



**Michigan District, LCMS**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

fiscal year ending January 31, 2016



The image features a sunset over a body of water, with a large, dark rock in the foreground. The scene is split diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right. The upper-left portion shows the sunset with vibrant orange and red reflections on the water. The lower-right portion is a solid, dark brown color. The text is positioned in the lower-right section.

# **CONTENTS**

**3 Message From the President**

**4 Our Mission**

**5 Summary of Financial Activities**

**6 Great Commission**

**7 Great Compassion**

**8 Healthy Congregations**

**9 Healthy Workers**

**10-11 Looking Forward**

## Message from The President

Dear Friends in Christ,

The picture on the cover of this report reminds us of the ever-changing seasons. The colors of Fall can often be glorious in Michigan.

Often we bemoan, are caught off guard by, or repudiate **change** – especially all the changes in our culture and society that seem to continuously undermine the truths of Scripture (think male, female, marriage, etc.) and would have us compromise the truth of the Gospel.

It is only by God’s grace, His calling us out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9), and His gift of faith (Ephesians 2:8) that we receive the righteousness of Jesus that we may continue to celebrate **the love of God that never ceases or changes**.

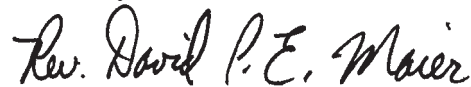
Never.

We may disobey God or even spurn Him, but God, Who is Love (1 John 4:16), will not—does not—change. The world’s evil cannot diminish or deplete His love. Even our righteous acts, done in the strength of Christ, cannot increase or amplify it. To be sure, our ignorance and irresponsibility don’t jeopardize it any more than our faith earns it. God doesn’t love us less if we fail, nor does He love us more if we succeed.

What follows in this report are stories—unique and brief—that highlight how God continues to use the Michigan District to share **His love** ... no matter the culture, context, or time in which we live. These stories are organized under “targets” that the District Board of Directors has established to guide and focus the work that God has laid before us in a way that we can be accountable. Because of His past faithfulness, we can eagerly prepare for and embrace the future with its changes because of Christ Who goes with us.

Would you join me in a daily prayer that God would not only bless what we are doing but that He would help us to do what He wants to bless ... sharing His Love and the changeless message of Christ crucified as People of Hope.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier  
President



Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier  
President

## Mission

In grateful response to God's grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of the Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches (congregations), communities, and world.

## Critical Targets



### Great Commission

Being *People of Hope*, Michigan District congregations and ministries will share the Good News of Jesus with people who do not know him.



### Great Compassion

Being *People of Hope*, Michigan District congregations and ministries will seek out and compassionately attend to people in need.



### Healthy Congregations

Being *People of Hope*, Michigan District congregations have Christ-centered ministries, loving and joyful atmospheres, and sustainable organizational systems.



### Healthy Workers

Being *People of Hope*, Michigan District church workers have Christ-centered lives, loving and joyful spirits, and stable family and professional systems.



# Summary of Financial Activities

For the Year Ended January 31, 2016

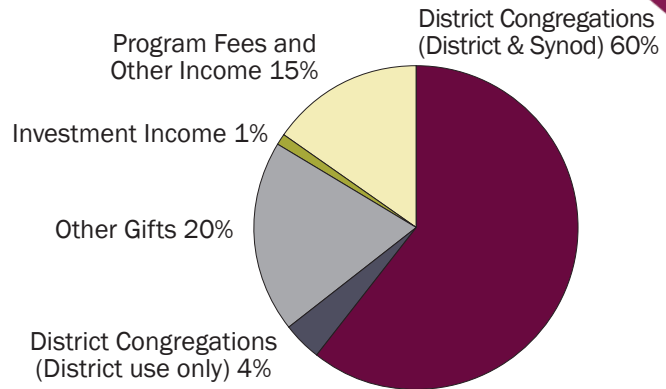
## Support, Revenues, and Gains

District Congregations (District and Synod).....	4,575,019
District Congregations (District use only).....	312,067
Other Gifts.....	1,486,165
Investment Income.....	94,515
Program Fees and Other Income.....	1,128,009
<b>Total Support, Revenues, and Gains.....</b>	<b>7,595,775</b>

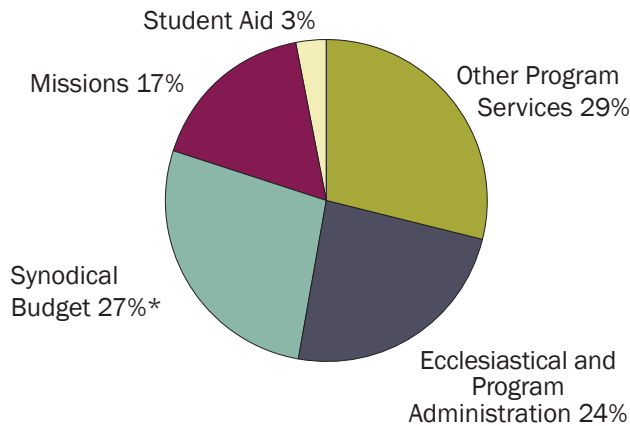
## Expenses

Synodical Budget*	1,788,300
<b>Program Services</b>	
Missions.....	1,124,593
Congregation Mission & Ministry Facilitators..	571,895
Christian Care.....	108,748
Lutheran Schools.....	266,015
Youth Ministry.....	47,973
Loon Lake Lutheran Retreat Center.....	87,573
Other Congregation Program Services.....	106,687
Communications.....	308,839
Student Aid.....	225,652
Worker Care.....	470,504
<b>Ecclesiastical and Program Administration</b>	
Administration.....	802,682
Convention.....	157,667
Development.....	243,188
District Properties and Depreciation.....	414,397
<b>Total Expenses.....</b>	<b>6,724,713</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets .....</b>	<b>871,062</b>

Revenue



Expenses



Information is taken from the audited financial statements of the Michigan District, LCMS. Copies of the audit report, which include all integral parts of the financial statements, are available from the District Office.

\*The Michigan District sent 39.5% of its unrestricted cash receipts from congregations to national Synod during the fiscal year. The numbers on the financial statements reflect adjustments based on pledges from congregations and to the Synod as required by Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

## Support for National and International Ministries

For the fiscal year ending January 31, 2016, the Michigan District remitted \$1,788,300 to Corporate (national) Synod, which represents 39.5% of the District's unrestricted gifts from congregations. The 35 districts of the Synod contribute approximately \$14.7 million of undesignated revenue to Corporate Synod annually in support of national and international mission and ministry. The balance of the \$81.8 million 2015/16 budget of Corporate Synod comes primarily from restricted gifts and sales of materials and services.

Allocations of the budgeted use of undesignated revenue for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 are as follows:

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| International Missions 1.6% | Mission Advancement 2.7%                      |
| National Missions 2.8%      | Concordia Historical institute & KFUE 3.0%    |
| Pastoral Education 5.4%     | Ecclesiastical Services and Commissions 11.2% |
| University Education 18.3%  | Officers and Administration 20.8%             |
| Communications 19.5%        | General and Administrative 14.7%              |

## Great Commission

**Being People of Hope, Michigan District congregations and ministries will share the Good News of Jesus with people who do not know him.**

The District implemented **FiveTwo StartNew's** approach to start new ministries to reach new people with the Good News of Jesus Christ. In August, the first "3Day" event was held at Hillsdale College, with 5 leaders and their teams in attendance. Of those, 4 began the 2-year coaching relationships with FiveTwo and moved forward. One of the leaders is Rev. Greyson Grenz (**Trinity, Wyandotte**), who learned Wyandotte starts its recreation programs in 4th grade. Looking to fill that void, Trinity implemented Bitty Ballin', a basketball league for lower elementary kids (K-2). This ministry reaches out to fathers in the congregation and the neighborhood by leveraging Trinity's empty school gym. Members serve as hosts and hostesses and chat with parents and families while their children are in camp.



*FiveTwo Training*

**Campus Ministries** continue to serve students at 8 universities, such as Christ The King Chapel in Mount Pleasant (Central Michigan University campus). In Ypsilanti, the Eastern Michigan University campus chapel at Cross and Resurrection provides pancake breakfasts for students during finals week, as well as prayer and Bible study opportunities. Campus ministries have seen students strengthened in their faith, and some who have come to faith and were baptized.

In Detroit, **Acts 2 Enterprise (A2E)** served more than 200 youth in the summer of 2015 with three sports camps/VBS programs. A2E also offers soft skills training for adults through its annual Jobs for Life program. In 2015, 9 students graduated from the program.

In the greater Detroit area, **GoodLife Community Partnership** continues to make life better for the people of Rochester Hills. A grant from the Michigan District enables GoodLife to serve the community through summer camp programs, fundraisers for local businesses, a Crisis Pregnancy Center, an Easter Eggstravaganza, and other initiatives.

The Michigan District also supports the **Hmong Ministry** through the efforts of Rev. Lang Yang (St. Michael, Richville/Our Savior, Lansing). In 2015, 15 Hmong individuals at Our Savior, Lansing, were baptized and received into membership.



*Pictured top to bottom: Bitty Ballin'; A Campus Ministry Gathering; Jobs for Life Graduation; New Hmong members and their families of Our Savior, Lansing.*



## Great Compassion

**Being People of Hope, Michigan District congregations and ministries will seek out and compassionately attend to people in need.**



*Special Friends Camp*

Following the District Convention's direction under the theme *Imagine Living as God's ... Loved and Compassionate Community*, congregations and ministries continued to find ways to serve their communities in 2015. The District-sponsored summer **Special Friends Camp** offered a fun, Gospel-filled week for 51 attendees.

The mission of Nativity, St. Charles in **Chesaning** has begun branching out, adding to the food distribution outreach, and sponsoring movie nights in the community. It also offers a recovery ministry in partnership with Restoration Fellowship, Midland.

People in Detroit continue to receive much-needed acts of compassion. In the summer of 2015, 68 high school students and adults from five Lutheran churches in Michigan and one in Illinois partnered together to minister to the city of Detroit by sorting food, serving meals, and hosting a VBS program. The event, called **Summer Serve**, was organized by Faith, Troy in partnership with the Michigan District.

**St. Paul Community, Pontiac** serves children and adults through its iCan Tutoring and English as a Second Language programs. It also houses its Fathers' Hands Food & Clothing bank, and hosts the Fathers' Hands Christmas Blessing.

**Family of God, Detroit (FOG)** moved to a new facility, which will allow them to better serve more people. Christ Our Savior, Livonia and St. John, Detroit are partnering with Family of God, calling and supporting Rev. James Hill who leads FOG, and congregation members are involved hands-on with the ministry.



*Pictured top to bottom: Chesaning Food Bank; Summer Serve Youth VBS program; Family of God, Detroit's new facility.*

## Healthy Congregations

**Being People of Hope, Michigan District congregations have Christ-centered ministries, loving and joyful atmospheres, and sustainable organizational systems.**



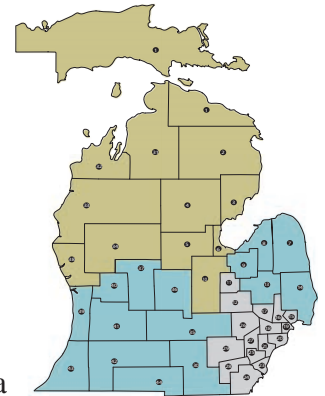
The annual **A2E Urban Institute** held at Bethany, Detroit aimed to encourage people who are in or desire to partner with people in the urban context by 1) helping people recognize the dynamics and diversity of urban ministry and providing biblical principles to effectively communicate the appropriate “heart language” in the mission and ministry; 2) exposing attendees to contextualized mission paradigms in the urban arena; and 3) transforming fearful and/or negative disposition associated with urban ministry into Christ-centered lenses which see Kingdom opportunities.



Tucked into miles of state and national forests near Tahquamenon Falls in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula sits **Trinity Lutheran Church in Newberry** (population: 1,500). Trinity’s average worship attendance is 84. The congregation and new pastor, Rev. Kyle Kuehl, are reaching out into the economically challenged community through District mission subsidy to fund ministry expansion. Pastor Kuehl, considered the town’s pastor, is training to be a firefighter and working towards becoming a Fire Department Chaplain.



**Messiah, Midland’s** Pier Ministry approach enables the congregation to reach out to the community through different opportunities, including a garage where people purchase cars or have theirs maintained or repaired at little or no cost. They also host an annual shoe distribution before school starts, and a food bank. Messiah’s Restoration Fellowship, a recovery ministry, saw 50 baptisms in 2015.



*District Zone Map*

In 2015, recognizing Michigan’s diverse regions and communities, **Congregation Mission and Ministry Facilitators (CMMFs)** were reassigned to meet congregation needs by dividing the District into three distinct zones. The North Zone includes the Upper Peninsula

and the upper half of the Lower Peninsula and is served by Rev. Dr. Richard J. Wolfram. The Southwest and Thumb Zones are served by Rev. Galan D. Walther, and the Metro Zone, which includes congregations from Flint to Monroe, as well as Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Metro Detroit. Dr. Bruce Braun serves as Superintendent of Lutheran Schools for the entire District. The CMMFs offer direct services, conflict management, process consulting, ministry resourcing, and encouragement in ministry for the pastor and ministry staff as they assist congregations in ministry development or renewal.



## Healthy Workers

**Being People of Hope, Michigan District church workers have Christ-centered lives, loving and joyful spirits, and stable family and professional systems.**



*Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper hosting a webinar.*

In 2015, the Michigan District offered five **webinars**, three of which directly trained workers: the District developed its first Online Course for First Year Teachers, which had 229 people enrolled; another webinar guided youth workers through the National Youth Gathering registration process; and a third webinar, Helping Workers Grow Through Evaluations, shared tools and philosophies with church workers.



The District sponsored many **events** as it does every year. Over 1,500 church workers attended the Pastors' Conference, under the theme "Jesus at the Leading Edge;" the Katie Conference, which saw an increase in the attendance from previous years; the biannual OPC for church and school office personnel; Intentional Interim Ministry training and Continuing Education; Pre-Retirement Conference for church workers; Early Childhood Conference (Living inside God's Design" and "Seven Keys to Success"); Deacon/Supervising Pastors'; Parish Nurse; and Principals, Stewardship, DCE/DFL conferences.



The Michigan District also celebrates **outstanding educators** every year. In 2015, principal David Waltz was nominated as the Michigan District's Principal of the Year, and Amy and Benjamin Cooper (Valley Lutheran High School, Saginaw) were selected to receive Lutheran Education Association's 2015 Distinguished Lutheran Secondary Educator awards.



*Pictured top to bottom: Carl Medearis and Rev. Dr. David P. E. Maier at the 2015 All Pastors Conference; Katie Conf. attendees; Amy Cooper with students.*



## Looking Forward

### *Here We Stand*

*Here We Stand* ... is the district's capital campaign in celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, October 2017.



## Here We Stand

**“Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason ... my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me. Amen.”**

*Here We Stand* ... secure in God's love and grace ... ready, eager, and equipped to go forward with the eternal, life-giving message of the Gospel for this generation—and for future generations—so that all whom the Lord our God calls to Himself may experience eternity with our Savior.

**“O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come” Psalm 71:17-18.**

### Campaign At A Glance

	<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Goal</i>
Here We Send	Professional Church Worker Scholarships	\$3,000,000.00
Here We Care	Innovative Missional Ministry	\$3,000,000.00
Here We Imagine	Michigan District Endowment	\$3,000,000.00
Here We Share	International Ministry	\$1,000,000.00
		<u>\$10,000,000.00</u>

**For more information visit:**

*[herewestand.michigandistrict.org](http://herewestand.michigandistrict.org)*



***Because of God's past faithfulness, we are eagerly preparing for and embracing the future with its changes because of Christ Who goes with us:***

- Congregations discover where God is at work in the unique flavor of their communities;
- The Michigan District will provide quality resources through its staff, educational opportunities, and mission emphasis;
- District staff stand ready to assist and network congregations as they develop vibrant, impactful ministries, utilize the gifts God has given them, become increasingly aware of their communities, and discover ways to implement strategies for outreach and mercy ministries;
- Pastors, teachers, and other professional church workers will be well-informed of available resources and receive excellent continuing education opportunities for spiritual and professional growth;
- FiveTwo StartNew 3Day Training Events will help teams to lay foundations through sacramental theology and business model best practices. As the new start possibilities become realities, coaches will walk alongside the teams, encouraging and guiding them as they express the presence of Jesus in their communities.



***As People of Hope, may God bless what we are doing, and may He help us to do what He wants to bless ... sharing His Love and the changeless message of Christ crucified to those who do not yet know Him.***



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