



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

Forgiveness... Share it!



Rev. Roger Schlechte
District President

“I can forgive, but I can never forget!” Have you ever heard these words or spoken them yourself?

So what’s the deal with “never forgetting?” Such words give evidence of tremendous hurt or disappointment experienced from a family member, a neighbor, a co-worker, a fellow church member or someone unknown.

Yet note that God speaks of remembering sins no more (Heb. 8:12). How can that be? Can God forget sins? Of course not! God never experiences memory lapses!

In remembering our sin no more, God chooses not to hold it against us. Rather, God forgives sin through Jesus’ blood shed on a rugged cross. Furthermore, God desires that His forgiveness be shared with all people.

Can you recall a situation when you felt that it was going to be



LCMS/Erin M. Lumford

impossible to forgive? Think about what angered you? How had you been hurt, physically or emotionally?

Yet, even in the most tragic situations, forgiveness needs to be given. Intellectually, we know how important it is to forgive. We pray in the Lord’s Prayer:

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

We have learned that it’s serious business not to forgive. In context of the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus said:

“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive

others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

— Matt. 6:14-15

Humanly speaking, forgiveness may seem impossible. However, through God’s forgiveness and the power of the Holy Spirit, we, too, can forgive. We who have been forgiven of *all* our sin will be able to forgive those who have sinned against us.

Will you be able to forget? Probably not! Our memories are too good! Since we’re unable to forget, it becomes a matter of what we do with our memory of the offense. We do not hold

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LIFE MINISTRY ANNOUNCES **VIRTUAL LIFE CONFERENCE**



LCMS Life Ministry will host its first-ever virtual life conference March 19–20, under the theme “Making Disciples: Valuing Life.” Registration is open now.

“This conference is for everyone,” explains Life Ministry Director Deaconess Tiffany Manor. “The pandemic constraints have given us an opportunity to share presentations by many experts with students of all ages, missionaries, church workers and congregation members who couldn’t make it to previous in-person events.” And that includes you!

Conference sessions will help you explore a distinctly Lutheran understanding of the sanctity of human life, specifically as it pertains to:

- » Speaking for life in the public square;
- » Caring for life in your community; and
- » Teaching about human life.

Hear from theologians and human care advocates, including LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, Focus on the Family

Vice-President of External and Government Relations Timothy Goeglein, and Deaconess Manor.

Explore a variety of life topics for participants of all ages, with your family, congregation or on your own. A Spanish track — with sessions offered in the language — will be available as well.

“More than ever we need to be focused on the truth of our triune God’s value of all human life no matter a person’s stage of development or abilities,” Manor notes.

Join in:

- » Access the conference by livestreaming, watching on-demand videos and engaging with speakers through question-and-answer opportunities.
- » Register individually, or as groups of 10 for a group registration discount. (Consider gathering a group at a local congregation to stream the conference together.)

To register for the conference or for more information, visit lcms-life.org.



DISTRICT CALLS

Calls accepted

- ▶ **Rev. Dennis Lucero**, emeritus, Colorado Springs, Colo., to Resurrection, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Calls declined

- ▶ **Rev. Luther Brown**, Immanuel, Ellsworth, Kan., to Immanuel, Haxtun, Colo.

NEW OFFICES

for Rocky Mountain District

You can now find the district offices at

**88 Inverness Circle East,
Unit A-210,
Englewood, CO
80112**



FORGIVENESS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



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on to it, as though nursing a grudge. Rather, we seek God's help to let it go, to forgive, to move beyond, and we seek His peace and comfort in the midst of our hurt and disappointment.

As we remember Jesus' perfect life, His suffering and His death, we believe that He gave His life for us. He paid for all our sin, and in repentance and faith, we trust that He forgives all our sin! Yes, *all!* In thankfulness to God for His love and forgiveness, we forgive others, no matter how badly we've been hurt.

Although hurts and disappointments may never exit our memory bank, remembering God's love and forgiveness enables us to love and graciously forgive others from the heart.

Rev. Roger Schlechte
rschlechte@rm.lcms.org



ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT ENDOWMENT FUND



This fund was established by the district Board of Directors to receive bequests and proceeds from the sale of property or other investments.

The fund's purpose is to provide an orderly way to manage gifts from donors and to encourage the confidence of the members and other benefactors to consider such gifts to the Rocky Mountain District Endowment Fund. It is aligned to the mission of the district to advance the kingdom of God through the district and its ministries.

Only the interest from this fund or no more than 4 percent per year may be used for mission and ministry of the district and for funding Gospel Gap requests.

Share your news with us!

We are always in need of more submissions for Peaks and Valleys. Why should you send them in? It helps remind us of what God is doing around the Rocky Mountain District. It is also a way to share ideas for nurturing those God has already gathered into His church and for reaching those still outside of the flock with the Good News about Jesus. It finally reminds each of us that Christ's Church is much larger than just our particular congregation.

We welcome pictures and stories of congregational events, youth events, outreach events, installations, events from your men's or women's group, servant events, conferences, anniversaries, church renovations or additions, and much more. If you would like an upcoming event publicized, please make sure we have the information at least two months in advance. **Please send pictures as JPEG attachments, 300 dpi.**



Please send submissions to Jan Hoener at *communications@rm.lcms.org*. You may also mail your submissions to Jan at 5446 Knoll Place, Highlands Ranch, CO 80130.

The deadline for the May 2021 issue is March 15.

LCMS offering technology grants

By Stacey Egger
LCMS Reporter

The LCMS Office of National Mission (ONM) has announced a new grant opportunity to assist congregations in funding technology, software, equipment and training that will help them fulfill their mission to proclaim the Gospel to their members and the world.

Under the Esther 4:14 National Grant Program, approximately 100 grants of up to \$1,500 each will be awarded to LCMS congregations seeking to advance their technological capacity in “such a time as this” (Esther 4:14). Grants may be used to fund:

- ▶ Technology (cameras, mixer boards, etc.);
- ▶ End-user equipment (tablets for shut-ins, etc.);
- ▶ Software or software subscriptions (Microsoft Teams, Zoom Pro accounts, editing software, etc.); and
- ▶ Other equipment or training to meet congregational needs.

Deaconess Maryann Hayter, manager of LCMS Grants Administration, said the grants are especially needed during a time when physical gatherings have been severely limited due to COVID-19.

“This grant is not the large-dollar award that would fund a state-of-the-art film studio or other leading-edge professional technologies,” Hayter said. “However, we hope to encourage congregations to fill the need of the church to proclaim the Gospel in new ways and to creatively increase ‘people contact’ in a meaningful way during such times as these.”

In recent months, many LCMS churches have experienced an increased need for technology to carry out their mission. Such technology can be expensive, however, and many churches — especially smaller churches and those that were already struggling prior to the pandemic — have been limited in their efforts by financial concerns. This grant



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opportunity is designed to ease those limitations.

Grant recipients will be chosen by a grant committee, with preference given to congregations that:

- ▶ Demonstrate financial need;
- ▶ Show the ability to meet an unmet need with grant funds;
- ▶ Provide evidence of thoughtful planning; and

- ▶ Document the actual costs of desired equipment or technology.

Applications for Esther 4:14 grants will be accepted through April 5, with awards announced in May.

Visit [lcms.org/esther4-14](https://www.lcms.org/esther4-14) for more information and to submit an online application.

Synod releases statement on vaccines

On Jan. 21, LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison sent an email to all workers on the Synod roster addressing questions and concerns about the COVID-19 vaccines that are being distributed and dispensed.

Harrison’s letter and the vaccine document are now available at [lcms.org/president](https://www.lcms.org/president) for churchwide reading and download. They address such topics as:

- ▶ Whether the currently available vaccines contain aborted human fetal tissue.

- ▶ Whether the currently available vaccines were tested using human fetal cell lines.
- ▶ Whether there is an official LCMS position on the use of COVID-19 vaccines.



In addition to providing factual information about the vaccines, Harrison’s letter offers pastoral counsel on deciding whether to receive the vaccine and talking to those with whom one disagrees.