



# PEAKS AND VALLEYS

## DISTRICT NEWS

### *Know the Truth, Understand the Culture, Live the Faith*

As I took office in June, my thoughts turned to developing a focus for the next three years. The focus quickly took root from something that has always been on my heart, and that is reaching those who do not yet know Jesus Christ as Savior with the precious Gospel message.



**Rev. Roger Schlechte**  
District President

The focus, meant for individuals and congregations, comprises three parts:

- ▶ Know the Truth
- ▶ Understand the Culture
- ▶ Live the Faith

Jesus proclaims that God's Word is truth. He says that:

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life." — JOHN 14:6

The truth of the matter is that no one can be forgiven, no one can receive life and salvation except through Jesus.

The truths of God's Word are continually and carefully proclaimed and taught in our churches, schools and early childhood centers, in formal and

informal settings. While we articulate the clear message of the Gospel, people are not crowding into the sanctuaries to hear what we so appreciate and need. Why?

That brings us to the next phrase: We need to "understand the culture." The Western church no longer occupies a primary place in the community. Community leaders and residents may not feel the church has anything to offer them. They may even consider the church to be out of date and out of touch with the current values of much of the population. At best, the church might be considered a mere relic of the past.

Although community residents may not enter the church doors, we as members of the church exit them each Sunday with our hearts filled with peace, joy, love and hope. We converse with our neighbors. We interact with our fellow employees on Monday morning and throughout the week. We serve in community organizations with fellow citizens.

People in our neighborhoods, places of employment, schools, community organizations, grocery stores, barber shops, salons and other venues that we



frequent observe how we speak and how we live. That brings us to the third phrase: "Live the faith."

We want people to see us as people filled with hope, and with love and care for others. We live out our faith not only on Sunday mornings, but every day and night of the week! As followers of Jesus, we represent Him wherever we

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# Holy Baptism in Juárez, Mexico



Photo © LCMS, Erik M. Lunsford

▲ The Rev. Javier Lozano, pastor of Iglesia De La Santa Biblia (Church of the Holy Bible) in the Rancho Anapra community of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, baptizes a child.

◀ The Rev. Stephen Heimer, pastor of Zion, El Paso, baptizes Kimberly.

For 10-year-old Kimberly, Oct. 26 was no ordinary day. In a dusty corner of Anapra, Mexico, Kimberly and nearly 25 other children and adults were rescued forever from sin, death and the devil through the waters of Holy Baptism.

Kimberly is one of many children affected by violence in this community on the edge of Juárez. When she was just 4 years old, her father's decision to pay the rent rather than the drug cartel cost him and his wife their lives.

"The kids were suffering from a kind of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from the violence that erupted in Juárez in 2006," said Elvira Viramontes, who serves with Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care (YLM), a Rocky Mountain District ministry and LCMS Recognized Service Organization in El Paso, Texas ([www.ylm.org](http://www.ylm.org)).

In 2014, a grant of \$13,500 from LCMS World Relief and Human Care



The Rev. Dr. Karl Heimer, pastor of San Pablo Lutheran Church, El Paso, Texas, and president of Ysleta Lutheran Mission Human Care, greets a young girl before her baptism.

helped YLM bring PTSD training to staff and volunteers working in six separate missions in Juárez. Four years later, the training continues to be put to good use. Under the leadership of Deaconess Rosy Lira, the children at YLM's mission site in Anapra are taught, fed and cared for in body and soul.

"We've been outside under the strong sun. We've been cold. ... But here they

are, seeking every day that spiritual food," Lira said.

As Kimberly raised her dripping head after being baptized by the Rev. Stephen Heimer, chief operating officer of YLM, on that warm October day, the crowd cheered and praised God.

"We don't want to define them by their tragedy, especially Kimberly, because her dad and mom did come to faith before they were killed," Heimer said. "I want her to know that she'll see them in heaven, that she can live her life not defined by that tragedy but by what Jesus brings to her."

Rev. Stephen Heimer, who serves as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, El Paso, is the son of Rev. Dr. Karl Heimer, pastor of San Pablo Lutheran Church, El Paso. Karl, YLM president and chief executive officer, was called in 1982 to serve at San Pablo.

A full version of this article is available at [engage.lcms.org/mexico-baptisms-winter-2019](http://engage.lcms.org/mexico-baptisms-winter-2019).

# Blessings in Arvada

The Rev. Dr. Robert Macina was installed as pastor of Risen Christ, Arvada, Colo., on Oct. 14. Rev. Roger Schlechte, district president, officiated; Rev. Dwight Hellmers, Risen Christ vacancy pastor, was the liturgist; and Rev. Pete Scheele, circuit visitor, was the lector. From left, Revs. Tom Lock, Victor Young, Schlechte, Wayne Woolery, Hellmers, Macina, Jared Melius, Pete Scheele, Paul Rockrohr and Adrian Sherrill.



# 80 YEARS!

On Nov. 19, Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Santa Fe, N.M., celebrated its 80th anniversary. The official name of the congregation when it was organized on Nov. 10, 1938, was Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church of The Unaltered Augsburg Confession (U.A.C.), Santa Fe, Santa Fe County.

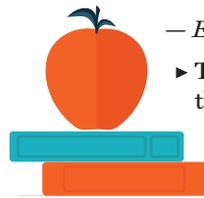
The following prayer is offered in thanksgiving for God's abundant blessings:

Almighty and most merciful God, Your glory fills the whole earth. You cannot be contained in houses built by men. And yet we pray that Your presence will continue to be shown to the pastor and people of this congregation and the work you have set before them. Thank you for the privilege and blessing of proclaiming the Gospel of Your Son, Jesus Christ for 80 years to this community. For those who have gone before, including our founders, we praise You for moving them to establish this congregation, and dedicating themselves and their posterity to the faithful preaching and teaching of God's holy Law and Gospel. Continue to bless, O Lord God, the work You have placed before us, so that Your kingdom may come and souls be won for all eternity; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

# District educators honored

At the Rocky Mountain District Educators Conference in October, these educators were presented with the following awards:

- **Mary Martin**, Mission Lutheran School, Las Cruces, N.M. — *Administrator*
- **Andrew Graham**, Prince of Peace Lutheran School, Cedar Crest, N.M.



— *Educator*

- **Teckla Coerber**, Redeemer Lutheran Preschool, Fort Collins, Colo.

— *Early Childhood Director*

Congratulations to these outstanding educators! We thank them for their service to the children in our district.

# MESSAGE

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are, in whatever we do and in whatever we say. Our interactions with others in our occupations and our vocations are opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ, the One who loved and served us by giving His life that we might have life eternal.

As we live the faith, our prayer is that others would be drawn to the truth of Jesus, and that we would have the opportunity to speak of His love and how He served us. Rejoice in the truth of your salvation and joyfully live the faith in your vocation!

**In Christ's love and service,**  
The Rev. Roger Schlechte  
[rschlechte@rm.lcms.org](mailto:rschlechte@rm.lcms.org)

# March issue deadline: Jan. 15



**Send news to Jan Hoener:**

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# Rocky Mountain District Office

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# New sign in Denver

On Sept. 30, Christ Lutheran Church, Denver, dedicated a new electronic sign. The sign was paid for in part by memorials in memory of Esther Hagemann, the widow of Rev. Harold Hagemann, who served at Christ. For many years, Esther changed the message on the old church sign.



# Mount Hope welcomes new pastor



Rev. Carl Frank was recently installed as pastor of Mount Hope Lutheran Church, Evergreen, Colo., on Reformation Sunday Oct. 28. From left, Revs. Dr. Robert Macina, Pete Scheele, Frank, Dwight Hellmers and Craig Thomas.

# Gospel Gap grants awarded

A highlight of the district Board of Directors meeting held Nov. 5-6 was the acceptance of Gospel Gap grant applications and the awarding of funds in support of three applications.

▶ A \$3,065 grant was awarded to St. John's, Salt Lake City, and the Utah Circuit in support of the tuition

costs for an Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) student.

- ▶ A \$20,000 grant was awarded in support of Rev. Adam DeGroot, St. Andrews, Albuquerque, N.M.
- ▶ A \$20,000 grant was awarded to support the ministry at Relaunch

# Holy Trinity to celebrate 10th anniversary

All are invited to join Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Riverton, Utah, on Jan. 27 to celebrate its 10th anniversary. Rev. Roger Schlechte, Rocky Mountain District president, will deliver the address and sermon. For more information, contact Rev. Al Borchert at 801-860-6412.

## DISTRICT CALLS/ CHANGES

### Calls accepted

- ▶ **The Rev. Michael Manz**, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Greendale, Ind., to Shepherd of the Springs, Colorado Springs, Colo.
- ▶ **Amanda Lowe**, Plano, Texas, candidate status, to Prince of Peace, Carrollton, Texas

### Change of Status

- ▶ **The Rev. Griffith Pritchard**, Trinity, Alamosa, Colo., associate pastor to emeritus
- ▶ **JoAnn Stibrich**, Mount Olive, Aurora, Colo., to emeritus

### Transfers

- ▶ **The Rev. Kenneth DeSoto**, candidate status, Rocky Mountain District to Southern District
- ▶ **The Rev. Michael Flannery**, Tijeras, N.M., emeritus, Montana District to Rocky Mountain District

Denver and the work being done by the circuit in the Highlands area of Denver.

We praise God for the initiatives of the circuit pastors and congregations, for the Gospel Gap grant process, and for the resources to make these awards possible and our partnership in ministry. To Him be the glory and praise!