

ENGLISH CHANNELS



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Love Your Neighbor as Yourself - At Your Church

Parish Nursing in the English District

In keeping with Bishop Hardy's triennium theme, "Love Your Neighbor As Yourself," we are featuring the ways we can care for and love our neighbors. The following was originally featured as a blog post on our English District's website. Some edits were made due to space.

By Sue Neff, RN

For those of you who are not familiar with Parish Nursing, I'd like to give you an overview what I do, and share some benefits of having a parish nurse in your congregation.

The modern Parish Nurse movement began in the 1970s when a hospital chaplain, Dr. Granger Westberg, saw the need for whole person care: physical, emotional, and spiritual, for persons who were in the hospital. If we are not attending to the whole person, and one aspect is out of balance, our whole-person wellness will suffer.

Dr. Westberg saw nurses who were spiritually mature as fulfilling the role of Parish Nurse.

The Parish Nurse fulfills four general roles: Health Educator, Personal Health Counselor, Volunteer facilitator, and Liaison with the community. Each ministry will be specific in its job description based on the demographics of the congregation, i.e., a large elderly population, a preschool or day school, a military population, etc.

It has been said that Parish Nurses have one foot in medicine and one foot in theology. Not only can we understand a patient's medical condition (and sometimes be the liaison between doctor and patient), but we can offer spiritual support and prayer with and

for the person as well. The Parish Nurse ministry is a complementary ministry in the church. The nurse works with the pastor to assure that those who have needs are being seen. One powerful example of a complementary ministry is for the pastor and Parish Nurse to visit a seriously ill person together. If the Lord's Supper can be taken, the pastor can do that, and if the person has medical procedures, tests, and equipment present, the nurse can help the family understand the process.

Earlier I stated that whole-person health is important for persons in hospitals; however this is an important concept for all of us. As your Parish Nurse, I would rather help you to stay well. To that end, it is important to educate our members on prevention, including a healthy diet, adequate exercise, screening tests, the risks of smoking, drinking, and drugs, etc.

To qualify as a Parish Nurse you must hold an active Registered Nurse license in the state where you practice and be certificated – or working towards a certificate – as a



Parish Nurse.

There are several organizations that offer educational courses to get your certificate. There are also several conference opportunities each year that are wonderful places to network, share and learn.

Please feel free to contact me for any information:
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Bishop's Notes

The Rev. Dr. Jamison J. Hardy
Bishop & President of the English District

Letter From The Pastor

As the cold weather begins to encroach upon us and the New Year is just around the corner, it is an exciting time of year. People are preparing for the oncoming festival seasons of Christmas and Epiphany within the Church, and the stores have had Christmas decorations out since the day after Halloween. The excitement is growing for many as they look forward to time with family, friends and celebrating the mercies of our Lord. Together we feel a sense of joy growing and the potential for mercy is at our doorstep. These feelings are always beneficial and extra special at this time of year.

However, for many within the Church the opportunity for these feelings to exist are plentiful throughout the year. Jesus calls us into service in His kingdom from the moment that the Holy Spirit is given to us in Baptism. We, His children, are provided many opportunities to live out that post-baptismal life daily. We daily are given opportunities to love our neighbors and care for those who have needs and follow the great commands of Christ.

Have you ever thought about the simple opportunities that the Lord has given you this week alone to show mercy to someone, witness to the world the faith given you by the Holy Spirit, or have fellowship with those with whom you share faith and love? These opportunities continue to be given by the grace of God.

We pray in the church that we be given these opportunities and the Lord hears our prayer by delivering these opportunities to us daily. In some cases, Christians feel inadequate and insufficient to engage in these witnessing opportunities. The Lord reminds us that we shall not be given more than we can handle. This is true both in life and in our witness to Christ. By providing His people with opportunities to declare a witness to the world, show mercy to those who need it and gather together in fellowship, the Lord is simply assisting His people with what He has asked of them.

Do you actively love your neighbor as yourself in your service to Christ and the Church? Do you give back to God your first fruits, or do you begrudgingly return a small portion because you know that it is the right thing to do? Becoming a first fruits giver is one way to show the Lord that you take seriously the blessings he has given you in life.

By using His gifts to His glory and for the care of His people you really are giving a witness of faith and love. Stewardship is not simply something that comes up once a year in a sermon; stewardship is a way of life for Christian people. Stewardship should be viewed as an extension of the post baptismal life that all Christians live as they love their Lord and love their neighbor as themselves.

Reformation Tour

Join the Rev. Dr. David Stechholz and his wife Janet for a "10-Day Cradle of the Reformation Tour" in Germany.

The Bishop/President Emeritus of the English District is coordinating a tour from July 25 through August 3, 2016. Tour members will leave the United States and land in Munich, where they will travel to Oberammergau,

Augsburg, Berlin, Wittenberg and more. Visits to cathedrals, museums, the house where Martin Luther was born, are just a few of the many places to be discovered.

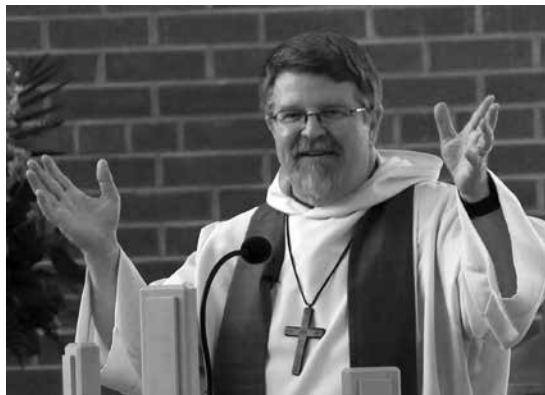
For information on the trip, please contact Rev. Dr. Stechholz or Janet by calling either of them at home (734) 464-2810, on their cell phone at (248) 470-6298, or via email: davejan7@hotmail.com.

New Assistant to the Bishop and Mission Executive for the English District

The Rev. J. Derek Mathers, pastor of St. Luke, North York, Ontario, Canada, has been named as the Assistant to the Bishop and Mission Executive for the English District Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Rev. Mathers received his Bachelor of Arts from Brock University in St. Catharines, ON, and his Masters of Divinity from Concordia in St. Catharines, ON. He has served the English District as Vice President Lake Erie Region, Circuit Visitor Canada West and Circuit Visitor Canada East. Rev. Mathers served the Synod as a pastoral advisor to seminary wives.

Pastor Mathers is a passionate disciple of Jesus



who wants to make disciples who can make disciples. When he's not doing that, he roots for the Blue Jays, reads science fiction (Neil Gaiman, Terry Pratchett), and works at his cabin.

He has been serving as pastor at St. Luke's since 1999, and has also pastored in Saskatchewan, Beamsville and Mitchell. Born in Edmonton, he grew up in Minnesota and Okinawa but came back to Canada to go to Brock, where he met and married Deb. They have two daughters and a grandson.

He loves to do lunch and, if it's at Duff's, you'll make his day.

School News

Bethesda International offers plenty to students

Bethesda International Academy, in Chicago, IL, is offering their students – from preschool through the eighth grade – the opportunity of differentiated learning using iPads and the E-Spark/Kahn Academy Reading and Language Arts program.

Since they began using E-Spark three years ago in the fifth through eighth grades, student MAP scores have increased in both reading and language arts. The students have become very adept at navigating the iPads, producing their own videos and being part of their own individualized instruction. When the Kindergarten through third grade students were added to the program last year, there was growth seen in their standardized testing and in their daily academic performance as well.

Thanks to the Chicago Lutheran Education Foundation (CLEF) – which purchased the iPads and



helps coordinate the E-Spark program – Bethesda International hopes to add their youngest learners, the preschoolers, to this innovative and academically rewarding program. They also would like to expand the program to include math.

Bethesda International is committed to producing global leaders for the 21st century.

Around the District



Rev. Dr. Roger Ellis retires

The Rev. Dr. Roger Ellis retired at the end of October, after serving Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sarnia, ON, Canada, since 1979. The church was packed with over 300 people for Pastor Ellis' Reformation Day service. Around 250 people attended the retirement dinner, and the colors of his beloved Toronto Maple Leaves adorned the banquet hall. Rev. Ellis baptized more than 500 children and adults in his time as pastor. For more information on his ministry, see the printed article online at: <http://www.theobserver.ca/2015/10/27/rev-roger-ellis-looks-back-over-30-years-at-sarnia-church>.



Bishop Richard Snow of Nebraska District and Bishop Jamison J. Hardy of the English District celebrated Reformation Sunday at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lincoln, NE. Bishop Hardy was the guest preacher and Bishop Snow was the Lector.



It's remarkable how God brings His people together from far and wide to share His gifts, in gratitude to Him, and do amazing things together.

Alan and Jayne Blohm and their family were visiting their daughter and her husband at Fort Knox and worshipped together with them at Grace Lutheran Church in Vine Grove, KY. Alan admired the work the congregation had put into installing their organ, and hearing of its story, he asked to have a look at it. Having completed work on the organ at his home congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church in Utica, MI, Alan then offered to help restore and improve the aging analog instrument.

After a month of research, phone calls and emails, Alan returned with a truck load of tools, equipment and parts to set about with the work he had planned. Over the course of a weekend, Alan, his family, the trustees and the pastor of Grace worked together, replacing 36 individual speakers, re-wiring and labeling the amplifier/speaker cables, installing two equalizers and completing a first pass tweak of the new components. The congregation is enjoying the fruit of Alan's service and is grateful for the stewardship of his God-given gifts in helping a sister congregation in its worship and praise of our Savior.

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Connect with Us!

We're a click away! Connect with the English District via social media! Stay up-to-date with conferences, events, happenings around the district and blog posts.

On our Web site you will find resources, our blog, contact information and so much more: www.englishdistrict.org

"Like" us on Facebook: **English District LCMS**

And join the English District Connect Group:

English District Connect

"Follow" us on Twitter: **EngDistrictLCMS**

If you would like to publish a blog post or share anything on our social media pages, contact Lynne Cobb, Communications Coordinator, at lcobb@englishdistrict.org.

Around the District (continuation)

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Bishop Jamison J. Hardy officiated at the Service of Installation of **Rev. Anthony Oliphant** on Sunday, October 11, 2015. The service was held at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Elmhurst, IL.



Conference held on “Church and State”

On Saturday, September 27, 2015, Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hartland, MI hosted a conference to discuss topics of Church and State. The conference, entitled *The Body of Christ and the Public Square – Religious Liberty in 21st Century America*, brought together local and nationally renowned speakers with an assembly of pastors and lay leaders of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Michigan and across the Midwest. Speakers included author, historian, founder and president of WallBuilders, David Barton; Michigan Representative Lee Chatfield; Michigan Senator Patrick Colbeck; pastor, professor, activist, and father of presidential candidate Senator Ted Cruz, the Rev. Rafael Cruz; Christian apologist and nationally syndicated radio talk show host, Bob Dutko; Law School Professor, author, speaker, and President and Chairman of Salt and Light Global, William Wagner; and Professor of Early Church History and Patristic Studies at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN, the Rev. Dr. William Weinrich. Our Savior pastor, Rev. Christopher Thoma, organized the event and acted as master of ceremonies.

St. John’s Pembroke, Ontario 125th Anniversary

Kick-off begins October 2015 with cake, refreshments and press coverage. Each month, until October 2016, the congregation will celebrate their anniversary with a special event. Some events planned are: Chili cook-off, Rhubarb social, picnics, special music, guest preachers and more. Congratulations on an incredible milestone!



New Life celebrates 19 years!

The congregation of New Life Chinese Lutheran Church in San Francisco, CA, has recently celebrated their 19th year in ministry!

Merger

Just 95 years after the founding of Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norwood Park, IL, the last worship service was held on October 25, 2015. Our Savior will merge with St. John Lutheran, and the two churches will unite to become Ascension Lutheran. Our Savior’s pastor, Rev. Eric Carlson, has been installed at Peace Lutheran in McMurray, PA, to serve as associate pastor at English District Bishop Jamison Hardy’s church.

Creative fundraising

Chapel of the Cross-Lutheran Youth, St. Louis, MO, are once again working to raise funds to help them get to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans in July 2016. For a small donation to the youth, one can pay to have someone they know or love “flocked” with a dozen pink flamingos. For those who want to support the youth, but do not want to have a flock of pink birds adorning their front yard, “Flamingo Insurance” is available for a suggested \$10 donation. What a win-win fundraiser for this creative bunch!

New Child Care Center!



Ascension of Christ Lutheran Church, Beverly Hills, MI, opened a child care center in mid-November, ministering to the needs of infants and toddlers, ages six weeks to three years-old. The new center is located

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Regional Conferences Update

The **Eastern Region Pastors Conference** of the English District took place September 22-24 in Ocean City, NJ; 28 pastors (along with some wives and one child) were in attendance. The main speaker at the conference was Rev. Mark Jasa, who shared his insights on how to communicate the Gospel to those of other religions (or no religion at all). District President and Bishop Jamison Hardy also led the group in his presentation on “Love Your Neighbor,” which serves as the district’s theme for the next three years. The Divine Service was held on the final evening of the conference at Peace Lutheran Church (a congregation of the SELC District of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod) in nearby Galloway, NJ. During free time, pastors and their families strolled the boardwalk and enjoyed the wonderful beach weather! The annual regional conference is a good opportunity for pastors and their families to come together in mutual support, consolation, and encouragement with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The **Midwest Regional Conference** was held October 6-8 in Chicago, IL. The conference hosted two great speakers this year: Rev. Dr. Justin Rossow, who focused on metaphor theory and narrative approaches to preaching the gospel; and Mark Schoepp of Wheat Ridge Ministries, who taught about the latest brain research and how it impacts self-care, health, and congregational planning.

The **Lake Erie Pastoral Conference** met at the Holiday Inn Express, Port Clinton, OH, from October 20-22. The theme of the major presentation for the conference was, “Theological Reflections on Bioethics.” The guest speaker was the Rev. Dr. Gilbert C. Meilaender, Senior Research Professor at Valparaiso University and former Ramsey Fellow at the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture during the 2014-2015 academic year. He holds the M.Div. (1972) from Concordia Seminary (St. Louis) and the Ph.D. (1976) from Princeton University. He has written many books and articles in the field of Christian ethics. Among all of his accomplishments

in the area of Bioethics he is a Fellow of the Hastings Center and was a member of the President’s Council on Bioethics from 2002 to 2009. Approximately 60 pastors and their wives attended the annual conference for worship, Bible study, fellowship and theological reflection.

The **Western Region Professional Church Workers Conference** met in Tucson, AZ, from October 27-29. This year’s theme was, “You Became a Model (1 Thessalonians 1:6-8).” The sessions were led by the Rev. Russ Sommerfeld, former Nebraska District president. Attendees explored biblical models of service and outreach to help more effectively engage increasingly godless community cultures for Christ. The conference was hosted by Tucson area churches, with Ascension Lutheran Church hosting the Worship Service.



Pictured are individuals who attended the Western Regional Conference.

About the Channels

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School News

Grace Lutheran Preschool sees steady growth

By Jennifer Thompson, Director

As times are changing, more and more preschools are being found in the public school setting and some smaller, faith-based schools are finding it difficult to continue their programs.

This is not the case for Grace Lutheran Preschool in Elyria, OH, which has seen steady growth since 2010. The preschool has been serving families for over 30 years, but since 2010, the school has been growing and filling all the classrooms they can in the modest church building. Jennifer Thompson, the director for six years, has had a hand in this change.

“Preschool is not just about the children we serve, but the families as well. Each family who registers has a story, and struggle just like the rest of us. It is our job to offer support and grace in any way we can to both the children who enter our classrooms and the families they go home to. I think showing them God’s love is what is making the difference here,” said Jennifer Thompson.

This philosophy is felt by families and helps to start the “ripple effect” that brings more families to the school to register. A few families share their Grace stories:

“Our family was going through a tough transition and my daughter’s little three year-old mind was struggling to make sense of it, but her teachers worked with her (and me) and made us both completely comfortable and supported Reagan while she dealt with getting used to her first year of school and the changes our family was going through. By the four year-old class, she was ready to go and school has been a breeze for her since. She has a wonderful attitude towards school and strives for success, which I can only attribute to the positive foundation the teachers at Grace helped to build through some sensitive times. I recommend Grace to a lot of people.” - Julie Willemin, former preschool parent

“My family moved from Elyria several years ago and we still chose to make the drive to Grace Lutheran Preschool for our girls. We really enjoy the format of the preschool. The amount of days and time spent in the classroom are well suited to younger children and the teachers do a nice job of engaging them. They learn a lot and are well prepared for Kindergarten.” - Jen Pulig, former preschool parent

The school also prides itself on offering quality education that meets the needs of the child, while teaching



them the importance of giving to others. Mrs. Thompson and the teaching staff have developed a curriculum for the school that offers opportunities for each child to develop social, emotional, and academic skills needed to succeed as they go further with their schooling.

“I cannot say enough positive things about Grace Lutheran Preschool. The teachers are absolutely amazing. They are so smart and kind. When I went for my child’s “Star Student Days,” I just wished I could be a kid again. The curriculum also has done an excellent job preparing my daughter. She is doing fantastic in Kindergarten, both academically and socially. If you are looking for a top quality preschool, this is it!” - Tracy Gantz, preschool parent

The curriculum has a focus on the importance of outreach and volunteering as well. Each year, the students participate in food drives, nursing home visits, and collect infant and baby items. The school also sent over 2,000 items overseas in care packages to soldiers and have raised over \$3,000 in the past three years to purchase new books to give to area schools.

“It is important to teach children at a young age to be generous. Be generous with the gifts the Lord has given you, whether the gift is your time or things you can give or do to help others,” shared Jennifer Thompson.

There is no doubt that you can see the impact of the preschool throughout the community. Parents bringing their children to and from the school leave knowing they are valued. We can all have that kind of impact as well if we value each person as God’s gift and give a little more of ourselves, even just a smile or an extra amount of patience. This can make all the difference.

Official Acts

Pastors - Installations

The Rev. Jeffrey S. Teeple, September 27, 2015, Associate Pastor, Peace, Fremont, IN; *The Rev. Anthony Oliphant*, October 11, 2015, Sole Pastor, Redeemer, Elmhurst, IL; *The Rev. Karl Koch*, October 24, 2015, Intentional Interim Minister, Faith, Tucson, AZ; *The Rev. Eric Carlson*, November 29, 2015, Associate Pastor, Peace, McMurray, PA; *The Rev. J. Derek Mathers*, December 6, 2015, Assistant to the Bishop/Mission Executive, English District LCMS, Associate Pastor, St. Luke, North York, ON; *The Rev. Jeffrey Kunsman*, December 6, 2015, Senior Pastor, St. Luke, North York, ON

Teachers - Installations

Anna Hu, August 9, 2015, West Portal, San Francisco, CA; *Kayla Konow*, August 16, 2015, Redeemer, Oakmont, PA; *Hillary Czernicki*, August 22, 2015, Hales Corners, Hales Corners, WI; *Rachel Stathakis*, August 22, 2015, Hales Corners, Hales Corners, WI; *Kerrie Roesler*, August 23, 2015, Hales Corners, Hales Corners, WI

Calls Accepted

The Rev. Justin Laughridge, Sole Pastor, Morning Star, Lakeside, CA as a Dual Parish with Crossroads, Mira Mesa, CA; *The Rev. Michael Scheer*, Director of Church Relations, Concordia University, Portland, OR; *The Rev. Karl Koch*, Intentional Interim, Faith, Tucson, AZ; *The Rev. Anthony Appel*, Sole Pastor, Immanuel, Des Plaines, IL; *The Rev. Joseph Robb*, Executive Director, LINC Milwaukee through LINC Houston; *The Rev. Jeffrey Teeple*, Associate Pastor, Peace, Fremont, IN; *The Rev. J. Derek Mathers*, Assistant to the Bishop/Mission Executive, English District LCMS; *The Rev. Jeffrey Kunsman*, Senior Pastor, St. Luke, North York, ON

Transfers In

The Rev. Patrick Runk, May 13, 2015, Eastern District; *The Rev. Richard Klein*, September 13, 2015, Alberta British Columbia District (Lutheran Church Canada); *The Rev. Karl Koch*, September 28, 2015, Ohio District; *The Rev. Anthony Oliphant*, October 1, 2015, Northern Illinois District; *The Rev. Dr. Edward Naumann*, October 20, 2015, Missouri District

Transfers Out

Jane Boye, July 14, 2015, Pacific Southwest District; *Jennifer Hook*, July 28, 2015, Pacific Southwest District; *Theodore O. Geheb*, October 15, 2015, Florida-Georgia District; *Ryan Schultz*, August 1, 2015, Texas District; *The Rev. Dr. Ronald Farah*, December 1, 2015, Michigan District

Appointments

The Rev. Dr. Martin Erhardt, November 13, 2015, New York-Circuit Visitor #1

New School/Child Care

Ascension Early Child Care Center, November 1, 2015, Beverly Hills, MI

Change of Status

Sunny Kan, December 15, 2012, Non-Candidate to Non-Candidate; *Jonathan Hilmer*, October 17, 2013, Non-Candidate to Non-Candidate; *Suzanne Zobel*, June 1, 2014, Active to Candidate; *The Rev. Dr. Roger C. Ellis*, October 31, 2015, Active to Emeritus

Reinstatement

Les Morris, September 24, 2015, Candidate

Resigned

Susan Taylor, August 4, 2015

Called to Glory

The Rev. Nicholas Zipay, Jr., October 27, 2015

Around the District (continuation)

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in the church under the direction of Katrina "Trina" Stewart who has over 15 years of experience in the early childhood field.

Grant awarded

Martin Luther Christian Preschool, Pennsauken, NJ, was the recipient of a \$1,000 grant through the "Big City Mission: Tools for School," the mission project included in Concordia Publishing House's 2015 "Camp Discovery." The school serves 77 children in preschool through sixth grade in a "multi-cultural" setting, according to Principal Becky Williams.

"The \$1,000 went to help offset the cost for a family with two children in our school that was debating whether or not they would be able to continue here this year after

mom lost her job," Williams said. "It has been a blessing that we have received grants so that we are able to assist."

Local Mission Week

The Youth Group from St. Mark the Evangelist, Janesville, WI, had a "stay-cation" type mission trip over the summer where they did service projects and activities around their local community. Projects included assisting shut-ins with cleaning their homes and yard work; sprucing up St. Mark's; hosting a blood drive; serving dinner and visiting residents of an assisted living center; and making freezer meals for shut-ins at St. Mark. What a wonderful opportunity to use Bishop Hardy's "Love Your Neighbor" theme by caring for their neighbors, strangers and others.