journey under the Lord’s grace and mercy, we know that our Lord was willing to take his unique and special journey - becoming flesh and dwelling among us.”

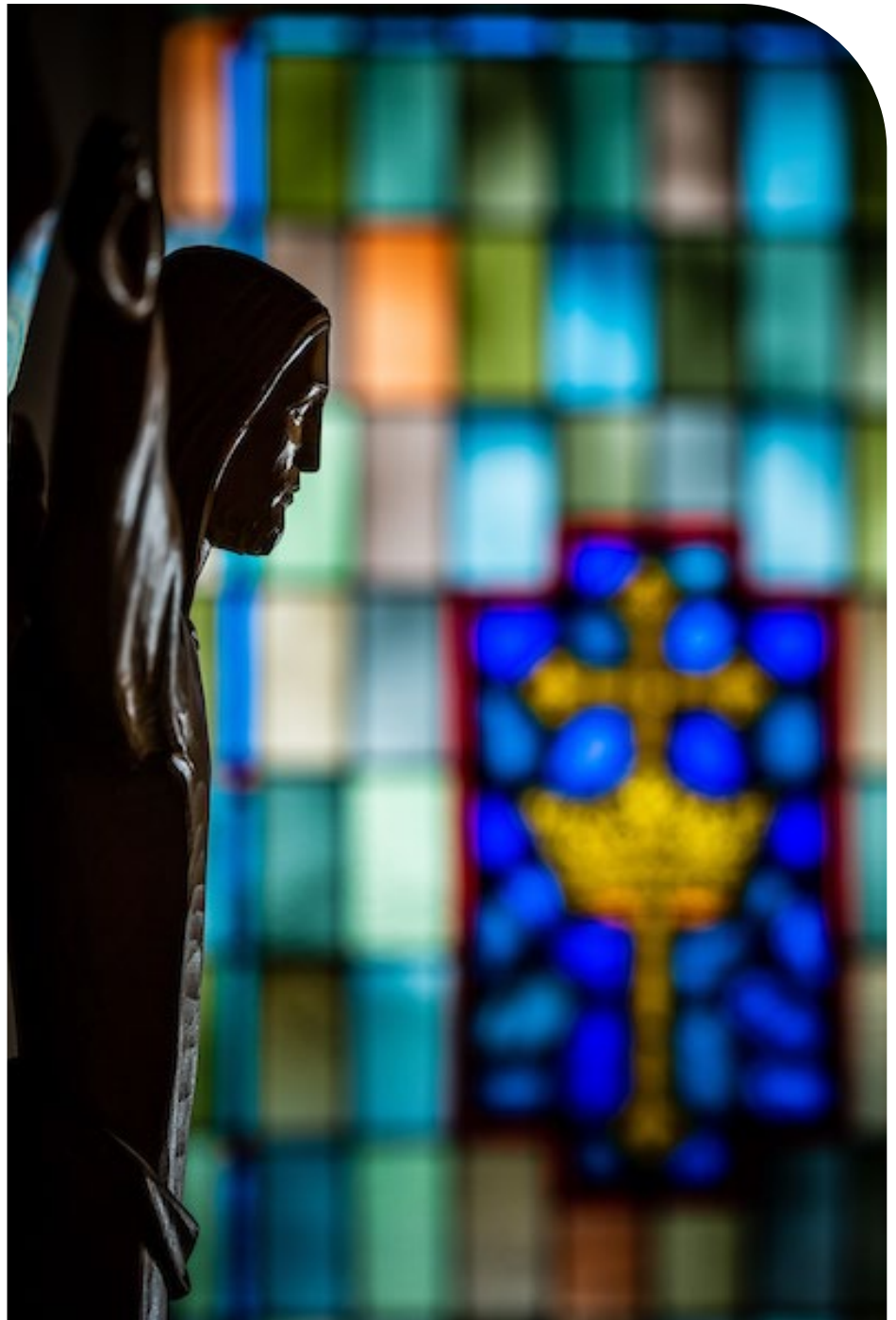
-Rev. Jonathan Manor

News from the PALS Field

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“Mutually Encouraged in Christ” Facilitator’s Conference 2024

On June 25th and 26th, 32 of our PALS facilitators will gather in St. Louis under our conference theme “Mutually Encouraged in Christ”.

Please keep these facilitators in your prayers for safe travels and a blessed time of learning, sharing, and being mutually encouraged in Christ as they begin or continue to support and encourage new pastors, their wives and families in their transition from seminary to parish life.

NEXT STEPS ON THE JOURNEY!



FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU; BE NOT DISMAYED, FOR I AM YOUR GOD; I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU, I WILL HELP YOU, I WILL UPHOLD YOU WITH MY RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND. *Isaiah 41:10*

As call days and placement services and graduations have all taken place for our church work candidates, the next steps in the journey for them and their families will be filled with challenges and celebrations as they transition from college and seminary to church or school or wherever the Lord is leading them to serve. What a privilege and joy it is for our congregations, our districts, and our synod (especially here in the PALS office!) to be on that journey with them, walking with them through the challenges and celebrations that are coming their way.

As we all take this journey under the Lord's grace and mercy, we know that our Lord was willing to take his unique and special journey - becoming flesh and dwelling among us. He knows the challenges and celebrations that are part of our lives every day. And He was willing to go through the extreme challenges of betrayal and denial, mockings and beatings, forsakenness and death to pay the penalty for our sin. But he rose to life again, conquering sin and Satan and death, and bringing about an incredible Easter celebration that we continue to celebrate in our daily lives and in our churches as we gather to receive His gifts each Lord's Day.

As we continue to live our lives as baptized children of God, we have challenges before us, but we also have the joy of Jesus on this journey. Through it all, we await the greatest and grandest

of celebrations yet to come when the Lord returns in glory. On that day, the challenges of this world will be gone forever, and the celebration of the marriage feast of the Lamb will continue without end. God's continued blessings be to you and our church work graduates as we together take the next steps on this journey.

"Lord God, You have called Your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go but only that Your hand is leading us and Your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen." (LSB prayer 193)

Yours in our crucified and risen, Lord and Savior Jesus,

Jonathan

Rev. Jonathan Manor

Director of PALS and Continuing Education



Set Apart to Serve

SAS and CPH have teamed together to produce a marvelous church worker formation and recruitment curriculum, written age-specific for early childhood through adult. This curriculum focuses on Christ and His Church, the eight LCMS church work vocations, how we care for our church workers, and how we develop a culture of church work formation and recruitment in our congregations and schools. The free curriculum is funded by LCEF, the Concordia universities, and CPH, offered first to our LCMS schools, and soon to all our congregations. See <https://www.cph.org/set-apart-to-serve> .

WHAT ARE PALS PARTICIPANTS SAYING?



"The entire program has helped us through the early years of ministry."

"PALS is a great place for brother pastors and their wives to worship together and share joys and burdens."

"It is a blessing to be refreshed among peers."

"PALS is a wonderful program-a lifesaver for new pastors' wives!"

"I don't know how anyone could go through their first three years of ministry without PALS. It was a huge blessing to our family."

"PALS gave me space to voice my struggles and courage to remain steadfast in my call."

PALS GATHERINGS

Iowa District West

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Chris and Heather Nitzel** hosted a PALS Retreat over Memorial Day Weekend at **Camp Okoboji** in **Milford, Iowa**.

The group was blessed to participate in a discussion of the book, Christians in a Woke World: A Call to Courage, Confession and Love, led by author **Rev. Paul Dare**.

Minnesota North District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Scott and Tammy Brown** hosted a Spring PALS Retreat at **Lutheran Island Camp** in **Henning, Minnesota**. The group enjoyed the camp setting as they used the chapel, dining hall, recreation hall, and outdoor spaces.

Pastors studied the PALS course, "Calling on Inactive Members," while the wives worked through a study on "Hospitality at Home and Church."

Texas District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor David and Ann Jung** hosted a PALS meeting at **Crown of Life Lutheran** in **Colleyville, Texas**. The group viewed and discussed Eric Metaxas's video, Letter to the American Church, as well as continuing to work through the book, Canoeing the Mountains.

Participants shared, *PALS is an excellent opportunity for leadership and growth...very helpful discussion and fellowship.*



Texas District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Stephen and Ursula Sohns** hosted a Spring event for their Texas PALS group. Participants enjoyed finished Boundaries by Henry Cloud, as well as a discussion of the Genesis account of Noah, and discussing the 3 P's (Passion, Problem and Possessions) as a way to work with leaders and staff on community engagement.

Wives enjoyed time in discussion with husbands, as well as time together with children in a park setting.

Wyoming District

PALS participants **Pastor Ellery and Meghan Steffensen** hosted PALS facilitators, **Pastor Kenneth and Vickie Mars** in their home, as pastor and Vickie made the trip from **Cody, Wyoming** to **Kimball, Nebraska** to meet with them in person.

The couples enjoyed a time for mutual support, study and encouragement. The pastors worked through part of The Pastor, by Wilhelm Loehe.

Northern Illinois District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Leonard and Lori Payton** hosted a Spring PALS retreat at **Holy Cross Lutheran Church** in **Cary, Illinois**. Pastors enjoyed an extensive discussion of John Kleinig's Wonderfully Made, as well as a unit from English District President Jamison Hardy's PALS course, *Introduction to Pastoral Leadership and Parish Administration*. PALS pastors, **Rev. Don Stein** and **Rev. Ben Hayter** shared in the responsibility for worship services and preaching. The congregation provided the lunch-thank you dear Holy Cross Ladies!

PALS participants shared, "Cultivating and encouraging..." *"PALS is always a highlight and comes at a good time. I thank and praise God for PALS and the dear friends we've made."*

Kansas District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Andrew and Miriam Wehling** hosted a PALS meeting this past April. The group enjoyed a discussion about the call process, as well as life in the pastor's family's home.

Participants truly appreciated time for questions, discussion, and personal sharing.



Ohio District



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Stephen and Heidi Lutz** hosted their final PALS event as facilitators at **St. John's Lutheran Church in Dublin, Ohio**.

"This is such a wonderful program. I think it is one of the best things that we do in our Synod. Thank you to everyone for your support. This program has been a real blessing to us. We appreciate the fact that we have been able to serve." -Rev. Stephen Lutz.

The Lutz's will be missed! We are incredibly thankful for their years of service.

Nebraska District

PALS facilitators, **Pastor Rick and Cheryl Kanoy** hosted an April PALS meeting at **Calvin Crest Camp, Conference & Retreat Center in Fremont, Nebraska**. The group worked through PALS course, *Pastoring the Dying and Funeral Preparation*, as well as Sabbath Rhythms and Reflections. PALS pastors, **Rev. Eric Larson** and **Rev. Ryan Maser** led the group in devotions.

The group also celebrated the final year with PALS participants leaving after their 3rd and final year in PALS. They were presented with gifts, including a fused glass cross made by Pastor Kanoy.

Participants shared, *"Ministry can feel lonely at times. PALS is a great way to form connections with fellow workers in God's kingdom that allow you to be refreshed and renewed."* *"Great retreat center. Food was wonderful and loved the extra fellowship time."* *"I loved my time in the PALS program. It's a great way to connect with other pastors' wives and support and encourage each other."*

Missouri District West



PALS facilitators, **Pastor Bernard and Katherine Ross** hosted a Spring Retreat for their PALS group May 22-23 at **Heit's Point Lutheran Camp in Lincoln, Missouri**. What a beautiful setting for study, casuistry, fellowship, and play!

Participants shared, *"I love PALS because I feel heard and understood by my fellow sister in Christ. They help provide practical suggestions to current situations."* *"It is good and encouraging to meet with fellow pastors."*