

the GatePost

"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved" John 10:9

Newsletter of the Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

2020: Issue 6



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**Making
Disciples
for Life** 

Advent Readiness

**Advent means that our Lord is coming to us.
He came, He is coming, and He will come again.**

In Jesus' parable of the bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1-13), even while the wise girls were *remembering* to bring extra oil for their lamps, the foolish ones did not. Of course, all of them knew full well the very important thing, that the bridegroom was coming. How foolish, indeed, to forget! How foolish we can be when we let the world and its distractions crowd out our remembrance of the incomparably important thing, that Christ CAME. He died for us according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He rose again according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Such foolishness amounts to faithlessness, for which there exists only one answer: repentance.

Only through faith in Christ can we be *relaxing* as the Lord comes. The wise bridesmaids relaxed. They went to sleep just like the rest. They did not have to "stay up all night" to be ready. Christ gives us forgiveness not on account of our strivings, but out of His self-sacrificing love for us. He purchased and won us not with gold or silver but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. He gives us this forgiveness when He COMES to us right now in His Gospel and in the sacraments. Therefore we can relax.

And we can be *responsible*, that is, able to respond to our Savior and His call as we await the day when He COMES AGAIN. As people who are heavenly minded, we can now be of genuine earthly good. Having by faith the magnificent eternal destiny that He earned for us, we can live in true freedom. We can spend and be spent in the Lord's service from day to day.

Advent readiness — that is, readiness for our Savior's coming to us — consists in *remembering*, *relaxing*, and being *responsible*. All of it is by grace.



**"For the grace of God
has appeared, bringing
salvation for all people"
(Titus 2:11)**

From the President's Desk

"The Nature of a Gift"

The generosity of the one who gives a gift is revealed in the value of that gift. A person can contribute a penny from his abundance and that trifle can display how stingy the gift giver is. It is said that John D. Rockefeller, though worth many millions of dollars, would give away dimes to friends, family, and as tips. The sum was hardly a drop in the bucket and the shared wealth could go unnoticed since it wouldn't make the slightest dent in his vast oil profits. On the other hand, the two-mite offering of a noted widow, dropped in the alms box, brought about special comment from Jesus, because although it was a pittance to anyone who had much more, for her it was all she had and she gave it away. This is the difference between a gift that is "some," and a gift that is "all."

Every physical
thing that has
come our way is
a gift from God.

However, God so loved the world that He gave... What is it that our Lord withheld for our sake? Absolutely nothing! He is the Creator of all that is seen and unseen. The universe, although vast, barely touches upon all that God is and has. Creation is finite and God is infinite. In comparison, we might be counted as nothing. Our individual lives might have gone unnoticed except that our heavenly Father, since He had every resource at His disposal, motivated by nothing less than pity and mercy for us, took special interest in our brokenness. We had lost value – while He insisted that we were worth much more – and He would make a gift that would bear out His lavish thoughts toward us!

It is the nature of a gift that it flows from love. It is the nature of a gift that it provides, without conditions or limits, something we don't otherwise have. It is the nature of a gift that the giver can guarantee its value. It is the nature of a gift that it is granted free of charge.

Since we were first fashioned from the dust of the ground everything He created – by word and dirt – was given over for our use to sustain the life He had breathed into our nostrils. Every physical thing that has come our way is a gift from God.

What we were robbed of, by our sin, such as immortality and godliness, faith and God's favor, it was His intent to return it to us as a gift. Yet, for us to possess true and complete righteousness again, divine justice would have to be fulfilled and someone would have to do what was commanded and to pay the ransom price.

God so loved the world that He gave... Yes, His greatest gift was nothing other than His only beloved Son, entering the world in our flesh and nature, to square away what we couldn't begin to make right. This is of immense value on account of our inherited poverty and our natural inability to repay! The incarnation of the eternal Son of God as the Son of Mary (and our brother) was, is, and always will be the greatest gift ever given for the likes of fallen man. This Gift lifts us up and sets us right. This Gift takes away all sadness as He takes away our guilt and bears it away on His own sufficiently strong shoulders. This Gift, Jesus, is the very image of our heavenly Father's generous love for His fallen sons and daughters.

Our own gift-giving is a shadowy reflection of the greater or the best sort, namely, that which God Himself did when He gave His Son and which His Son did when He totally gave Himself!

.....

The Lord bless you and yours through the gift of His own Son as we remember and are still benefited by that significant action again at the end of this strange and momentous year – 2020!

— Rev. Mark A. Miller, President

1 Corinthians 2:2



Rev. Mark A. Miller, President



Continues through 2021

“Bring Giving Home” (BGH), our District’s stewardship and mission education initiative, will continue throughout the year 2021. If your congregation’s involvement has been limited up until now, there is still time!

BGH started with the District pastoral conference in spring, 2019. The following fall, workshops were conducted Circuit-by-Circuit throughout CID. The year 2020 was to be the time of follow-up, in Circuit Pastors’ Conferences and congregations. BGH was supposed to conclude at the end of this year.

However, COVID-19 curtailed travel for over three months, during which no visits were made. And churches busy with the process of re-opening usually did not schedule BGH events right away. Therefore CID is most grateful to Church Extension Fund for graciously allowing grant funds for BGH to be expended throughout next year.

District President Mark Miller and Stewardship Executive Ken Schurb are still available to preach and teach about Stewardship at your church during 2021. You can also contact Dr. Schurb for a congregational consultation. Write him at kschurb@cidlms.org

Book Discussion (Zoom format)

Responding to Idols

Identifying idols stands out as important in evangelism. When the church brings the Gospel to people around us, we should understand the idols we are up against. And we need to recognize the idols in our own hearts and lives.

Idolatry lies at the heart of all sin, so our dealing with it cannot be superficial. For when we sinners fail to fear and love and trust in God, we all find substitutes. We look for substitutes not only for God as Creator, but also as Redeemer and Sanctifier.

As a theologian and a preacher, Martin Luther had much to say about idolatry. Even when he wasn’t using the word “idolatry,” he was engaging with the subject. He did so regularly as he expounded God’s Word in pulpit and classroom.

The book *The Unholy Trinity: Martin Luther against the Idol of Me, Myself, and I* by Michael Lockwood (CPH, 2016) lays out Luther’s multi-faceted case against idolatry and for the one saving God. This book applies the reformer’s biblical insights to our times today. For our idolatrous culture takes even good things and casts them as ultimate things. It coaxes us to do likewise. Against this, Dr. Luther provides stimulating spiritual help, centered on Christ.

Starting on Thursday, January 14, CID Evangelism Executive Ken Schurb will conduct one-hour Zoom discussions of this book every other week, with a break in February. Sessions will be live on **Thursdays at 3:00 p.m.** on the following days.

January 14 — Introduction and Chapter 1

January 28 — Chapters 2 & 3

February 25 — Chapter 4

March 11 — Chapter 5

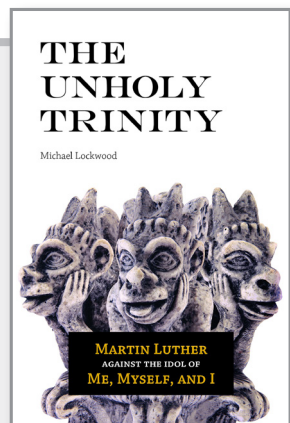
March 25 — Chapter 6

April 8 — Chapter 7

April 22 — Chapter 8

May 6 — Chapter 9

Any “make-up” session that proves necessary would occur on May 20.



These conversations are open to all members of CID churches. Pastors and other rostered church workers are especially encouraged to participate. To register, click on the link within the article on the Book Discussion at www.cidlms.org/news.html.

The sessions on the above dates will be recorded. If you cannot participate live, you can view the session later.

There is no cost for the sessions. In fact, CID can provide at least some registrants for these sessions a *gratis* copy of the book *The Unholy Trinity*. (Please reimburse the District \$3.00 for shipping costs.) If you register by January 3, 2021, we can mail a copy of the book early enough for you to read the introduction and chapter one before the first session on Jan. 14. Be sure to include both your e-mail address and your postal address when registering.

YouthLead Training

**February 25-28, 2021
St. Louis, MO**

For 40 years, YouthLead (formerly Lutheran Youth Fellowship) has equipped teens to develop and use their leadership skills as they serve Christ within their congregations and communities. Our annual leadership training event in St. Louis is lead by our teen Executive Team and gives teens the tools they need to mature in their faith, become leaders in their congregations, and reach out to their peers with the love of Christ.

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW.
GO TO [LCMS.ORG/YOUTHLEAD](https://lcms.org/youthlead) FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

WHO IS INVITED?

Any high school youth who is an active member of an LCMS congregation can join us. We encourage you to contact your district before you register as some districts have supports for those attending this training. *(CID has budgeted limited scholarship funds.)*

We prefer teens attend with an adult leader from their congregation. Arrangements can be made for them to come unaccompanied.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Registration for youth and adults is \$375. This covers your food, housing, supplies and a shirt during the whole training.

You will need to also cover your transportation to and from St. Louis.

WHAT HAPPENS AT A YOUTHLEAD TRAINING?

Youth are equipped for leadership in two key ways. First, we engage them in studying God's Word through a Bible study they experience and are trained to lead back home.

Second, we focus on their unique identity and vocations so they can lead from their strengths in their home congregation.

WHAT IF I CAN'T MAKE IT THIS YEAR?

If you can't make this training, don't worry! We hold training every year in St. Louis. We will also host a version of YouthLead training at the National Lutheran Youth Worker's Conference in Houston July 2021. Go to lcmsgathering.com/national-2021

QUESTIONS? EMAIL US AT [YOUTH.MINISTRY@LCMS.ORG](mailto:youth.ministry@lcms.org)!



Issues, Etc.

Through the Old Testament in a Church Year

Audio resource by Issues, etc. with Ken Schurb

You can find resources that survey the Old Testament in a year. Here, however, is one that does so in a *church year*. Going through Old Testament history in chronological order, it correlates various Old Testament incidents with the church year's themes and emphases.

This audio resource will consist of a series of *Issues, etc.* interviews with CID staff member Ken Schurb during the 2020-2021 church year. The typical interview will run about 25 minutes, closer to 20 minutes if listeners fast-forward through various announcements. The interview recordings will be available on demand at <https://issuesetc.org/archive>

The series commenced on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 2020, with an hour-long premiere highlighting the biblical teachings of Creation (appropriate for Thanksgiving) and of the Fall and first prophecy of the coming Deliverer (for the First Sunday in Advent). In each succeeding week, God willing, you will find at least one interview, occasionally more than that, to unfold the story of the Old Testament through the church year. The series will end on the Sunday before Thanksgiving in 2021.

After listening to each of these interviews, you can ask yourself:

1. **Now, how did that go?** – What was the Bible story on which the interview centered?
2. **Now, what is the Lord saying to me?** – What was the Law in this biblical account? Where was the Gospel?
3. **Now, how does this apply?** – What applications to life did this interview state? Or which others might be suggested by it?

Listen for these interviews week by week. Dig into the Old Testament. At the same time, renew your acquaintance with and appreciation for the church year. It all centers in Christ!



CID Youth Bible Bowl (April 2021)

Introducing the 2021 Central Illinois District Youth Bible Bowl:

The Exodus. As, God willing, we have our own exodus from home confinement to meeting together as God's church in our various congregations, we seek God's guidance for our exodus by studying the historical portions of the biblical book of Exodus (chapters 1-20, 24, 32-34, & 40). Whether or not we can have an in-person District Bible Bowl (or via Zoom?), we can study God's word in our homes and/or churches in the Christian hope of God's freeing us from the shackles of this world into His promised paradise through Jesus Christ. Contact Pastor Mark Eddy at zionlcms@juno.com if you would like more information about how your congregation's youth might participate in this year's Bible Bowl.

Official Notices

9/2/2020 – 12/3/2020

Ordained

Change In Status

- **Rev. Douglas Meyer**, Senior Pastor, Salem, Salem to EM
- **Rev. Charles Olander**, Zion, New Holland to EM
- **Rev. Dr. David Jacob**, EM to Pastor Christ, St. Luke/Delavan/San Jose

Transferred In

- **Rev. Aaron Uphoff**, NJ
- **Rev. Kurt Larson**, IDE
- **Rev. Dean Herberts**, NWD

Transferred Out

- **Rev. Aaron Hauser**, Associate, Our Savior, Springfield to SWD

Installation

- **Rev. Aaron Uphoff**, Pastor, Calvary, Watseka
- **Rev. Dean Herberts**, Pastor, St. Paul/St. John, Dieterich/Wheeler
- **Rev. Kurt Larson**, Pastor, St. Matthew, Milan
- **Rev. Dr. David Jacob**, Pastor, Christ/St. Luke, Delavan/San Jose

**Making
Disciples
for Life**





Keeping Christ on Campus

ENDOWMENTS FOR MINISTRY

College is tough. People need Jesus. Could there be a more important time in life for the church to be there with Christ in Word and Sacrament?

"We'll help," our Synod has said for more than a century, by providing campus pastors. "We'll help," our District has echoed, for close to 80 years.

The *Keeping Christ on Campus* initiative aims to grow four campus ministry endowment funds, one for each of our District's campus ministries, created and initially funded earlier this year by Lutheran Legacy Foundation. Lutheran Legacy has generously offered to match 100% contributions to each of these funds made by July 1, 2021, up to \$10,000 for each fund.

In little over the first two months of the initiative, *Keeping Christ on Campus* contributions have amounted to more than \$13,500. There is still plenty of room to grow, and lots of money to match YOUR gift. Please prayerfully consider this way of helping our District to continue supporting campus ministry into the future at the University of Illinois, Illinois State, Eastern Illinois, and Western Illinois.

For more information:

<http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-missions-campus.html>

To donate:

<https://www.lutheranlegacyfoundation.org/fund/central-illinois-district-campus-ministry/>



By the way, the District's Facebook page is featuring a different campus ministry every month throughout each semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. See if you recognize any familiar faces, places, and stories!

Visit facebook.com/cidlcms

CID is on Facebook AND Instagram

Come find us @cidlcms in both locations! Our page is filled with prayer and encouragement for you to share with those around you. Join us to keep up to date on District happenings and learn about new and exciting things coming soon!



Otago Exercise Program

BUILDING STRENGTH & BALANCE

With the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more people have become isolated leading to less physical activity, strength, and function. In fact, research showed that at the start of the pandemic, worldwide physical activity decreased 27% as people stayed at home. In our cold and snowy Illinois winters, it is even more challenging to get out and be active. Importantly, the lack of activity is particularly detrimental for older adults who can lose more strength and increase their risk for falling.

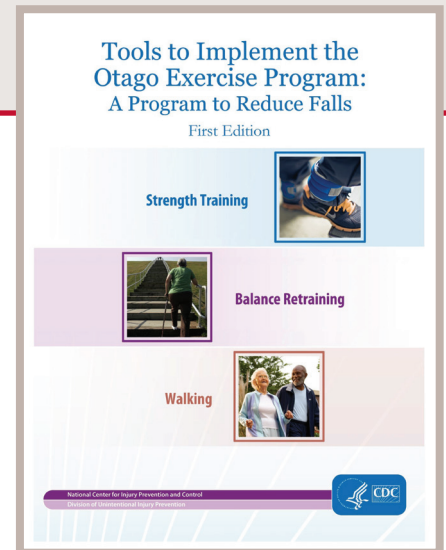
Given that 1 in every 3 older adults falls each year, it's important to participate in activities that improve our strength and balance to remain healthy.

The Central Illinois District is excited to offer a free exercise opportunity for people 60 years of age and better in congregations throughout the District. Beginning January 12th, the CID will offer the Otago Exercise Program, an 8-week long exercise class that meets once a week, for people on Zoom or the telephone. The exercise class focuses on building strength and balance with all activities able to be modified for a variety of fitness levels. This class has been shown to improve physical functioning and balance, as

well as reduce the risk for falling by nearly 30%! While providing a great way to improve your health and balance, this class will also be an opportunity to socialize with others throughout the CID.

This class will be offered for free through a grant provided by the Administration for Community Living. Classes will be taught by Margaret Danilovich, a physical therapist and assistant professor at Northwestern University who is also the organist at First Saint Paul's Lutheran Church in Chicago. Margaret is a graduate of Concordia River Forest where she studied exercise science and also sang in the Kapelle choir. After graduation, she earned a doctorate in physical therapy from Northwestern and has spent her entire career practicing in the area of geriatrics.

What will this exercise class look like? All of the exercises are modifiable for a variety of fitness levels. There's no exercise equipment required and all of the exercises can be done from the comfort of your home. When you register, you'll receive an exercise handout that provides pictures of all the exercises in the program. Over the course of the 8-week program, you'll progress through a variety of strength and balance exercises to build your muscle strength and reduce your risk for falling. Each class session will have a warm-up, strength exercises, balance activities, and a short cool-down. What makes this class even better is that you'll be joined by old and new friends throughout the CID!



For Adults Age 60+

Tuesdays 10:30 – 11:00am

8-Week Long Class

Begins on January 12th

Uses Zoom or a Telephone

**No Exercise Equipment
is Needed**

**To register for this FREE class,
sign up online by January 9th at
<https://bit.ly/3991Eus>**

If you have any questions,
please contact Margaret Danilovich at
Margaret-wente@northwestern.edu
or to register by phone,
call (312) 547-1896.

Sign-up now at
www.cidlcms.org
 to get
The GatePost and
Monthly Bulletins
 emailed to you.



1850 North Grand Avenue West
 Springfield, IL 62702-1626

The GatePost for The Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is a supplement to congregational newsletters.

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Did you know?

Suggestions are on CID website to help your church invite new people to respond to church services they are viewing online. See <http://www.cidlcms.org/resources/InvitingResponsesToOnlineService.pdf>

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, is now in the midst of its 175th academic year.

Links to back issues of CID’s See? **WOW!** Evangelism newsletter are found at <http://www.cidlcms.org/outreach-cwow.html>

December 10 is the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther burning the papal bull (pronouncement) that threatened his excommunication in a bonfire that included copies of canon law and various writings of scholastic theologians.

A planning guide to help congregations plan and carry out a Stewardship emphasis is available at <http://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-stewardship.html>

Lutherans for Life-Illinois 2021 Essay Contest

For students in Grades 6 through 12



Any Lutheran student in a Lutheran school or church is eligible. Lutheran students may also enter through a home school or congregation e.g. confirmation class, youth group when validated by a pastor or teacher. Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the theme: **God Chose You** with the bible verse: “**You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit**”. (John 15:16) Examples of topics the essay could deal with are, but not limited to: abortion, the handicapped, adoption or foster care, infanticide, cloning, stem cell research, physician assisted suicide or euthanasia etc. Grades 6-8 should submit essays up to 400 words. Grades 9-12 should submit essays up to 750 words. Entries should be submitted digitally using Microsoft Word or Google Docs to cathy.benning.os@gmail.com by April 1, 2021. There will be a \$100 first place award and \$50 second place award for each of the two. The two first place category winners will advance to the national contest. Grand Prize for the national winning entry at each level: \$250 plus free conference registration to a 2021 Regional Conference and one night stay at the conference hotel. All entries become the property of Lutherans For Life. For questions or resources on the sanctity of life, see lutheransforlife.org.

Visit <http://www.cidlcms.org/news.html> for rules.

INVESTMENT APPLICATION



CHURCH EXTENSION FUND, INC. (CEF) Central Illinois District - LCMS (CID)

1850 North Grand Avenue West
Springfield, IL 62702-1626

TELEPHONE: (217) 793-1802 FAX: (217) 793-9454

EMAIL: cef@cidlcms.org www.cid-cef.org

New Investment: \$ _____
Make check payable to:
CID Church Extension Fund

-OR-

Existing CID-CEF Investment Certificate # _____
(signed Investment Certificate or Lost Certificate Agreement must be
returned with Application)

Reinvest \$ _____ Redeem \$ _____

INVESTMENT CERTIFICATES - Minimum Investment: \$500 - Interest paid/applied and statement sent semi-annually

- ☐ 1.25% 5-year term ☐ 1.00% 3-year term
☐ 0.60% 1-year term ☐ 0.30% 6-month term

Special Term and Rate – Limited Time!!!

- ☐ 1.00% 2-year term

INTEREST PAYMENT METHOD (Choose one)

- ☐ Accumulate interest and add to investment
☐ Investment check semi-annually (if over \$25)
☐ Direct Deposit – requires completed enrollment form
(Go to www.cidlcms.org or contact CEF to request the form)

INTEREST RATES ARE EFFECTIVE 7/1/2020 AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE – CALL TO CONFIRM CURRENT RATES

FLEXIBLE SAVINGS – Interest added to account monthly, statement sent quarterly

- ☐ Regular Flexible Savings Account Interest Rate: 0.25% Minimum: \$25 – available to all customers
☐ Capital Campaign Flexible Savings Account Interest Rate: 0.60% Minimum: \$500 – available only to religious organizations

Account Ownership (Complete A, B, or C. Please print)

A. Sole or Joint Owners (One or more owners as joint tenants with full rights of survivorship and not tenants in common. Beneficiaries may be designated on "Beneficiary Designation" form. Interest is reported to the IRS using the Social Security number of the first owner listed.)

1. _____
Last or Religious Organization Name First MI Social Security # or TIN Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
2. _____
Last First MI Social Security # Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
3. _____
Last First MI Social Security # Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

- ☐ Check if "Beneficiary Designation" form is attached ☐ Check that all joint owners have signed application

B. Trust ("Certificate of Existence of Trust and Authority to Act" must be completed and sent with application)

Name of Trust Social Security #/TIN

C. Custodian Investment for Minor (Under the Illinois Uniform Transfers to Minors Act)

MINOR Last First MI Social Security # Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

CUSTODIAN Last First MI Social Security # Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)

CONTINUE TO BACK OF PAGE

Contact Information for Account

Address

City

State

Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

Email Address

Supporting Investments

(Please provide the organization to be recognized for current or future investment requirements)

Your Home Congregation

City

---OR---

Other LCMS Organization

City

Investment Certification and Signature – Signatures of all account owners are required.

By signing this application ("I" refers to all applicants, whether one or more), I certify that:

- All information provided is true and correct.
- I am of legal age and not a minor.
- I authorize the Central Illinois District Church Extension Fund to initiate any correcting debit or credit that may be necessary.
- I am a member of, contributor to, or participant in The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod or any district or other program, activity, or organization which constitutes a part of the Synod or any of its districts, or I am an ancestor, descendant, or successor in interest to such person.
- I am a U.S. person (including a U.S. resident alien).
- The Social Security or Tax ID number shown for me on this application is correct.
- I am not subject to backup withholding because (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) the IRS has not notified me that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding. Please draw an "X" through the preceding sentence if you ARE currently subject to backup withholding. Due to IRS regulations, the Central Illinois District Church Extension Fund cannot record your investment until your Taxpayer Identification Number is provided and the above certification signed. The IRS does not require your consent to any provisions of this application other than the certifications required to avoid backup withholding.

Signature of Account Owner/Trustee/Custodian/Authorized Signer

Date

Signature of Account Owner/Trustee/Custodian/Authorized Signer

Date

Signature of Account Owner/Trustee/Custodian/Authorized Signer

Date

The CID-CEF is a nonprofit religious organization, therefore CID-CEF investments are not FDIC-Insured bank deposit accounts.

The Mission of the Central Illinois District Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CID-CEF) is to aid member congregations and agencies in the Central Illinois District of the LCMS in building and expanding their facilities and their ministry for the growth of God's Kingdom.