

Concordia CONNECTION

February 2018



NEW STAFF | LENT/HOLY WEEK | 2018 BUDGET | CONSTRUCTION UPDATE | MISSION TRIPS

PASTOR'S NOTE



"Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, live in Him, firmly rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding with thankfulness."

—Colossians 2:6

These days are monumental for Concordia. We are building a new monument to the Lord in our Center for Christian Education that will soon

become a reality. Equally, our lives are living monuments to the grace of God at work in us. Throughout this *Concordia Connection*, you will read about the "ministrative" and "ad-ministrative" work among us that moves this monument building forward. Great things are happening. Let's keep going!

Warmly,

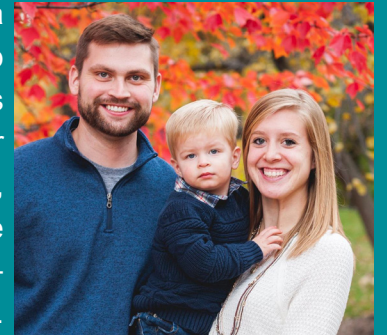
Pastor Seidler

Senior Pastor

sseidler@CKhome.org

CONCORDIA WELCOMES TWO NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Welcome to **Jacob and Rebecca Schultz**, who joined Concordia's ministry this month. Both are assisting on a part-time basis in areas of ministry need and opportunity: Jacob as a pastoral assistant, with emphasis in young adults/families; and Rebecca as the staff leader for Children's Ministry, especially our Sunday morning and Wednesday night offerings. Jacob and Rebecca will serve Concordia through June 2019. They live in Clayton at Concordia Seminary (Jacob is finishing his Ph.D.) with their 2-year-old son, Isaiah, and are expecting a second child in April.



LENT AND EASTER WORSHIP

SACRIFICE

What are you holding onto?

LENT
2018

Lenten Midweek Services

"The Gospel in Seven Words"

Feb. 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21

11:00am, 7:00pm; Sanctuary



Maundy Thursday—March 29

11:00am; Sanctuary

7:00pm; Concordia Center

(sign language interpreted; childcare available)



Good Friday—March 30

11:00am; Sanctuary

7:00pm; Concordia Center

(sign language interpreted; childcare available)



Palm Sunday—March 24/25

Saturday: 5:00pm; Sanctuary

Sunday: 8:15am; Sanctuary

9:30/10:45am; Concordia Center



Easter Worship—March 31/April 1

Saturday: 5:00pm; Sanctuary

Sunday: 6:30am; Sunrise worship

at Oak Hill Cemetery

8:00/9:30am; Sanctuary

9:30/11:00am; Concordia Center

(9:30am sign language interpreted)

ADULTS

Dear Friends in Christ,

Recently I was a breakfast guest at Feed My People. In addition to feeding our bodies that morning, the dedicated folks at Feed My People also fed us with information about the many services offered by this worthwhile organization. They have a food pantry. They have a gently used clothing store. They provide job-search assistance. They counsel struggling families.

- You help support them with your offering gifts.
- They have need of volunteers to help provide assistance to their clientele.

Periodically, I help lead Bible study and devotions for kids at Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA). Located in the Peace Center on South Grand, faithful staff and volunteers minister to immigrants, many of whom are refugees. After-school tutoring, Bible studies and snacks are part of ministering to the kids. Assimilation into our American culture and assistance with housing, furnishing needs and transportation are provided to the families.

- You help support them with your offering gifts.
- They have need of volunteers to help these New Americans make the transition to our culture.

On **December 31, New Year's Eve Day**, I sat in the back row of our Sanctuary (A very good Lutheran place to sit!) and was fed by Pastor Chris Paavola of All Nations Lutheran Church, University City. He told of the challenges of reaching people with the Gospel. He inspired us with the story of their breakthrough into the community. It happened when they discovered a deep need for tutoring after school. And, once people saw how this church was serving their community in the Name of Jesus, they began to open up to hearing about Jesus. Pastor Chris left us with this Gospel insight, ***"Jesus is seen through service."***

Feed My People, Christian Friends of New Americans, our own children's ministries and so many others need volunteers. They need you! In your service they will see Jesus. And, in Jesus, they will receive life!

I hope I have nudged, encouraged—maybe even inspired—you to serve in the Name of Jesus. There are so many opportunities. Contact me. Contact a ministry leader. We would love to help you help people see Jesus!

In His Love and JOY,

Pastor Meggers, Associate Pastor
dmeggers@CKhome.org



"SOUP'S ON"

Beginning **Ash Wednesday, February 14**, "Soup's On"—coordinated by Concordia's Ageless Generation Team—will be served following each 11:00am Wednesday service during Lent, as well as on **Maundy Thursday, March 29**. Volunteers are needed to provide food, as well as to help with set-up/clean-up. Please sign-up for soups, breads, and desserts at the Registration Center. A free-will offering will be collected at each lunch; this year's proceeds to benefit Concordia's Turkey Blessing project and All Nations Lutheran Church in University City. All are welcome for worship, food and fellowship!

HEALTH RESOURCE FAIR

Sunday, February 11, from **9:00-11:00am**—Concordia's "Healthy Living ... Healthy Giving" resource fair will take place in the Concordia Commons and main level Lobby. Representatives from the congregation and community will provide physical, emotional and spiritual resources for all ages, as well as opportunities for service inside and outside our walls. Stop by and enjoy a healthy treat from Smoothie King! Event sponsored by Concordia's Health Ministry Action Team.

MEN'S GOLF LEAGUE

The Concordia Men's 2018 Golf League is looking for players of all skill levels. **Tuesday evenings** from **April through August**. Tee times **4:45-5:15pm** at Paradise Valley Golf and Country Club (44/141). Greens fees: \$17 walking, \$21 with cart. If you would like to sign up or have any questions, contact **Ray Herweck** at ray.herweck@gmail.com, 314-680-9925.

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

LWML Missouri District, 25th Biennial Convention on **June 8-10** at Lodge of Four Seasons in Lake of the Ozarks. The theme this year is **HE Knows My NAME**. Concordia may send two delegates to the convention; if interested, contact **Shirley Meckfessel** at 314-892-3807, smeck@juno.com by **February 18**.

WORSHIP ARTS



It's always interesting to me how Christian holidays fall on different days of the week, or even dates, each year. Just this past Christmas we had to figure out what to do about having Christmas Eve fall on a Sunday, when we would normally have a full morning of services. The date for Easter changes yearly, based on the date of the Jewish Passover, which coincides with the first full moon after the Spring Equinox (when day and night are of equal-ish lengths). In 2018, that puts Easter on April Fool's Day (*He really is risen—NOT kidding!*). The season of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday (40 days before Easter) starts on Valentine's Day (*"To dust you shall return ... and I love you, sweetie!"*). Thank you very much, Vernal (or Spring) Equinox! I look forward to seeing how our preachers connect all of those dots ... LOL 😄

For musicians, Easter is a great day to lead the congregation in song. One of my greatest joys at Concordia is seeing the span of generations sharing their musical gifts (singing and playing) during worship. I hope that many of you will join us for this festive day! You can listen to some selections from last Easter at vimeo.com/133455978

We have opportunities for both instrumentalists and singers.

EASTER ORCHESTRA

Our Easter Orchestra is open to high school students (9th grade) through adults; this group is made up of woodwind, brass, strings, and percussion players. Each year, I work to put together musical arrangements that blend the best of our traditional Easter hymnody with the familiar sounds of modern worship songs. If you would like to participate, please contact me at bknorp@CKhome.org as soon as possible, so I know which parts to prepare. I will send out music prior to the first rehearsal to allow for individual practice time.

Wednesday, March 28 – Rehearsal from 7:00-8:30pm in the Concordia Center

Saturday, March 31 – Rehearsal from 9:00-10:30am in the Concordia Center

Sunday, April 1 – Performance during Concordia Center Worship at 9:30am and 11:00am

EASTER CHOIR

Our Easter Choir will sing during the Sanctuary services under the leadership of Dr. Jim Marriott. If you plan to participate, please contact Jim at jmarriott@CKhome.org, so he has an idea of how many to expect. The rehearsal and singing dates are:

**Wednesday, March 28 –
Rehearsal from 7:00-8:30pm
in the Sanctuary balcony**

**Saturday, March 31 –
Rehearsal from 9:00-10:30am
in the Sanctuary balcony**

**Sunday, April 1 –
Performance during Sanctuary
Worship at 8:00am and 9:30am**

Brendan Knorp

Director for the Worship Arts
bknorp@CKhome.org

ASH WEDNESDAY–FEBRUARY 14

7:00am - A brief Order of Confession and imposition of ashes designed for those who want to observe Ash Wednesday prior to heading to work or school. The service is finished by 7:30am.

11:00am - Service of Confession and imposition of ashes with Communion in the Sanctuary.

"Soup's On"

Following worship, a soup lunch will be served in the Concordia Commons. A free-will offering will be taken, with proceeds supporting the Turkey Blessing and All Nations Lutheran Church in University City. All are welcome to join us for worship, food and fellowship!

7:00pm - Family worship in the Concordia Center with Communion. ASL sign language interpreter. Childcare available; no regularly scheduled Wednesday events that night.

EXECUTIVE REPORT



ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

Concordia Sets an Ambitious Two-Year Financial Goal

Wise financial management is a hallmark and pride point for our congregation's ministry. With the resources God provides, our staff and lay leaders work hard to balance budgets and move ministry to impact more people. 2018 and 2019 will be critical years for our ministry life together. Over the course of 24 months, we will spend—as a congregation—\$13.3 million. \$5.5 million will fund our ministry operations—the cost to compensate our staff, pay our utility bills and support our ministry program. \$7.8 million will fund the cost of our new Center for Christian Education—a major building project that will house our youth and Christ Community Lutheran School (CCLS) ministry. As is our preference and recent practice, we would prefer to pay for these ministry and building expenses in cash. We value having minimal long-term indebtedness.

The great joy as we begin 2018 is a \$3.46 million cash balance in our building construction bank account. In other words, over the remaining 23 months of this two-year period, we have a \$9.7 million goal to achieve.

As we move through this year and next, our Executive Director (Chief Operating Officer), Kristin Anderson, will update us on how this two-year goal is progressing. Additionally, Pastor Seidler will be reaching out to new members and others to invite their “intentional, sacrificial and joyful” participation in this ministry and the Our Next Step capital campaign to support the new building.

2018 BUDGET

Per congregational by-laws, the congregation must approve the annual budget. That approval will take place at our regularly scheduled **Congregational Voters' Assembly Meeting on Monday, February 5, at 7:00pm in the Dining Hall**. The budget to be approved is shown below. Please contact me with any questions.

	Draft Budget 2018	Results 2017	Increase	%
<u>Revenues</u>				
Contributions	\$2,359,000	\$2,335,348	\$23,652	1%
Other Income	\$101,800	\$112,675	\$(10,875)	-10%
Lutheran Foundation Grant	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$(5,000)	-33%
Concordia Foundation Support	\$30,000	\$-	\$(30,000)	
<u>CCLS Facility Fees</u>	<u>\$157,000</u>	<u>\$153,753</u>	<u>\$3,247</u>	<u>2%</u>
Total Revenues	\$2,657,800	\$2,616,776	\$41,024	2%
<u>Operating Expenses</u>				
Personnel	\$1,334,000	\$1,293,243	\$40,757	3%
Property	\$297,200	\$270,476	\$26,724	10%
Program				
Ministry Programs	\$165,100	\$172,711	\$(7,611)	-4%
Administration	<u>\$77,500</u>	<u>\$75,059</u>	<u>\$2,441</u>	<u>3%</u>
	\$242,600	\$247,770	\$(5,170)	-2%
Parochial Education				
CCLS	\$611,000	\$601,780	\$9,220	2%
Lutheran High School	<u>\$43,000</u>	<u>\$38,000</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>13%</u>
	\$654,000	\$639,780	\$14,220	2%
Total Operating Expenses	\$2,527,800	\$2,451,269	\$76,531	3%
<u>Debt Service</u>				
Principal	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$-	0%
Interest	\$30,000	\$55,799	\$25,799	-46%
	<u>\$130,000</u>	<u>\$155,799</u>	<u>\$25,799</u>	<u>-17%</u>
Total Expenses	\$2,657,800	\$2,607,068	\$50,732	2%
Surplus (deficit)	\$-	\$9,708	\$(9,708)	

EXECUTIVE REPORT

2017 YEAR-END HIGHLIGHTS

Concordia finished very strong in 2017! December offerings included:

\$475,000 Inbound (previous record was in 2016 with \$420,000; average is around \$360,000)

\$484,000 Capital (Our Next Step) – To date we have \$3.6 million received on \$7.6 million pledged!

Other 2017 highlights include: almost \$30,000 for hurricane relief (of which \$10,000 was matched by the Lutheran Foundation) and \$40,000 for the Men's Ministry Turkey Blessing.

We finished the year with a surplus of \$9,708. Actually, it could have been more, but I did not ask for an allocation from the Concordia Foundation; in most years, we receive around \$30,000 from the Concordia Foundation who holds our endowments. Because we ended the year with a surplus, we did not need the allocation and can keep that money invested for future ministry!

VERY IMPORTANT - PLEASE REVIEW 2017 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

Contribution statements were sent out on January 17. **It is VERY IMPORTANT that you review these for accuracy, especially to make sure we allocated your funds correctly between Inbound and Our Next Step capital campaign.** As we begin to send our financials to banks for construction loans, it is important that they are accurate; we don't want to have to make adjustment later in the year. Please note our system only allows us to email to the family member designated as "Primary" in our database. For married couples, this is defined by our system as the husband. If we do not have your email address, your statement was mailed. Please contact **Kelly Ritter** at 314-822-7772 x121 if you have any questions. Thanks!

CONCORDIA BOND DEBT PAYOFF AND REFINANCE

Concordia currently has \$1.5 million left of bond debt from our 2002 Concordia Center and Recreation Center project. The bank that holds the letter of credit requested we pay off the debt in 2018, before we would need a construction loan on the Our Next Step project. The Finance Committee moved forward on that request and paperwork was submitted; the remainder of the bond debt will be paid on **March 1, 2018**. We will eventually need to refinance the bond debt, but not immediately because we have the cash on hand. It would be poor management to take out a loan and pay interest when we have the cash. As construction costs become steady in early/late Summer, we will most likely need to refinance then. Until then, we are debt free and not paying any interest!

Kristin Anderson, Executive Director
kanderson@CKhome.org

OUR NEXT STEP

We are in the middle of the Kirkwood approval process. Both Property and Zoning (P & Z), as well as the Architectural Review Board (ARB), approved Concordia's project! On February 1 at 7:00pm, Kirkwood City Council held a public meeting to discuss our plan. If that went well, our project will be on the City Council agenda for approval on **February 15**.



In February we should receive our GMP (Guaranteed Maximum Price) from Korte. This is another big milestone! There will most likely be some decisions we need to make based on how much we desire certain elements. It is important to keep our project in budget! We currently have a spreadsheet of additional options we would like; examples would be more brick on the outside of the building to please the ARB or a walk-in freezer/cooler in the new kitchen, because it is more convenient and saves on future maintenance. Other items, such as an additional restroom in the Early Childhood playroom, are more like "nice to have" rather than "need."

Assuming we get final approval from Kirkwood and negotiate a GMP with desired options, we will have the construction drawings finalized and start applying for permits. Permitting is, hopefully, a short three-week process, but there will be issues outside our control. If all goes as planned, Korte will begin groundbreaking near the end of April, with a goal of completing the parking lot and new playground in June. Construction on the new building (Center for Christian Education) would begin shortly thereafter. Concordia will hold an official groundbreaking in April, as well. Look for more details soon. **It will be a time for thanksgiving and celebration!**

CK YOUTH

JR. YOUTH MINISTRY

First Communion Class

A two-class opportunity for those in 6th-8th grade, along with a parent or faith mentor, designed to prepare their hearts to receive First Communion. These classes will be offered on **Wednesdays, February 28** and **March 7**, from **6:00-8:00pm**. Sign up for the classes at CKhome.org/firstcommunion.

First Communion & Celebration Dinner

Those who complete the two classes for First Communion will, in turn, celebrate their First Communion during the **evening Maundy Thursday service on March 29**. Students will have a chance to approach the Table (altar) with their families, commune, and then spend some time having a blessing spoken over them by their families. Prior to the service, mark this faith milestone together as a family in the Dining Hall with a celebratory catered meal.



SR. YOUTH MINISTRY

Summer Mission Trip 2018

Disaster Recovery in Houston, Texas

July 7-15—REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

Hurricane Harvey brought devastation to south Texas on a scale that has never been seen before, a scale that is impossible to describe. While some places on relatively higher ground emerged with only minor damage, others just a few feet lower in elevation were swamped. Entire neighborhoods were flooded, many up to the rooftops. When you actually see it, the mind reels. Block after block, mile after mile, community after community, the scene is the same. Come join the cause! All students who will be in 9th-12th grade in the 2018-2019 school year are invited! We will be joining 400 other high school youth from around the nation to serve and minister to people in Houston, Texas.



Disaster recovery is totally different—the situation, and the needs, literally change every day. All we can tell you at this point is that you will be desperately needed. Typically, once an affected house is emptied, it has to be gutted down to the studs. Drywall, insulation, carpeting—literally everything touched by water must be removed. It's a dirty job, but it's the only way! Then, everything that is left must be treated to remove mildew before drywall is rehung, finished, and painted. We will do our best to inform you what you might expect during this mission—but the best advice is to expect the unexpected!

REGISTER AT CKHOME.ORG/HOUSTONMISSION

Jayme Nichols, DCE

Minister to Youth

jnichols@CKhome.org



As January brought in some cold temperatures and Spring is still a couple months away, we encourage you to enjoy the cozy Winter months and spend some quality time deepening your faith lives, together, as a family. Looking for ideas? Read further:

Learn Another Culture

The season of Epiphany is all about Jesus' light to the world. As a family, pick a country and learn all you can about its customs, people, language, food and history. Find a recipe that lifts up the local flavors. Pray for the country and its people. Or, better yet, contact our ministry partner, Christian Friends of New Americans (CFNA), to get to know another culture personally!

Build a Fort

Who doesn't love a fort? Gather blankets, tables, pillows, sheets and chairs to make a fort. Have everyone come inside and offer thanks for shelter. Say a prayer for those who don't have adequate shelter. Contact Feed My People for ways you can help the homeless in St. Louis.

Plan Devotion and Worship Time during Lent

Find a family devotional that you can read together each day during Lent. Or, have worship in your home one day. Get together to pray, sing songs, read the Bible and bless one another. You can use your church bulletins or make up your own order. Most importantly, have fun and take turns leading!

Instead of Sacrificing, Serve during Lent

Decide as a family what you want to do to get into the community and share your love and time. Perhaps the nursing home, library or animal shelter has opportunities. Write a letter each week to someone who doesn't always get thanked, and tell them how much you appreciate their work and notice all they do (school janitors, bus drivers, secretaries, mail carriers, etc.). Talk about all the ways you can show God's love through service, a smile, a lending hand or listening.

Intentionally Rest and Recharge

Take time to simply be. Light candles. Sit by the fire. Turn off cell phones and televisions. Be together as a family. Read books or play games. Share your highs and lows. Look each other in the eyes. Know that in those still, quiet moments God's voice can be heard.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS) 2018 – GEAR UP! GET READY! GAME ON! JUNE 2-8, 2018

Are you ready to get your **Game On**? That is our theme for 2018 VBS! Based on 2 Peter 1:3, it teaches that,

"His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness."

IMPORTANT CHANGE: This year, VBS Volunteer Recruitment runs February through March, with **Child Registration opening around April 1**. We are making this intentional change for the sake of the children and the people who serve. It is important we have enough volunteers to ensure the kids' experience is positive, safe and rewarding. We will set the number of children we can accommodate based on the number of volunteers we recruit. We desire quality over quantity and commit to a well-organized, structured program for the volunteers, making it easy, efficient and rewarding. Look for ways to sign up to help in the next couple of weeks!

ONGOING KIDSMIN FAITH-BUILDING PROGRAMS

Both Concordia Kids Night and KidsMin Sunday are off to great starts in 2018! In the first three weeks of January, **128 kids** attended one of these faith-building programs. We have 313 active members, ages 3 years old–5th grade. That means 41% have already engaged in Children's Ministry in just the first three weeks! We hope to keep increasing that number. If your family has not yet participated in Concordia Kids Night or KidsMin Sunday, we invite you to give it a try! Contact **Rebecca Schultz** at rschultz@CKhome.org for more information or visit our website at CKhome.org/children.

Our children's ministries meet:

- **Concordia Kids Night – Wednesdays, 5:00-7:45pm (1st-5th Grade)**
- **KidsMin – Sundays, 9:20-10:20am (3 years old–5th Grade)**

BELIZE MISSION VALENTINE'S DATE NIGHT

Drop off your kids at Concordia and enjoy a night out to celebrate Valentine's Day! The Belize mission team will babysit your kiddos on **Friday, February 16**, from **6:00-10:00pm**. While you enjoy a quiet dinner out, your kids will play games and make crafts in the Dining Hall. Snacks will be provided. A free-will donation will be accepted. All ages welcome!

For **4th/5th graders**, this will be our **February EPIC Night**. We will gather with the other kids for a meal. Then, separately, our EPIC Kids will get a taste of what Confirmation will be like with an activity-centered learning experience leading to small group conversation/prayer time. Nothing heavy, but something meaningful. Pastor Seidler will have some parents help with this activity, as well. (No fee for EPIC night; please donate to the Belize mission.) **Register at CKhome.org/datenight.**



CHRIST COMMUNITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

CONCORDIA/CCLS PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS-REQUIRED FOR CCLS PARENTS

All CCLS families with children in kindergarten through 8th grade during the 2018-2019 school year must attend a partnership meeting. The 30-minute session will cover our commitment to CCLS, an update on the new Center for Christian Education and also outline our expectations of CCLS families at Concordia. **Attendance at one of these meetings is required to get your Pastor Card signed for the 2018-2019 school year.** Please plan on attending ONE of the following meetings in the Atrium Room at Concordia:

Sunday, February 11 – 10:45am

Sunday, February 25 – 10:45am

Wednesday, February 28 – 6:00pm



Christ Community Lutheran School

CHRIST COMMUNITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL (CCLS) ENROLLMENT – MUST ACT QUICKLY

Christ Community Lutheran School is currently welcoming applications for children age 6 weeks through 8th grade. To begin your story at CCLS, visit ccls-stlouis.org or contact **Leanna Butterfield**, Director of Enrollment, at 314-740-5417 or LButterfield@ccls-stlouis.org for more information. **Act quickly, as some classes have already reached capacity and others only have a few available spots remaining.**

CCLS TRIVIA NIGHT

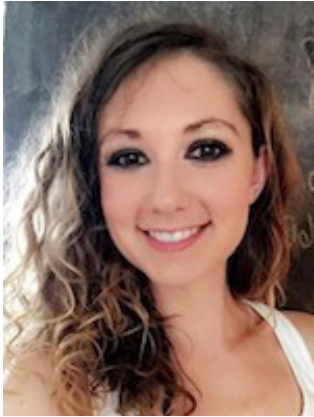
Join us **Friday, March 2, 6:00-10:00pm**, for an “unquestionably” good time! Come for the competition or just for the food, drinks, and fun. Sign up as a table of 8 (\$160) or as an individual/couple. You won't want to miss our “CCLS Experience” silent auction items and sign-up parties. Free soda and snacks, or bring your own food and adult beverages. Hosted by the CCLS 8th Grade Class at Concordia in the Gym. Proceeds support the 8th Grade Class Trip and CCLS Tuition Assistance Funds. For more information and to register to attend, visit ccls-stlouis.org.

BE FAITHFUL MOMENT

The Wednesday-morning ladies LifeLight class adopted four families this year. They had two families from Farragut School, as well as two of Concordia's Seminary fieldworkers. Through the generosity of all our ladies, we were able to provide the beds and TV needed by one family and the kitchen appliances needed by another. This was accompanied by clothing, books, toys and shoes for all.



SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY



For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

– Psalm 139:13-14



BIBLE FELLOWSHIP FOR ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Individuals with disabilities—of all ages—have the right to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and to know they are valued by God and God's people.

Concordia's Special Needs Ministry will begin offering a weekly Bible fellowship class for adults with special needs, ages 18 and up on **Tuesdays** from **6:00-7:15pm** in the Library. The class will begin with Biblical instruction, delivered in a way that is accessible to adults with special learning needs, and conclude with refreshments and conversation. To sign up or for more information, contact me.

BIBLE STUDY FOR PARENTS OF A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Bible study will follow the book ***Held: Learning to Live in God's Grip***.

"In this Bible study written for special-needs parents by special-needs parents, you will learn you are not alone. Even when life feels out of control, it will help you remember He is in control. You will learn there is a future hope we all can cling to. You will learn there are others out there, just like you, who need to be shown they are also in the grip of God."

This is an informal, yet structured, time for family members to come together in fellowship with others who can relate to life with a child with special needs. The Bible study meets at Concordia on **Wednesdays** from **6:30-7:45pm** on the following dates: **February 21, March 14, April 4 and April 25**. Grandparents and caregivers are invited, as well. If you would like to attend, are in need of childcare or would like more information, please contact me.

Jessica Crawford

Director of Children and Families with Special Needs

jcrawford@CKhome.org

314-374-0682

CKDEAF MINISTRY

ASL Bible Study

A time for both the hearing and deaf members of Concordia to come together and study God's Word. Class meets the **2nd and 4th Sundays** of the month from **10:45-11:45am** in the Library.

ASL Class

CK Deaf invites our Concordia family to learn American Sign Language (ASL)! Class meets the **1st and 3rd Wednesdays** of each month from **7:00-8:00pm** in the Library. All ages and abilities welcome.



OUTBOUND MINISTRIES

Again during Spring Break, Concordia will send two mission trips to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and to serve those in both Bermudian Landing, Belize; and Kawete, Uganda. Please read on to learn how you can help support their efforts.

UGANDA MISSION TRIP INFORMATION & SUPPLY NEEDS

For the past four years, Christ Community International (CCI), with generous support from Concordia Lutheran Church, CCLS-St. Louis and many other supporters, has taken teams twice yearly to Kawete, Uganda, to serve the students, staff and community of Christ Community Lutheran School, Kawete, Uganda. Activities while on the ground include running a medical clinic, providing Bible studies for all ages, educational support, a sponsorship program, relationship building, and infrastructure building/repair among many other activities.

CHRIST COMMUNITY INTERNATIONAL



"EXPRESSING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH SERVICE"

On **Sunday, February 25**, join Mission Coordinators, Kent and Katie Killian, as they share stories of the team visits, explain the mission in more detail and discuss CCI's goals for the future. Everyone is welcome, whether you are just curious about how God is working through the Lutheran Church of Uganda or may want more information about joining a mission team in the future. Join us at **10:45am** in the Dining Hall!

A group travels again this Spring (**March 15-25**). The list below includes all needed items; please leave donations at the Giving Center in the Concordia Center Commons.

Medical:

- Youth prescription eyewear
- Monetary donations for purchasing medicines in Uganda

Personal Hygiene:

- Bar soap
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste (NOT toothbrushes)
- Floss
- Razors for men
- Crochet washcloths

School Supplies:

- Pencils (already sharpened)
- Blue and red ink pens
- Pink erasers (NOT pencil toppers)
- Rulers
- Basic pencil sharpeners (no shavings container)

Monetary donations for desks

Pillowcase dresses

Paperback Bibles

BELIZE MISSION TRIP NEEDS & FUNDRAISERS

Sixteen travelers, from grade schoolers to grandparents, will head to Belize over Spring Break to serve the people of Bermudian Landing. The team—working side-by-side with local church members—will lead Bible studies; visit pre-schools; prayer walk; and work on construction projects on the newly built church, which needs exterior painting and new flooring in the youth room. A weekend family day that includes a sports camp and a movie night for all ages is also planned. The team will visit a nursing home that has recently opened a resale shop to help generate funds. In addition to visiting with the residents there and sharing God's Word, the team will help stock the shop with gently used items.

They are also collecting adult diapers to take with them; bring them to the Giving Center in the Concordia Commons.

To help fund the trip, please read about the Valentine's Date Night on page 9.

CFNA THANK YOU!

Thank you, Concordians, for giving so many blankets! It meant so much to so many who live in cold, drafty apartments and probably kept some away from the doctor. The warmth of your love and generosity is greatly appreciated. Come and visit. You will be welcomed with a cup of Nepali tea or Ethiopian coffee ... or, call **Carol Buckman** at 314-517-8513 to arrange a visit!



GIVING TREE

Beginning **Ash Wednesday, February 14**, make Concordia's "Giving Tree"—located at the Giving Center in the Concordia Commons—part of your Lenten offering. Choose a tag from the tree, purchase and return the item(s) by **Good Friday, March 30**. Your contributions will be shared with a number of organizations in our community that serve the less fortunate.



COUNCIL CORNER



On **January 15, 2018**, Council held its regularly scheduled meeting at Concordia. After an opening prayer and blessing by Pastor Seidler, the first order of business was approval of the Official Acts of the Church for 2017. Jacob Schultz, Concordia's newest staff member, attended the meeting, which gave leadership an opportunity to meet and interact with him as he begins his ministry at Concordia. Council also reviewed Pastor Seidler's and the staff's compliance with the church's limitation policies. While Pastor Seidler and the staff are not out-of-compliance with any limitation policy, a committee was formulated to review and follow-up on the language of several limitation policies for potential revision. Matt Wilson, Council Vice-President, will lead the committee and report back on findings in **March**.

Kristin Anderson, Concordia's Executive Director (Chief Operating Officer), reported on the church's financial status, the current status of the Our Next Step capital campaign effort, and the incredible outpouring of generosity by the congregation as we closed out 2017. Kristin also provided details about the plans next month to set up a search committee to lead the effort to fill a full-time youth position to partner with Jayme Nichols in Youth Ministry. Finally, Kristin updated Council on the bond debt currently held by Bank of America and the bank's desire to not renew the related financing. She also discussed her recommendation that the church pay off this debt on **March 1, 2018**.

Pastor Seidler concluded the meeting by highlighting three important "strategic kernels" he plans to emphasize in 2018: increasing the breadth and depth (quantity and quality) of discipleship experience across all generations, with an emphasis on achieving more active engagement beyond worship in spiritually significant activities; the elevation of lay leadership; and completion of the building project.

Contact me at if you have any questions or would like to suggest a topic for inclusion on the next Council meeting agenda.

Matt Schelp

Council President

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PRE-MARRIAGE SEMINAR

Many couples today are spending a great deal of time and money planning for their wedding day, but spending little, if any, time planning for their future marriage. You must pass a test before you receive your driver's license, yet you can get a marriage license for just a few dollars. A successful relationship requires more preparation than an elaborate wedding!

Concordia values the importance of strong Christian families and wants to support and encourage couples who are planning to be married. We require each couple that will be married at Concordia to attend a **Pre-Marriage Seminar, led by Charlie and Debbie Davis**. This seminar will be based on the **PREPARE/ENRICH inventory** and will cover marriage expectations, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual expectations, children/parenting, family/friends, role relationships and spiritual beliefs. Charlie and Debbie look forward to working with each couple, helping them to prepare for a lifelong marriage. They are **trained PREPARE/ENRICH facilitators** and have been leading these seminars at Concordia for more than 10 years.



The **seminar dates for 2018** are Saturdays, March 3, June 2, September 1 and December 1, from **10:00am-4:00pm**. Register at CKhome.org/weddings.



CONCORDIA
Lutheran Church

BE STILL, BE ONE, BE FAITHFUL

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