

Nbr. 80 – September, 2026

Salvation from Divine Judgment

As you know, in June CID played host for an Evangelism Enclave of leaders from around the Synod. See the story on p. 3 of the *GatePost* issue at <https://cidlcms.org/resources/gatepost/2026.GatePost.3.pdf>

Perhaps not surprisingly, an Old Testament professor, President Tom Egger from CSL, pointed out that the reality of Divine judgment is only rarely mentioned in the church today in connection with evangelism. Perhaps it is not mentioned much at all.

Yet no one can wish it away or ignore it away. Those who die without faith in Christ face eternity apart from God's saving presence in hell.

The only One Who can save anyone from God is God. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. He has the given the message of reconciliation to His church and her pastors. By the His Spirit's power, His Word makes THE difference!

Canvass in Effingham

In October, D.v., St. John, Effingham will conduct what I am calling a "soft" canvass of its neighborhood. The survey questions are to be:

1. What is great about our community?
2. What does our community need that it does not have?
3. What do you think when you hear "St. John Lutheran Church?"
4. How can we pray for you?
5. Would you like someone from the church to contact you?

If you would like information about how your congregation or others in your Circuit can implement a similar canvass, please contact me.

Pastors' Conference Sectionals

At the fall conference, this coming Oct. 4-6 in Pekin, I am scheduled for two sectional presentations. Please consider attending both, especially the first one described below:

This first one is "Further Addressing Cultural Idols." Identifying and addressing cultural idols is a perennial need for the church. These days, this need is becoming increasingly known and appreciated, even to the point of being discussed at the 2026 Synod convention.

CID has already provided help along these lines to pastors and others. This presentation will review relevant resources already cataloged on the District's website, and it will point out additional resources from both Lutheran and non-Lutheran sources. It will delve into the theology of addressing cultural idols.

This is also to be a working session. Participants will be invited to discuss current cultural idols. You will be able to make suggestions that will help me create a survey for pastors, and otherwise formulate plans to develop new resources for use in the future.

The other sectional is "held over" from the spring, a conference I missed due to illness. "F.C.D. Wyneken: Man on a Mission" introduces the Synod's second president, Friedrich Wyneken, and sketches his work as a survey missionary and circuit riding pastor in Indiana. Wyneken devoted himself (to borrow a phrase from another Synod president, A.L. Barry) to getting the message out, even as he himself was learning more and more to keep the confessional Lutheran message straight during the early years of his career. By the way, 2026 marks 150 years since Wyneken went to be with the Lord.



Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers

See? **WOW!** News and Encouragement for CID **C**ircuit **W**itness & **O**utreach **W**orkers

Worth considering:

re:Vitality Resources

re:Vitality is literally: about vitality. Every congregation -- regardless of size, setting, or average membership age -- has vitality. It has life.

Its life as the people of God comes straight from the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Vine, we the branches. Wherever His Word is proclaimed and His sacraments are administered, there is life. This life needs nurture, direction, and stewarding.

The Synod's *re:Vitality* program gives churches help in several important areas. These tools are for your use, and all at no charge!

The *Congregational Assessment of Development/Decline Status* (CAD/DS) is a roughly 100-question survey that will yield a one-page snapshot showing what your congregation's members (and any interested friends of the church who take the survey) think are its relative strengths and weaknesses. If your demographic report (available separately from the District office) tells you about your *community*, the CAD/DS helps you to know your *capacity*. If you are interested in a CAD/DS study at your church, please contact me.

In addition to the CAD/DS assessment, the Synod offers several *re:Vitality* modules. Most are available on a "self-directed" basis. That is, they require no outside facilitator and can be scheduled at your maximum convenience. Modules include:

- *Connect to Disciple*, an outreach module. While "witness" is one-on-one communication of the Gospel, "outreach" refers to the organized efforts of a congregation or its auxiliary organizations to move people from an initial contact or *connection* with the church to being

gathered around God's Word and Sacraments with the rest of the congregation as a *disciple*. The module features a four-step process: "Build Awareness, Create Connections, Build Relationships, Make Disciples."

- *Beyond the Classroom* is an adaptation of *Connect to Disciple* for churches with Lutheran schools. CID provides facilitators for this workshop. Contact Trip Rodgers or me if you are interested.
- *Shepherding our Strays* focuses on inactive members. It provides a Bible study and a self-directed workshop to prepare you for reaching out to inactive members, both short- and long-term, in a realistic way. Many congregations note this as a need. Here is help!
- *Serving in God's Mission* deals with strategic planning. It guides congregations through a process designed with the needs of Lutheran churches in mind, to help you develop a plan to carry out your part of God's mission in the unique place where you are.
- Scheduled for release: *Members of One Body*. This module is about assimilation of members -- or perhaps better to say, incorporation of members, helping people to find meaningful roles in their congregation's mission.

Some of these *re:Vitality* resources have been around for a while. You may recall hearing about them before. Somehow, though, you don't think much about a resource until you need it. Has the time come for *your* congregation?

Additional information about these *re:Vitality* tools can be found and downloaded at <https://www.lcms.org/church-revitalization>

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Circuit Witness and Outreach Workers