

RECOGNIZED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Serving in the Name of Christ

Volume 4, Issue 2 • May 2019



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Recognized Service Organizations

To extend its mission outreach, education and social ministry, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod works with independent Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) that agree to ensure their programs are in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the LCMS.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 20–23, 2019

LWML 38th Biennial Convention —
“In Praise to the LORD!” — Mobile, Ala.
lwml.org/2019-convention

June 19, 2019

LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission
Webinar — “Understanding Social
Issues in the Urban Setting”
calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-understanding-social-issues-in-the-urban-setting

July 11–15, 2019

LCMS Youth Gathering — “Real.
Present. God.” — Minneapolis
calendar.lcms.org/event/2019-lcms-youth-gathering

July 17, 2019

LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission
Webinar — “Mental Health and Its
Impact on the City”
calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-mental-health-and-its-impact-on-the-city

**MORE EVENTS
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The Comfort of the Cross — Perry Lutheran Homes



Many people cherish “The Old Rugged Cross,” the 1921 hymn that sings of the cross of Jesus. But a group of faithful elders in Iowa is working to put a different kind of cross in the hands of suffering people around the world. Instead of old, rugged crosses, these are new crosses handmade from clay, sometimes asymmetrical and never quite smooth, but always perfectly fitted to a hand.

The cross on which Jesus hung may not have been old, though it was likely rugged. What is certain, though, is that for Christians the cross is a symbol of redemption and a silent witness of Jesus’ presence — a comfort.

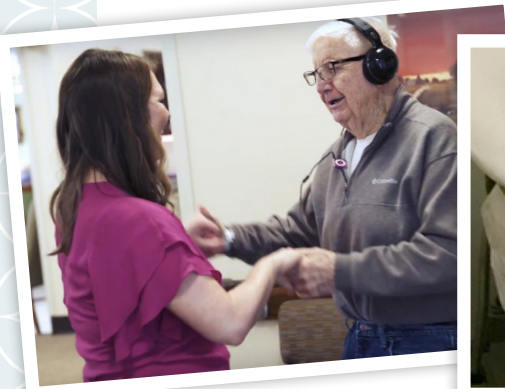
Each year, Perry Lutheran Homes’ residents make crosses to comfort. They believe that life has a purpose even in old age. While our culture often devalues life, Perry Lutheran Homes, with its mission of “Serving Christ by Serving Others,” values the life of each of its staff, residents, children, families and volunteers, encouraging them in the meaningful work of helping others. One way is by making and sending crosses.

Perry Lutheran Homes crosses have found their way to Texas as part of Hurricane Harvey relief. They have been distributed at church worker conferences, in churches and in schools, and are often ordered by congregations for use in their ministry. One LCMS teacher comes each year to have crosses made for all the children in her class. Wherever they are sent, they proclaim the Lord Jesus until He comes.

IN JANUARY, THEY FOUND A NEW DESTINATION.

Members of the senior leadership team at Perry Lutheran Homes and their partners at Lutheran Family Service journeyed south, 2,000 miles south, to the country of Haiti. This followed a year of preparation and partnership with another LCMS Recognized Service Organization, Ministry in Mission. The trip was the first part of a joint enterprise to open the newest, and one of the few, elderly care homes in Haiti. Along with 24 large suitcases of medical supplies, clothing, sandals and medicines

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was a carton of hand-made crosses to be given to the elders coming into the Jacmel Lutheran Home's care.

Many elderly care facilities do an excellent job of keeping their residents safe and physically and mentally active. Many work just as hard to support their residents' faith. But Perry Lutheran Homes goes further in keeping their residents engaged with the world, through everything from prayer to crafts to community events.

Residents have created over 50,000 bandages for use in medical missions around the world. They cut out denim soles for shoes needed by children in Africa. They create dog treats with Christian messages attached to give as a mission outreach to people with pets. They pray for people in need and worship every Sunday morning with an on-site congregation that includes staff, residents, family and community members, including a regular group from Christ Lutheran Church in Bouton, Iowa. They even Skype with their counterparts in Haiti, sharing a word or two in Haitian Creole, and, more than that, sharing their smiles and their faith in Christ.

Established with the help of the LCMS Iowa districts in 1956, Perry Lutheran Homes has gone on to be a refuge of blessing for those who need care, 70 percent of whom are on state assistance. It is a home carefully connected with each resident and fully engaged with the church.

In caring for residents with dementia and training other caregivers, Perry Lutheran Homes' staff focuses on Jesus and His hope. Staff members work to help pastors minister to members with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, many of whom are often overlooked in spiritual care. Their chaplain corps of three pastors serves faithfully in making sure that God's message of hope and life in Jesus is never far away.

This community of God's elder children shares its residence with some of His youngest. The Acorns & Oaks Intergenerational Christian Daycare mission of

Christ Lutheran also resides inside the home, making it a natural community of people from six weeks old to 106 years young. Many of the residents' mission projects are done with the help of these little ones, a joy to both!

Earlier I mentioned that the hand-held crosses made by the residents were anything but smooth. Many clay creations when fired have a smooth glaze, but not these — and by design. As a last step in the production, each cross is clutched by its maker, leaving an indelible hand print complete with palm swirls and finger prints. The message is clear: God created each one of us and His salvation through the cross of Jesus is for every person. There is no greater comfort!

"But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (GAL. 6:14).

May God continue to bless Perry Lutheran Homes and their work of serving their residents, and the church as a whole, with the cross of Christ at the center of all they do.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE about Perry Lutheran Homes and their ministry to all of God's people, or if you would like to help support their mission, please reach out to them through their Director of Ministry Development, Wanda Pritzel, at wpitzel@perrylutheranhomes.org. Visit their website (perrylutheranhomes.org) and like their Facebook page (Perry Lutheran Home/Spring Valley Community).

FREE TO BE FAITHFUL:

Idols Demand Sacrifice: Always Have, Always Will



Recently, archaeologists in Peru made a startling find. At a sacred site overlooking the Pacific Ocean, they discovered the remains of more than 140 children along with 200 young llamas that had been ritually sacrificed about 550 years ago. Literally in the shadow of the ancient capital of the Chimú Empire, we are once again given a stark reminder that idols, the false gods of our own invention, almost always require sacrifice from those who worship them. So it was in the pre-Columbian world of the Aztecs, the Mayas and the Incas, and so it is in our day as well.

Of course, today our idols are not typically made of wood or stone. Instead, our most prominent idol is the one that greets us every morning in the mirror. It is the self — the free, autonomous self — that is most often the object of our worship. And yes, it is to this god that sacrifices, often human sacrifices, are offered. Indeed, in the 46 years since *Roe vs. Wade*, we have sacrificed our unborn children by the tens of millions in homage to this god of self. In what has become regarded as a near sacrament in the eyes of many, we find untold numbers of men and women offering the fruit of their bodies, their own children, to assuage the demands of the imperial, unencumbered self.

As shocking as this form of sacrifice may be, we find that in recent years yet another form of human sacrifice has been instituted in order to placate the god of self. It goes by the name euthanasia, aka physician-assisted suicide. Beginning in Oregon and now spreading across the United States, most recently in New Jersey, there has been a concerted effort not only to legalize the taking of one innocent human life by another, but also to normalize such taking, all in the name of autonomy. Echoing the paganism of the pre-

Christian world, there has been a rising tide of people dedicated to claiming complete control over every facet of their lives including their own death. And all of this with utter disregard for God's claim on their lives and for the welfare of the lives of others.

These demands for autonomy have become increasingly militant. This past year alone has seen euthanasia bills introduced in no less than 16 states, along with bills seeking to expand the scope of the practice in states where it is already legal. In New Mexico, for example, an assisted suicide bill would have made fatal drugs accessible not only to its own residents, but to visitors from any state. A statute proposed in Delaware would redefine palliative (comfort) care to include physician-assisted suicide. In Minnesota, legislation was introduced which, among other troubling elements, would have required all medical providers, as a part of standard medical care, to discuss assisted suicide any time they informed a patient of a potentially terminal illness, even when such a suggestion would violate the conscience of the provider.

Thank God, nearly all of these legislative efforts have been rebuffed this year. Through the heroic efforts of a wide variety of coalitions which include both secular and religious entities, including the LCMS, states have almost uniformly rejected these severely misguided proposals. Still, it is clear that the culture of death has taken on a much more militant posture and is making every effort to establish itself as the default position in our society. Sadly, whether through abortion on demand or wide-spread acceptance of euthanasia, there are those who will continue consistently and persistently to advocate for death as the answer to life's problems.

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It is in response to these and other forms of idol worship that the LCMS has begun to more intentionally and robustly engage our culture both nationally, through the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty, and on the state level, through various district-sponsored public policy initiatives and activities. Compelled as we are to serve the Gospel and to defend our neighbor, we have helped to form, and are active participants in, various state-based coalitions dedicated to halting the spread of these harmful practices. Informed by our understanding of the two kingdoms, we have sought to keep our pastors

and their congregations well informed about these issues, so that they can more confidently engage in the policy conversations going on at the state and local levels, always advocating for a culture which fully respects the sacred nature of the life God has given us. We pray all these efforts will be pleasing to God and, by His will, meet with success.

Rev. Hinz serves as the public policy advocate for both the LCMS Minnesota North and South districts and can be contacted at fred.hinz@mnsdistrict.org.

Reflect His Light, Tell His Story – Stained Glass Windows Installed at Lutheran Child and Family Services



On April 13, 2019, Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS), Indianapolis, Ind., celebrated the installation and dedication of new stained-glass windows in its Lutherwood chapel at a special afternoon service. The windows were designed, fabricated and installed by the Center for Liturgical Art, a program of Concordia University, Nebraska.

The Bible stories depicted in the windows are foundational and impactful in the lives of LCFS residents. The six west windows depict Old Testament stories looking towards Christ: the creation of the world, the fall into sin, Noah's ark, Joseph, the plagues of Egypt, Moses, Rahab and Jericho, Ruth, David, Daniel and Jonah. The six north windows depict the Christmas story, the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus calming the storm, Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Resurrected Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

LCFS has provided programs of compassionate care and counsel to those in need in the Indianapolis area since 1883. Its current programs include Lutherwood, a licensed psychiatric treatment facility specializing in the care and treatment of children ages 6–18 with behavioral or emotional impairments, a residential treatment program for girls who have been victims of human trafficking, and an independent living group home for young men ages 14–21 who are transitioning

out of the foster care system. LCFS also provides Christ-centered spiritual care to residents and staff members through its Spiritual Engagement Education and Development (SEED) program, through chapel services, one on one conversations, and providing Bibles and visits from local church members to residents.

In a booklet created to commemorate the dedication of its new stained-glass windows, LCFS comments, “In our work with at-risk youth and their families, we tell the history of God’s love found in the Bible. God’s story stands the test of time and informs our own. The one who is lost becomes the one who is found. In the art of our stained-glass windows, we share God’s story of redemption, hope, love and salvation found in Christ. You are invited to visit and view what our children observe and see your own story within God’s story.”



For more information about Lutheran Child and Family Services, please visit lutheranfamily.org.

LUTHERAN ANNUAL FORMS ARE COMING!



Be on the lookout for the 2020 Lutheran Annual Form this summer! This form is an opportunity for you to review your organization's contact and service information and let us know if any changes need to be made. Please return the form even if you have no corrections or additions to make (write "no corrections" on the form). Thank you for helping us to ensure the most accurate information possible is printed in the 2020 edition of LCMS' *The Lutheran Annual*.



LUTHERANS ENGAGE THE WORLD:

Engaging the Church in the work of witness and mercy across the globe in our life together. Read more at engage.lcms.org.

PS. 71:17-18

O GOD, from my youth you have taught me,
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
So even to old age and gray hairs,
O God, do not forsake me,
until I proclaim your might to another generation,
your power to all those to come."



WANT MORE RSO NEWS OR LOOKING FOR AN RSO?

Check out our searchable directory and find more RSO news at lcms.org/rso.

July 20–25, 2019

LCMS National Convention — "Joy:fully Lutheran" — Tampa, Fla.
calendar.lcms.org/event/2019-lcms-national-convention

August 21, 2019

LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission Webinar — "Deploying the Young Adult Corps in Urban Mission"
calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-deploying-the-young-adult-corps-in-urban-mission/

August 22, 2019

LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission Webinar — "The No-Casserole Illness and How the Church Can Respond"
calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-the-no-casserole-illness-and-how-the-church-can-respond

September 18, 2019

LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission Webinar — "Understanding Recognized Service Organizations"
calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-understanding-recognized-service-organizations

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For more information about the LCMS RSO ministry, visit lcms.org/rso.

If you want to subscribe to or no longer wish to receive this newsletter, contact Deaconess Cara Patton at 314-996-1635 or cara.patton@lcms.org.

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