

# ENGLISH CHANNELS



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## Final issue of English Channels

### *Subscribe to District e-newsletter*

This issue of the English Channels will be our last. To keep up with all that is happening in the English District, we encourage you to sign up for the District's weekly e-Newsletter. Whether you are a church worker or congregant, you may subscribe to this free weekly update, which will be delivered straight to your email inbox! To sign up, visit our website at [www.englishdistrict.org](http://www.englishdistrict.org) and click on the "Subscribe to the English District's e-Newsletter" link on the main page under District News, or email Peggy Oke at [poke@englishdistrict.org](mailto:poke@englishdistrict.org).

You are encouraged to share this e-Newsletter with interested members of your congregation by forwarding

it or printing it for them.

If you do not have email and would like to receive the weekly newsletter and are unable to obtain a printed copy from your church, please notify the district office. We will mail them to you monthly.

To submit information for possible publication in the e-Newsletter, please email to Kathy Stanis at [kstanis@englishdistrict.org](mailto:kstanis@englishdistrict.org). Allow two weeks for publication and be mindful of dated material.

If you have any questions, please contact the English District office at (248)476-0039 or (800)755-9335.

## School News

### Welcome to Ascension Lutheran Early Childhood Center

By Laurie Schneider, Director

Ascension Lutheran Church in North Olmsted, Ohio has provided an early childhood ministry to parents of young children in North Olmsted and the surrounding communities for the past 39 years!

The current program offers a unique blend of spiritual training interwoven throughout an age and developmentally appropriate curriculum. Our daily program serves young children from ages three through six. In addition, we offer a weekly Tot Time program for parents and toddlers.

Our program is unique in our area in that we use parent volunteers on a daily basis in our preschool classrooms. It is important to us that we foster a positive home-school relationship while providing



young children with a positive start to their lifelong adventure with learning. Parents share with us that our program makes them feel like they are part of a family, but it works both ways! Our families are also sharing their child (and their family) with our teachers and staff members for the time they are in our program and often for many years after!

One of the most exciting things we have added to our program has been the presentation of a

Children's Bible to all children new to our program each fall. The Bibles are presented to the children during our first Chapel time of the year.

The parents have shared with us that their little  
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## Bishop's Notes

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

# *Love your neighbor as yourself*

As this theme begins to take root in the English District, we see many people grasping this concept and making it a part of their ministry lives. I am amazed when I visit congregations, how many people have resonated with this theme and run with it in their ministry setting and context. In a recent parish visit, I was overjoyed to see the congregation making decisions based on how it would show love to their neighbors in the community around them.

What a wonderful witness for the love of Christ when people see our good deeds and praise our Father who is in heaven. Scripture reminds us that “it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

People will see the love you have for others and the love that is in you, and they will see Christ living in you.

I want to continue to encourage all the congregations to seek ways to show Christ's love at home, at church, with family, at work, and with strangers.

Focus on the work that Christ would have you do for the sake of the Gospel. As this New Year begins, many people will be making resolutions about what they want to do or accomplish. For we as Christians know, as we get older, Satan finds new ways to distract us and cause us to become lazy and complacent in our faith. He turns our eyes on making ourselves more important than our relationship with Jesus.

By loving others, we are able to continue daily to drown the old Adam, as Luther says in the small catechism, and daily rise anew in the mercy of Christ Jesus our Lord.

## School News (continuation)

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ones want them to read the same stories they heard at school! The first year our Bibles were funded through private donations. However, since then they are purchased through the designation of Thrivent funds! We also use some of our Thrivent funds to purchase devotional materials for the children to take home and use with their families. Thank you, Thrivent, and Thrivent members!

Ascension is also blessed to have an outstanding Children's Library filled with faith-based children's books. Our children go to the library monthly to hear a story and borrow a book. These activities provide us with opportunities to “plant seeds” as we get faith-based materials into the children's homes.

Throughout the year we also offer a number of special activities. Dads enjoy a Saturday morning at school with their child for “Dads & Donuts” where

they join in a scaled down version of their child's day. The highlight of the day is our “Bubble Pool” – where children can put dads (or dads can put kids) inside a bubble! Even the pastor has taken a turn being inside a bubble! Moms join us for a special celebration also, at our Mother's Day Tea, where moms and kids can dress up and have a pretend tea party. They each receive a special framed photo of this event.

Ascension's ECC staff members feel blessed to work in an early childhood program that allows them to share their love of Jesus with the little ones that they welcome in His name.

They take to heart His commandment to “go and make disciples” and take steps to insure that they not only plant seeds of faith in the young children in their care, but continue to nurture and care for them also.

We join with Ascension's church family in asking God's continued blessings on this ministry.

# Board of Directors meet near Philadelphia

The Board of Directors met Nov. 13-15, 2015, in and around Philadelphia, PA.

Board members visited two District congregations: St. John, Springfield, PA; and Martin Luther Chapel, Pennsauken, NJ.

Board members met with pastors and leaders from Circuit #2 (Philadelphia) and Circuit #1 (New York/New Jersey). They also observed two projects of Philadelphia Lutheran Ministries: Shepherd of the City, the mission congregation in Northeast Philadelphia, and Logos Lutheran Fellowship, which meets in Center City.

The Board's attention was directed toward determining End Statements for the 2015-2018 Triennium. Five end statements were adopted:

- \* Each congregation will be aware of District activities and available resources.

- \* Each school and educational ministry will explore and embrace ways the Lutheran tradition can enrich instruction, practice and policy.

- \* Each church worker will enjoy emotional and spiritual wellness.

- \* Each congregation will prayerfully and financially support the District.

- \* Each circuit will implement a new mission or ministry.

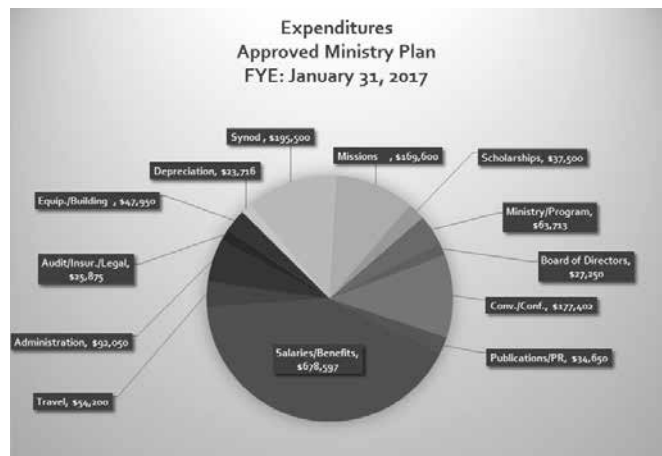
Other actions taken by the Board during the November session included:

- \* Approving the applications of Apostolic Lutheran Church, Moses Lake, WA, and Tree of Life Lutheran Church, Inverness, FL, as new LCMS congregations within the English District.

- \* Revising the *Corporate Operations Manual* section concerning the District Endowment Fund.

- \* Ratifying President Hardy's appointment of members to various District committees and Rev. Dr. Martin Erhardt to serve as Circuit Visitor for Circuit #1 (NY/NJ).

- \* Preparing for the 2016 LCMS Convention: selection of Rev. Derek Mathers and Mr. Terry Leu to serve as advisory delegates; adoption of a Report to Synod about District Viability, as required by the 2013 Synod Convention; submission of an overture



about increasing the number of Lutheran leaders in LCMS early childhood and school programs.

- \* Adopting the Ministry Plan Budget for FYE January 31, 2017 (see pie charts above).

The Board's next session is Feb. 22-23, 2016, in San Diego, CA.

## 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](http://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](mailto:lcobb@englishdistrict.org).

# Around the District



## Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

FIRE Jr. High Student Ministry of Beautiful Savior, Lee's Summit, MO, remembered those who serve them and their community during their "Cookie Express" servant event on December 13. The students asked congregation members to make some extra Christmas baked goods and donate to the cause. Over 600 Christmas cookies and other baked goods were donated, packaged, and delivered to over 20 locations in the community, including fire departments, police departments, emergency room staff, nursing homes, military recruiting offices, gas station attendants, and more. While delivering, students had the opportunity to thank these men and women for their service to the community, wish them a Merry Christmas, and remember them in prayer.



## Youth Retreat

The youth from St. John's, Pembroke, ON, were among six churches that were involved in a recent youth retreat: five from Renfrew County (the Ottawa Valley) and one from Ottawa. Twenty-eight youth took part in learning about God's Word, with emphasis on the Lutheran worship service. This led to fantastic discussions



and growth by all. With youth leaders, support staff and three pastors keeping the youth engaged and fed – both in body and spirit – positive memories were definitely created. In addition, the Friday evening and full day Saturday excitement included a hike to explore and enjoy God's beauty by the water and an invigorating game of soccer.

Tired and exhausted, everyone dispersed with the knowledge that a new group was formed to continue to live in the Light of God: Lutheran Ottawa Valley Engaged YOUTH (L.O.V.E YOUTH) now will gather monthly to build, learn, and grow with each other through the grace of God.



## Chapel Time

Using a large crèche, students at Shepherd King Preschool, West Bloomfield, MI, learned about the Nativity during Chapel Time.

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Our thanks to the Channels layout editor Ed Wright and all who have contributed to the English Channels over the years. In the future, please send news to Kathy at [kstanis@englishdistrict.org](mailto:kstanis@englishdistrict.org) to be considered for the weekly e-newsletter, *Servant to Servant*. Thank you!

# Around the District (continuation)

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### Serving the Community

Third through sixth grade students from Redeemer Lutheran School, Verona, PA had the opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas and God’s love with the city of Pittsburgh.



### Sharing with Neighbors

To help their local community, students and parents from Faith Preschool of The Church at Jacob’s Well, Fort Wayne, IN, collected and donated to a local food bank.



### Operation Christmas Child

Students from Wee Creations Preschool & Daycare in Fremont, IN, enjoyed Christmas Shoebox Packing Day and also participated in a Christmas program.



### What will you be when you grow up?

Students were mesmerized during their preschool Christmas program at Hope Christian Preschool in Hastings, MN. Pastor Josh collected baby pictures and current pictures of several of the students, talking about how they grow and wondering what they will be when they grow up. He ended with the picture of baby Jesus (seen in the picture), and shared that we know why THIS baby came - to save all of us!



### Winter VBS?

On Monday, December 28, Grace Lutheran Church in Elyria, OH, held a one-day winter VBS. Music, Bible stories, crafts, snacks and lunch were some of the highlights of the event, which served 30 students from preschool through sixth grade. A fun way to re-emphasize what was learned over the summer plus re-connect with friends, teachers and volunteers!

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# Love Thy Neighbor: Listen and Ask

By The Rev. Eric Carlson, Associate Pastor  
Peace, McMurray, PA

Proverbs 18:13 states, “If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.” The meaning is clear. To answer someone without first listening to them is foolish. To do so would be to speak in ignorance. How can you possibly respond to someone in an effective and loving way if you do not first understand their views or needs?

A response made in haste without listening carefully will not be very helpful. A thoughtless answer fails to demonstrate that you love others as yourself. Instead it portrays your neighbor as an inconvenience. It often doesn't address their concerns. The result is an unfruitful conversation. While you may feel good that you solved the problem with your words of wisdom, not listening before responding is shameful and ignorant, as Proverbs teaches.

Now it is time for confession. There have been all too many times in the past when I have wasted an opportunity to love my neighbor by not listening attentively. Sometimes I am in a rush and fire off “a word of wisdom” rapidly. Other times I am thinking about other problems and my attention is less than focused. More often, I am so “brilliant” that I know the response before the other person has even finished speaking.

But according to God's Word, a response that is given without first listening carefully is neither a word of wisdom nor brilliant. To the contrary, it is a mark of shame and a benefit to no one, except perhaps your own sense of importance.

Loving your neighbor calls for setting aside the self to focus on the needs of others. You are a new creation in Christ Jesus through Holy Baptism. You are a temple of the Holy Spirit. Speaking without listening is the way of the world, a way that gratifies the self. As children of God, we

are called to a better way. Our focus is on serving our neighbor and addressing his or her needs and concerns.

This is especially important when we are witnessing to others about Jesus. A few months ago, the “L.A.S.S.I.E.” approach to witnessing was introduced. In future articles, each part of this approach will be looked at more closely. The first letter stands for “Listen.” Listening is the starting point for sharing the Gospel. When you set aside distractions and listen attentively, the Holy Spirit will provide you with points of contact. When you understand what someone believes, what is upsetting them, what is missing in their lives, and what viewpoint they have, it makes it possible to respond with love. Rather than forcing a point you want to make, you respond to their needs and concerns.

The second letter in L.A.S.S.I.E. stands for “Ask.” As you listen, ask questions to deepen your understanding. Asking questions demonstrates that you are paying attention and it builds trust. Don't force the questions. They will come naturally as you seek to love your neighbor and learn about them.

Creating faith is always the job of the Holy Spirit. The L.A.S.S.I.E. model is simply a tool to help share the Good News about Jesus as you go about your daily life. When you get the opportunity to talk with someone, set aside your agenda and take the time to listen. Ask questions to gain understanding. This is the launching point to the L.A.S.S.I.E. approach to sharing the hope that you have in Christ Jesus. As you love your neighbor by listening carefully, the Holy Spirit will provide ways to serve them and to share your faith to the glory of God the Father.

**The LASSIE Approach to Witnessing:  
Listen—Ask—Seek—Share—Invite—Encourage**

# Lifeline Update

## A Lot of Processing Involved - For Life

By Rev. John Diener  
Lifeline Team

The words flow from our lips in the course of a worship service, "And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life...", and we may never give them a second thought. But these words frequently tug at my heart and cause me to reflect on a headline from a newspaper article some fifty years ago that simply read, "A Lot of 'Processing' Involved." Pictured were six adults with one of them holding an infant affectionately called "Baby Boy Doe." The article simply stated, "Baby Boy Doe, an abandoned, unwanted foundling may never know how many individuals went into action on his behalf after he was found in a restaurant parking lot when he was less than four hours old."

This little boy's mother chose life and left him in the front seat of a car, knowingly or unknowingly, where a purchasing agent ate daily at the Howard Johnson's restaurant. He was eating that day with a doctor.

As they finished lunch, they came upon the four-hour-old child and put into motion the measures needed to secure the child's safety and well-being. This involved police, social workers, detectives, foster parents and a myriad of people "processing" details and providing care for the protection of life.

The article concluded by stating that the Probate Judge would have the final decision regarding the young boy's future. By the grace of God, this simply was not true. The Lord and giver of life has that distinction. He had people in place "processing" the matter long before his birth, during the chaotic event, and His love and grace for life continues today.

I loved to read. The aforementioned article and others concerning the event were tucked in one of the books on a shelf in my room. My adoptive parents told me that they knew I would run across these articles some time - and when that time came - they knew that would be the right time to tell me that I was adopted.

At age 9, I took the articles to my mother and asked, "Who is Baby Boy Doe?" Her answer was, "It's you, John." Within a few days, there was a gathering of all those who were invested in my upbringing in those first years - Godparents, court workers, the Judge, not to mention my sisters, and many of the children my parents cared for as foster children. There was certainly a great deal of "processing" involved in making me their child.

They had to endure another process at nine years old to help me understand the whole idea of adoption since they were the only parents I ever knew. My parents put the following poem in my hands - one that I carry with me at all times - the legacy



of an adopted child:

Once there were two women who never knew each other.

One you do not remember, the other you call mother.

Two different lives shaped to

make yours one.

One became your guiding star, the other became your sun.

The first gave you life, and the second taught you to live in it;

The first gave you a need for love, and the second was there to give it.

One gave you a nationality, the other gave you a name;

One gave you the seed of talent, the other gave you an aim.

One gave you emotions, the other calmed your fears;

One saw your first sweet smile, the other dried your tears.

One gave you up - it was all that she could do;

The other prayed for a child, and God led her straight to you.

And now you ask me through your tears,

The age-old question through the years:

Heredity or environment - which are you the product of?

Neither, my darling, neither - just two different kinds of love.

Because of all the processing that has gone on in my life, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, these are the things I can share about investing in one another for life.

Except for Jesus, God's only-begotten Son, the ONLY children God has are adopted children. We are familiar with the phrase that "it takes a village to raise a child." Life, with all its complications and challenges, joys and blessings, is to be shared and "processed" with a group of people invested in life.

As a child of God, a champion for life, stand for life 24/7 by investing in the lives of those around you. When it comes to life, from the womb to the aged, your voice, your time, your talents, your gifts will touch lives.

The church family is a "village" invested in the lives of one another through prayer, fellowship, worship and caring and mission ministry. Who can we "invest" in for life with the grace of God?

The Lord and giver of life took an abandoned, unwanted foundling from the front seat of a car and brought him to Christ and led him to serve the Lord in His Church through the "processing" of many people caring about life.

As the words of confession flow from your lips, may the prayer also flow, "Lord, use my life to be invested for life." You may just be the one receiving a hug and a "thank you" for being there and making a difference for life.

# Official Acts

## Pastors - Installations

*The Rev. Justin Laughridge*, December 6, 2015, Sole Pastor (dual congregations), Morning Star, Lakeside, CA; *The Rev. Aaron Boerst*, January 10, 2016, Sole Pastor, Christ, Lake Mills, WI

## Teachers - Commissioning / Installation

*John Driscoll*, December 27, 2015, Teacher, Redeemer, Oakmont, PA

## Calls Accepted

*The Rev. Aaron Boerst*, Sole Pastor, Christ, Lake Mills, WI; *The Rev. Dr. Jason Kouri*, Sole Pastor, Redeemer, Sarnia, ON

## Transfers In

*Deaconess Melissa DeGroot*, November 23, 2015, Indiana District; *The Rev. Dr. Jason Kouri*, January 4, 2016, Lutheran Church-Canada East

## Transfers Out

*The Rev. Salvador Ferrero*, November 14, 2015, Nebraska District; *The Rev. Venice Douglas*, September 30, 2015, Michigan District; *Daniel Huth*, DCE, December 1, 2015, Michigan District; *The Rev. Anthony Appel*, December 2, 2015, Northern Illinois District; *Herman E. Koenig*, December 9, 2015, Florida-Georgia District; *The Rev. Keith Christiansen*, January 11, 2016, Pacific Southwest District

## Removal of Congregation

*Our Savior, Chicago, IL*, November 29, 2015, merged with St. John, Niles, IL to form Ascension, Niles, IL (NID)

## Appointments

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

## New School/Child Care

*Faith Preschool of The Church at Jacob's Well*, Fort Wayne, IN, September 15, 2015

## Change of Status

*Lois Lindeman*, June 15, 2015, Active to Emeritus; *The Rev. Aaron Boerst*, July 1, 2015, Active to Candidate; *Carl Hoppe*, July 28, 2015, Non-Candidate to Emeritus; *Jessica Dixon*, DCE, November 6, 2015, Active to Non-Candidate; *The Rev. J. Derek Mathers*, December 6, 2015, Senior to Associate, St. Luke, North York, ON and to Assistant to the Bishop/Mission Executive, English District; *The Rev. Jeffrey Kunsman*, December 6, 2015, Associate to Senior, St. Luke, North York, ON

## Resigned

*Deaconess Janice Drews*, December 21, 2015; *Evangeline Mathe*, December 1, 2015

## Called to Glory

*The Rev. Nicholas Zipay, Jr.*, October 27, 2015; *The Rev. Daniel C. Brockopp*, January 1, 2016

# Around the District (continuation)

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## Rev. Justin Laughridge installed

Rev. Justin Laughridge was installed as Pastor on December 6, 2015, at Morning Star Lutheran Church in Lakeside, CA by Western Region Vice President Rev. Todd Arnold.

Pastor Laughridge and his wife, Emily, have three children: Noah Jonah and Lilly.



## Rev. Eric Carlson installed

The Rev. Eric S. Carlson was installed as the Associate Pastor of Peace, McMurray, PA on November 29, 2015. Bishop Jamison J. Hardy officiated. The Fellowship Committee hosted a luncheon following the service.



Pastor Eric Carlson and his wife, Korie, have five children.



## Rev. Mathers installed

Rev. Ben Eder (First Vice President) officiated at the installation of Rev. Derek Mathers as the Associate Pastor of St. Luke's, Toronto, ON and Assistant to the Bishop/Mission Executive and at the installation of Rev. Jeff Kunsman as Senior Pastor of St. Luke's, Toronto, ON. The installations were held on Sunday, December 6, 2015 at St. Luke's.