

PenPALS

NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

July 2020


 "Dear Pastor"

"...is it more like running a sprint or a marathon?" -Dr. Jim Baneck

 PALS Welcome

Ordination and Installation

A Word from the CMO

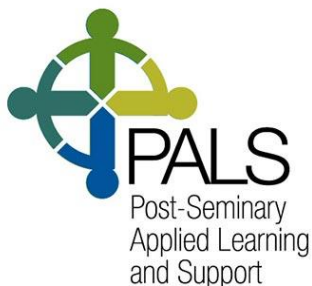
 News from the PALS Field

New IN and MNS PALS Facilitators

 Updates

DOXOLOGY Grants

Church Worker Recruitment



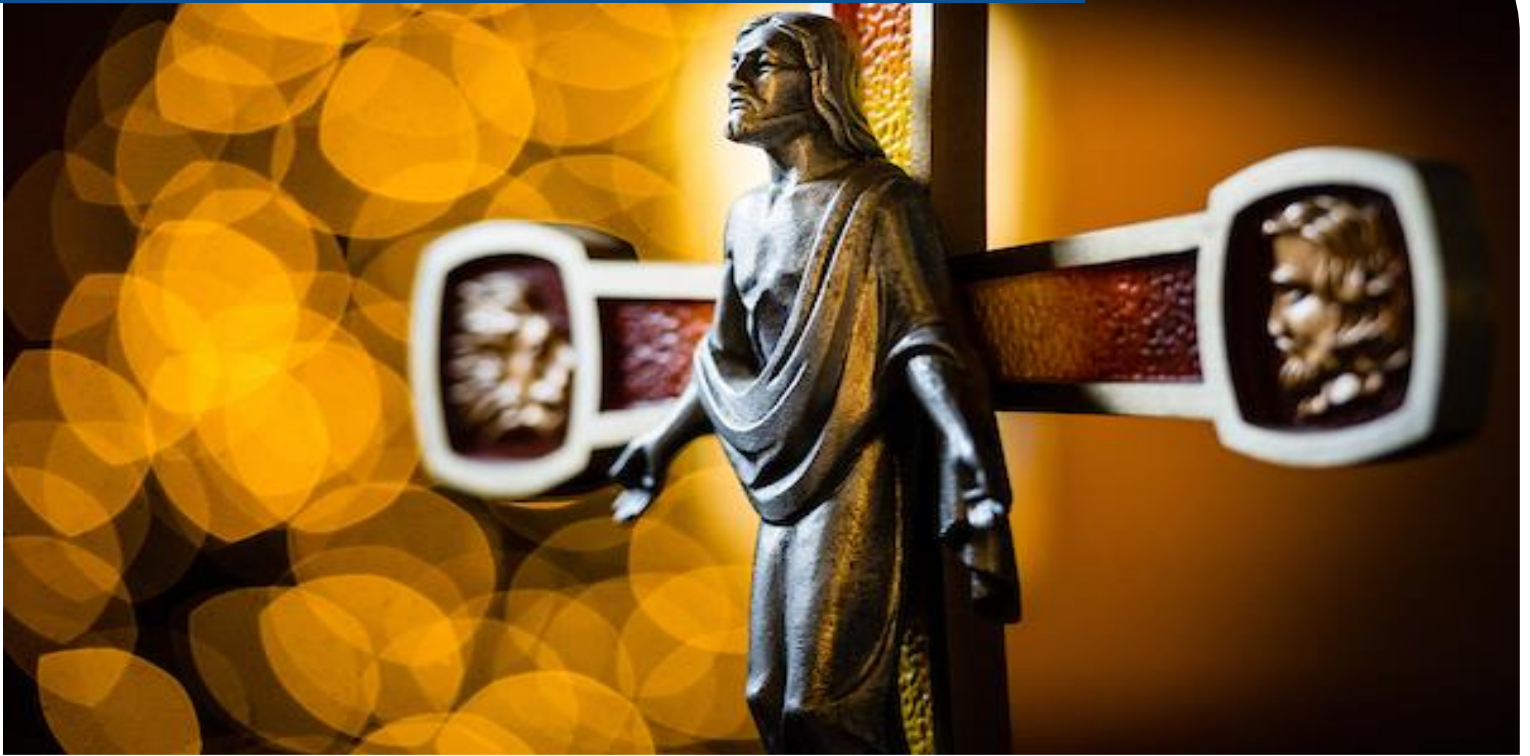
A WORD FROM THE PALS OFFICE

Greetings from the PALS office! I am incredibly blessed to serve in the offices of Pastoral Education and PALS as the administrative coordinator.

I am the “voice” on the other end of the emails and phone calls and am happy to serve you. I am a certified DCE and Lutheran school teacher who has been blessed with the opportunity to serve in this role. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or let me know if I can assist you in any way.

Robyn Armbrust
Robyn.armbrust@lcms.org; 314-996-1254

Running the Race



“LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US.”

HEBREWS 12:1

Dear Pastor,

Earlier this month, my wife and I hiked Beehive Basin with three of my children, their spouses, and one grandchild. The hike climbs 1,500 feet with switchbacks, breathtaking views, beautiful wild-flowers, and a babbling stream along the way. Not that I’ve ever been in peak hiking shape, but this hike took a much greater toll on my body than it did when we hiked it 10-15 years ago. I ended up calling Dr. On Demand, was diagnosed with hip bursitis, took my prescribed drugs, and hobbled around for the next week.

Endurance – “the demands of great physical and mental stamina when traveling a long distance.” How about pastoral ministry? St. Paul often compares his ministry to running a race. “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:7). “So, I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air” (1 Cor. 9:26).

Being a pastor. What would you say – is it more like running a sprint or a marathon? There are times you will be sprinting. However, if you’re looking at being a pastor for 10, 30, or even 40 years, it is indeed a marathon. But, regardless if you’re in sprinting or marathon mode, it still takes endurance. The writer of Hebrews is not just talking about *endurance*, but *hyper-endurance*! Being a pastor is running the race of divine ministry that takes great strength, courage, patience, and, yes, suffering. This endurance consists of training in the Word, drowning

the old man daily, stewardship of the body and mind, and facing the attacks of devil and your own sinful flesh. Yet, without Christ, all this training and endurance is self-serving and futile.

I have often found Hebrews 12:1 a great pillar of comfort and encouragement throughout my ministry. Don't *race* through these words (pardon the pun!) but consider these Christ-centered words for you and your life and ministry.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses (*we're not alone*), let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely (*drowning the old man and daily repentance*), and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us (*living out your holy calling as one crucified with Christ in whom Christ dwells*), looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith (*The Holy Spirit creating and sustaining faith in you through Word and Sacrament*), who for the joy that was set before him endured (*talk about endurance!*), despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God (*Christ is your redemption and salvation from sin and death. This is the heart and content of your holy ministry!*)

Dear friends in Christ, as we continue to live in a mad and sinful world, our hope and salvation is Jesus Christ. “Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39). This is promise is *for you* and to God's people to whom you minister.

In the name of Jesus,

Jim

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





ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

CONGRATULATIONS on your Ordination and Installation!



For all our new pastors ordained and installed this summer – everyone at the PALS office, the International Center, your district president, PALS facilitators, family and friends, and the whole Church celebrate with you and hold you dear in our thoughts and prayers.

We would love to post a picture of your ordination/installation in upcoming PenPALS.

A picture including your wife and/or attending pastors would be great! Please send a picture to robyn.armbrust@lcms.org. Thank you.



AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CMO

Recently, I was able to sit down with our LCMS Chief Mission Officer, Rev. Kevin Robson. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this gifted man, and the position he holds.

What does the LCMS Chief Mission Officer do and what are his responsibilities?

“The LCMS CMO position was created in the restructuring the Synod in 2010. I provide leadership and supervision to a dedicated team of LCMS employees working in the five key program units that carry out the domestic and international work of the LCMS under the mission emphases/priorities and resolutions adopted the by the Synod at its triennial national convention and in fulfillment of policies established by the Synod’s Boards for International and National Mission. These five units – the Office of International Mission, the Office of National Mission, the Office of Pastoral Education, LCMS Communications and LCMS Mission Advancement (donor engagement/fundraising) – constitute about 75% of the Synod’s operating budget in any given fiscal year. They represent the “core” of what we do as a confessional Lutheran church body to advance the Gospel here in the U.S. and around the world. At the Synod President’s direction, I also represent his office while serving on a number of LCMS-affiliated boards and in liaison to various church body agencies, auxiliaries and other entities around the globe.”



How does the work of the Synod CMO best serve a pastor in the first three years of his first call and his congregation? How does what the CMO does impact the local pastor and congregation?

“When the Synod is at her best, working effectively within the above-mentioned program units, our pastors can see and readily connect both themselves and their flocks to the incredibly rich and abundant mission and ministry initiatives and resources with which the LCMS has been blessed. Congregations who avail themselves of these treasures and opportunities are better-prepared to carry out their work (preaching and teaching the Gospel, administering the Sacraments, delivering God’s mercy to neighbor) in local context without having to “reinvent the wheel.” The unity of the LCMS is made manifest among our 6,000+ congregations and we realize the gracious fruit of our fellowship, collaboration and active partnership in the Gospel. What we’ve received from prior LCMS generations, we prayerfully desire to deliver to the world today, even as the world around us is changing at a dizzying pace.”

What are your priorities as CMO? How do you see these priorities affecting our church workers, congregations, districts, and global Lutheranism?

“My first priority as CMO is to remain faithful to God’s Word while, to the utmost of my ability, I strive to fulfill all of the duties spelled out in my divine call to serve the Synod – which is comprised of an endlessly fascinating, challenging, humbling and sometimes scary (!) array of theological, strategic, operational, financial, working relationship and leadership/management issues. I also want strongly to follow the excellent “lead” of the Synod President and our mission boards. My job – only one example of the manner in which God calls every one of us to live out our baptismal identities – simply put, is a “sacred care and stewardship” of fabulously gifted co-workers and the sacrificial contributions of countless LCMS constituents. My chief prayer is that Christ is clearly and boldly proclaimed everywhere, more churches are planted, those who suffer receive God’s mercy and more people are brought to saving faith and eternal life.”

Can you tell us a little bit about your background, who you are, where you’ve served, and what you most enjoy about being the LCMS CMO?

“I’m a second-career LCMS pastor, celebrating the 20th anniversary of my ordination in 2021. Prior to commencing MDiv studies at Fort Wayne, I worked for two large multi-national corporations in a wide variety of assignments (technology and management) coming out of an undergraduate background in chemistry and chemical engineering and then an MBA in finance and marketing. Before being called to serve as CMO in 2015, I was blessed to serve as sole pastor to several LCMS congregations in the Minnesota South and Minnesota North districts. I’ve been married to my beloved, supportive wife Peg for 35 years and we have one son, Karl, who is a gifted church musician.

As CMO, I’ve been blessed to be surrounded with the most talented, selfless, energetic and committed team I’ve ever been part of. We get to see the fruit of our labors together, every day. When one rejoices, all rejoice. . . and when one fails, invariably the others are there to lift us up. Our cornerstone is God’s powerful Word, around which we sinners gather on a daily basis in the International Center for forgiveness, life and salvation.”



NEWS FROM THE PALS FIELD

- **Indiana District PALS Facilitating couple**, Rev. Dr. Daniel and Annette Gard have joined our PALS facilitating family.

We are grateful for their willingness to share their vast experience in ministry with their PALS families!



- **Minnesota South District PALS Facilitating Pastor** Rev. Stefan Wismar will serve with PALS Wives Facilitator, Mrs. Melissa Jones.

What a blessing to have these faithful servants willing to commit time, energy and love in service to their PALS group.



- **The PALS year has started!** PALS groups are already meeting-some in person, some virtually-gathering together to support, encourage, and continue their education as pastors and new pastor's wives.

Watch this column for photos and gathering news as groups become more active.

“I thank my God
in all my
remembrance of
you...because of
your partnership
in the Gospel...”

Philippians 1:3,5



DOXOLOGY GRANTS AWARDED



Help us get the word out! PALS facilitators and district presidents, please let any recent PALS graduates, pastors who participated in PALS during their first three years of parish ministry, that there are still DOXOLOGY tuition grants available!

Tuition for the DOXOLOGY Classic Program (<https://www.doxology.us/>) is \$2,200 for all three events (10 days of training over a one-year period). The PALS grant will provide 50 PALS pastors with 50% of the tuition at \$1,100 per grant.

Grants are available to participating PALS pastors after the completion of the PALS program. Pastors will ideally be in the 4th or 5th year of their first or second call(s).

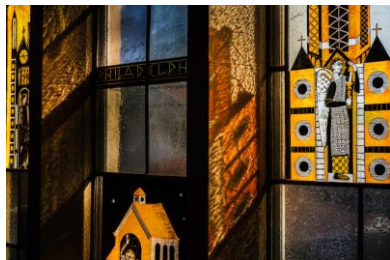
Several PALS graduates have already been awarded a grant! Please contact the PALS office for a grant application.



CHURCH WORKER RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE UPDATE

While the wording may be refined, we've identified two goals to this initiative: (1) increase engagement of youth and influencers in intentional church work formation activities, and (2) increase the number of youth answering the call to church work.

- To support these goals, all of us must: (1) build visibility, (2) change perceptions, (3) influence behaviors, (4) and intentionally engage.
- While these may be refined, our working strategies are: (1) establish church worker formation as a long-term Synod-wide change initiative, (2) establish a three-stage emerging church worker/leader program (Pre-Catechism-K-6th grade, Catechism-7th-8th grade, and Post-Catechism-9th-12th grade); (3) equip critical influencers to identify and encourage youth leaders; (4) develop continuous insight loop to develop new insights and tactics; and (5) position church workers as admirable champions of humility and sacrifice.
- Our next step, in working Standing Partnership (see standingpartnership.com) is to set into motion "Key Actions" for each strategy, which includes communicating this initiative with everyone in the Synod.
- In the meantime – identify individuals in your circle of influence (church, school, youth group, etc.) whom you see having the potential in being a church worker. Ask them if they've considered being a church worker, tell them you see them having the qualities for working in the church, pray for them, encourage them, and journey with them in their ongoing contemplation of a church worker vocation.



LCMS PHOTO GALLERY

Photos in this newsletter are care of Erik M. Lunsford/The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Our Synod photographer provides a gallery of downloadable photos for your use. We encourage you to take a look at this rich resource located at lcms.org.



INCENTIVE

To the first year new PALS pastor who notifies Robyn.armbrust@lcms.org, informing her you've read this entire newsletter, we will send a \$25 CPH gift card.