



A newsletter of Specialized Pastoral Ministry

August 2018



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“The Shame of It All”

Professionally, did you ever do something you considered dumb — or, worse yet, that others considered dumb? Too often, I feel like I specialize in it.



I just wrote something, and three minutes after I sent it I thought, “Why did you do that? It didn’t make sense.” I didn’t intend to write something dumb, of course. It’s just that if I am not careful to think through and double-check what I am emailing, I can write something I later regret or have to apologize for. Or it may be that I just miss something. Recently, I brought a mistake of Barb’s to her attention that was actually my mistake. She, of course, was gracious. Most people are.

I also need to confess that I get irritated with myself when I forget something that needs to be remembered or when I am not responsive and caring or, worst of all — at least lately — when I let unkind words come out of my mouth!

Why am I confessing all of this to you? Well, recently, Deaconess Heidi Goehmann [(Office of National Mission (ONM) Worker Wellness Advocate)] and I have been emailing back and forth about the impact shame has on the lives of ministers. It started back in mid-June when researcher Ryan Curnutt and I presented to President Harrison the findings of a recent Synodwide survey about worker wellness.

Shame shows up in the survey results as one of the obstacles that keeps people from seeking help for difficulties, challenges or some sin that has a grip on them. President Harrison noted, “We need to address the shame that stops our people from taking action to get the help needed to change behavior that is harmful to themselves, others and the church.” So Heidi and I started writing back and forth about shame.

Shame is a powerful and debilitating feeling. My Outlook dictionary defines shame as “a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior.” Yep! That’s it. And yet shame is far more than a feeling; it is a crippling assumption about oneself.

If I let myself, I can take a nosedive into anxiety and depression — not just because I made a mistake or said something unkind but because the flesh that fights against the Christ-generated spirit within me declares loudly, “Stupid! How can you keep doing such dumb things? What’s wrong with you?” And then a few minutes later, “God!” I cry out. “I hate feeling this way about myself!” I hate that my “old self” that has been crucified refuses to die.

But I love more that I am alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:1–14), and I love that “[t]here is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

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SPM Educational Event

The theme for 2018 is “SPM in the Midst of Crisis.” Those in SPM face multiple crises: individual, community, interpersonal and personal. Presenters — the Rev. Dr. Richard Armstrong, LMFT, and Stacey Tasler Crosson, DCE, LMFT — will address this range of challenges through “Ministry in Times of Crisis,” “Armor Up Your JOY” and “Ministry in Times of Community Crisis.”

In addition, the Rev. Kevin Robson, LCMS Chief Mission Officer, will lead us in a Bible study of Luke 15:11–32 in “The Gospel in the Midst of Crisis.”

There will be plenty of continuing education opportunity with workshops offered as well. And there is much more: networking and peer support,

worship with communion and a service of healing, conversing with friends, walking through the gardens at the King’s House and nutritious meals (and not-so-nutritious snacks).

Also, for the first time we will be presenting the Henry F. Wind Award for Outstanding Leadership in SPM. Those of us engaged in SPM on the front lines and back streets of society are there because someone thinks we are needed and has invested valuable resources for you and me to do what we are doing in the name of the Lord. Those leaders behind the scenes empowering those in SPM to serve faithfully need to be recognized and thanked. That’s what this new award is about!



Come and join in on the learning, celebrating, praying, relaxing and so much more.

For more information or to register, visit lcms.org/spm.

Save the Date! Oct. 2–4, 2018

King’s House Retreat and Renewal Center
700 N 66th Street, Belleville, IL 62223
kingsretreatcenter.org

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So, interestingly, about the time I was feeling really bad about myself, the Rev. Robert Zagore — executive director for the ONM, my boss — called me into his office to give to me my annual evaluation. I received a very high, affirming score along with generous comments.

Go figure! How can that be? How can those two realities live next door to each other? Inadequate Joel who screws up — and highly valued Joel?

You know! And I know you empathize. Your struggle may have a slightly different identity, but you are very familiar with shame. You know it can make you say horrible things to yourself, and it can lead you to doing something foolish — like quit or let yourself get stuck in depression or make some regrettable choice.

God help us! God does help us. And God provides help for us. Ask for it. Expect to receive it. Don’t let shame have its way with you. Our Lord’s grace is sufficient to lead us to the healing needed. Be assured, “... whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything” (1 John 3:20).

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Joel Hempel

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Worker Wellness Advocacy

BY DEACONESS HEIDI GOEHMANN

Technology is surely a bane and a blessing. Most of us use it every day. It keeps us productive ... most of the time. Maybe you use it for email, getting cash out of the bank, counting steps and getting that latest news. How much information do you take in each day utilizing technology? Most of us would resolutely answer, “too much!” Sitting at our computer screen can be hard on the eyes. The doomsday approach to media in the last decade begins to feel overwhelming and no one wants to have that argument on Facebook when they were simply trying to find pictures of their niece’s and nephew’s softball games. It’s good to admit when technology can be a bit much, to set some boundaries and not open every article that comes your way. We all need a filter ... for wellness. It is empowering to know you can walk away, close some tabs and disagree with the news reporter.

I do think technology gets a bad rap, however. We easily lay blame on technological advances for the disconnection so prevalent in the human race. As much as technology can be overwhelming, it can also be connecting. This is one reason so much of my work in worker wellness is driven by technology. When you put God’s Word and God’s heart into anything, connection becomes primary. Our God is a relational God. Our Savior is a relational Savior. Everything God does connects His creation to Him and each of us to one another in some way.

As part of my work as a worker wellness advocate, I create resources that advocate and inform about mental, emotional and relational health dynamics in ministry and in congregational life, at ilovemyshepherd.com. One of the chief concerns reported by those in ministry is isolation. One of the chief healers in mental health is connection. One of the primary purposes of the congregation is life together in Christ. Technology — whether in the form of blog articles to share, podcasts, videos or whatever we dream up — has the power to connect us when isolation and disconnection creep in. Today, when you’ve had just about enough of that computer screen, a good wellness challenge might be this: Ask yourself, “In what ways can I intentionally use technology to connect in meaningful relationship?” Perhaps that can help transform the screen in front of you into more blessing than bane.

Wellbeing

Who needs it? All of us, you think?

Wellbeing or flourishing in the Gospel is “already and not yet” for those of us called by God’s grace to follow Jesus!

A Synodwide survey of ordained and commissioned ministers and spouses returned 917 responses identifying worker and family wellness needs. The survey was constructed around the familiar concept of the “Wellness Wheel” that has been used by several Synod entities caring for workers. This provided the framework to address the wellness of church workers in seven different but closely related areas of wellness:

- relational
- physical
- vocational
- spiritual
- emotional
- financial
- intellectual

The survey results and analysis will be presented to the Council of Presidents in September, after which breakout discussion groups will be conducted with the COP. The findings of the survey, along with additional information gathered from 25 follow-up focus groups with ministers and spouses planned for early October, will be revealed to the church body, probably in January 2019.

SPM Scholarships

BY DEACONESS GAYLE TRUESDELL

Three grants were given to two ministers — one deaconess and one pastor — for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) units.

All of us in Specialized Pastoral Ministry recognize the value of CPE in chaplaincy and pastoral counseling. We also recognize the need to train additional chaplains as some of us grow older.

What you may not know is that there are scholarships available for those enrolled in or wanting to enroll in a CPE program. These funds come through designated donations for CPE scholarships (almost \$500 was contributed at our spring educational event) and through the interest from the CPE Endowment Fund. For many chaplains-in-training, the financial assistance that is offered makes it possible to complete a unit of CPE. In some cases — for those who qualify — others are given grants to do a yearlong CPE residency.

However, funds are limited, and the availability of scholarship dollars depend on how many people apply for a grant.

Please consider investing in our Synod’s Specialized Pastoral Ministry by making a contribution to the SPM Endowment Fund or making a designated donation to the SPM Scholarship Fund. Your gift not only helps to train those who follow after us but it also assures that there will be specialized pastoral ministers available to those who need them.

Time-Limited Endorsements

The reader may or may not know that time-limited endorsements are granted on special occasions to endorsement applicants who are not yet ecclesiastically endorsed but who need endorsement by their church body to serve in a chaplaincy position for which the institution requires endorsement (e.g., a VA facility, Federal Bureau of Prisons, etc.)

If an applicant does not have the necessary training (e.g., four units of CPE for institutional chaplaincy) or has not finished writing the required application materials, the person may be granted a time-limited, one-year endorsement. To qualify for the time-limited endorsement, the applicant must sign an official agreement between the individual and LCMS SPM Religious Endorser. During the year of time-limited endorsement, the applicant must comply with the agreement or risk losing the endorsement.

PEOPLE NEWS

Dearly Departed

- **Deaconess Rosemary (Ro) A. William**
Dec. 2, 1940–May 15, 2018



Acknowledgements, Achievements and Awards

Congratulations are extended to the following:

- **The Rev. Tim Wiser**, Prison Chaplain — ecclesiastically endorsed May 7, 2018
- **The Rev. Jerome McNamara** — became a Board Certified Chaplain, Association of Professional Chaplains

- **The Rev. Jeff Scheer** — 2018 ACPE Emerging Leader Award
The Emerging Leader Award is presented annually to ACPE Certified Educators who have been supervising for 10 years or less and have made outstanding contributions to the ACPE community through their initiative, innovation or leadership at the local, regional or national levels.
- **The Rev. Robert Spilman** — ACPE Educator Emeritus
- **The Rev. Paul Steinke** — ACPE Educator Emeritus
The honor of Educator Emeritus is granted to ACPE educators who have made faithful and enduring contributions to students and to the CPE movement over a period of no less than 10 years.



A New Face in Prison and Jail Ministry

Meet Don Sundene, the new LCMS contract coordinator for Prison and Jail Ministry. As the executive director of Lutheran Ministry Services Northwest (a Seattle-based RSO) since 2014, Sundene oversees chaplaincy ministries in hospitals, care centers and jails.

Don's involvement with the ministry of LMS began in 1985. Before he

became executive director, Don served as a volunteer as well as member of the Board of Directors. He also serves as the LCMS Northwest District Prison and Jail Ministry Coordinator.

Some of Don's responsibilities as the LCMS Contract Coordinator for Prison and Jail Ministry include the following:

- Responding to appropriate inquiries and requests for resources from families and inmates, referring them to District Prison Ministry Coordinators (DPMC) and local ministries where possible;
- Working toward establishing a functioning DPMC in each district;
- Providing encouragement, consultation and regular contact with DPMCs;
- Promoting DPMC contact with circuit visitors and parish pastors to encourage and develop prison ministry opportunities; and
- Developing and collecting presentations, video and/or audio recordings and training materials for DPMCs to be used for equipping and empowering local ministers and congregations for startup prison ministries' recruiting, informing, fund raising, etc.

Don's job is bigger than one part-time person can take on. Like Pastor Jim Rivett, who served as coordinator until June of this year, Don will be relying on faithful pastors and lay people around the Synod who have a similar vocational calling to serve those who are incarcerated.

The SPM is thankful to Don for stepping up to take on this opportunity to help us live out Matthew 25.

We also wish to extend a special thank-you to the Rev. Rivett for his years of service as Synodical coordinator and as one who continues to serve in the Southern Illinois District.

DISASTER RESPONSE CHAPLAINS:

Their Bags are Packed!

BY THE REV. BILL ENGFHR

When a human-caused or natural disaster strikes a community, our congregations and pastors are quick to respond. LCMS Disaster Response and its network of District Disaster Response Coordinators are there to help with spiritual and physical support for the affected congregation and community. However, the added stress on pastors and other congregation leaders can be significant.

LCMS Disaster Response chaplains are available to provide emotional and spiritual support to the local pastor to keep him healthy as he engages with his congregation and community in disaster response and relief.

Qualified

LCMS Disaster Response Chaplains are endorsed Emergency Services Chaplains or other Specialized Pastoral Ministers who have years of experience and

advanced training in dealing with the effects of stress in disaster situations. They are ready to respond on a moment's notice to the scene of a disaster — often able to arrive in 24–48 hours after being

requested. They are the first responders when it comes to stress management.

Ready to serve YOU

Disaster Response Chaplains can be requested through district presidents, the Office of Specialized Pastoral Ministry or the Chaplain Bill Engfhr, Interim Coordinator for Disaster Response Chaplains, at william@engfhr.com or 618-973-4309. Our bags are packed, and we are ready to serve.



Resources Shared

Resolution of Recognition

How about this? Below is an LCMS South Wisconsin District resolution sent in by the Rev. John Vierkant. It gives recognition to chaplains and praise to God for the ministry of specialized pastoral ministers and our military colleagues who serve in the SWD. Jonathan added, "Only four 'no' votes!"

Perhaps you could talk with the "powers that be" about something similar in your district.

Resolution 4-02

To Recognize Chaplains who Serve and Live in the South Wisconsin District

- WHEREAS The Lord of the Church continues to call servants into ministry with those who need distinct care; and
- WHEREAS in time of armed conflict or peace, our military chaplains continue to serve those in the armed forces at risk and sacrifice to themselves; and
- WHEREAS chaplains (many of whom are volunteers) serve in hospitals, prisons, hospice centers, retirement communities, special needs care facilities, campuses and emergency services, bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those in need of compassion, peace and forgiveness; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED that the South Wisconsin District recognize with thanksgiving and praise to God the service of all chaplains; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the convention direct the District staff to identify, encourage and provide ongoing education and training for the chaplains who serve and live in the South Wisconsin District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



Keogh and Gullickson join others in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Donation honors veterans

To mark Flag Day 2018, Navy Reserve veteran Mel Gullickson recently presented the Tomah VA Medical Center with a handcrafted wooden American flag for the facility's lobby entrance.

Tomah VAMC Chaplain Charles Keogh, a U.S. Army veteran, spoke at the event honoring the donation.

"The stylized flag at the entryway of the medical center serves as a reminder to all who enter of the duty, honor, country and service of veterans and their families, and we hereby dedicate it accordingly," Keogh said during the ceremony.

A Living Tribute TO A Living Saint

Although the following letter was written to the SPM Office with generous words of encouragement, we asked permission to include it in the *A Pastoral Touch* newsletter. The following is intended as a living tribute to a living saint, Chaplain Dr. Walter Volz.

Although my primary ministry has been in the parish, I did serve as a Navy Chaplain during Vietnam and remained in the Reserves for 30 years of total service. During this time, I participated in over 200 military funerals over a five-year period, mostly of young Marines who died in Vietnam. In 1959, I completed a six-month program of CPE with Dr. William Peters at the Cuyahoga County Hospital (now Cleveland Metro), followed by a summer school session at Lutheran Hospital in St. Louis with a Lutheran Psychiatrist under the tutelage of Chaplain Ed. Manke. In 1963, I

completed a six-month course in clinical pastoral care at the South Carolina State Hospital under the guidance of Chaplain J. Obert Kempson, an early leader in the development of CPE programs in the South.

Although I have always been close to the local police and fire departments in a quasi-chaplain role, upon my retirement from the parish I assumed the permanent position of chaplain for our local fire department. I thought I would do this for a year or two but am now in



my 18th year. Although I don't ride the trucks anymore, I do provide counsel, guidance and support to the firefighters and their families. At each monthly association meeting, I begin with the "firefighter's prayer" and provide a brief thought for the day. I also represent the fire department at some civic functions and schools.

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ONM Worker Wellness

Don Sundene
LCMS Prison Ministry

Rev. William Engfehr
LCMS Emergency Service Chaplaincy
(NOTE: Regrettably, Rev. Engfehr has
resigned as our ESC contract coordina-
tor after many faithful years of service.
We are now seeking a new ESC contract
coordinator. Rev. Engfehr has graciously
agreed to serve as Disaster Response
Chaplain coordinator until we find a
replacement.)

Reprints

A Pastoral Touch may be reprinted
with acknowledgment given to The
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Although I am now 83 years old, I still preach almost every Sunday around the country on behalf of Food for the Poor, the largest ecumenical charity in the Western Hemisphere, serving ministries in 17 countries in the Caribbean and Central America. I also visit our in-country projects on a regular basis, especially our hospitals, schools and orphanages.

May the holy angels sustain you and our Chief Shepherd guide your efforts to provide ministry beyond the parish for those who are servants in our communities.

Caring Connections Online Journal

The theme for the current *Caring Connections* issue is “Embodying Holy Joy.”

As co-editor Diane Greve wrote in her editorial, “Joy is one of those ‘fruits of the spirit’ that is often named in the psalms and throughout our scriptures. We may know it when we experience it, yet we may not always be quite so sure how to describe it.”

“In many of our ministries we focus on emotional and spiritual suffering,” she continued, “and it is right to do so. And yet I do know that sometimes we can become so focused on fear, loss, and illness that we can forget the joy and celebrations of life in our midst.”

To read more about “holy joy,” read the *Caring Connections* issue by following this link: lutherservices.org/newsletters#cc



Dates to Remember

- Aug. 17–18** Prison Ministry Conference
St. Louis
sidlcms.org/prison-ministry
- Oct. 2–4** Combined ESC Conference and SPM Educational Event
Belleville, Ill.
lcms.org/spm
- Oct. 14–18** Federation of Fire Chaplains Conference
Fort Worth, Texas
firechaplains.org
- Oct. 16–18** National Disaster Response Conference
St. Louis
lcms.org/disaster
- Nov. 2–4** The Association of Certified Christian Chaplains Conference
Colorado Springs, Colo.
certifiedchaplains.org

Save the Date

- May 29–31, 2019** SPM Educational Event
San Antonio, Texas
- Sept. 26–29, 2019** Zion XVII Triennial Conference
Mundelein, Ill.