



**LIVING**  
*Love*  
The Atlantic District LC-MS  
61st Regular Convention

## Section Six: Additional Reports to the District Convention

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# LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

Peter A. Labenberg, District Vice President

Atlantic District

## MISSION

The mission of Lutheran Church Extension Fund is to support The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by ensuring that financial resources and related services are available now and in the future.

## ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Since 1847, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) has pursued its mission to “vigorously make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities and the world.”

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is an organization that empowers ministry through investments, loans and support services. Incorporated in 1978, LCEF continues a long history of church extension fund service to the LCMS and its individual and corporate members.

We’ve grown from a mere \$100 million when LCEF was first incorporated in 1978 to over 60,000 faithful Lutheran investors with over \$2.1 billion dollars in total assets.

Historically, church extension operations have centered on loans made possible through investments and gifts from dedicated church members and supporters. Today, LCEF has expanded its offerings to include resources that define opportunities, design solutions and align resources that propel the Kingdom forward using a ministry clarity process and capital campaigns as well as real estate solutions to help develop and/or execute the best strategies to support ministry objectives.

Our strong and stable financial base represents the important role LCEF plays in supporting the LCMS now and how it will continue that support long into the future.

We use investments to support the work of thousands of LCMS individuals, congregations, schools and organizations. They fund home loans for Rostered Church Workers. They support the renovation and construction of sanctuaries, senior living communities, fellowship halls, Lutheran schools, early childhood centers and much more.

Rev. Bart Day serves as president and CEO and reports to a 12-member board of directors. LCEF employs over 116 people located in St. Louis and more than 35 employees in 31 LCMS member districts throughout the United States. LCMS ministries connect to LCEF through their district vice president (DVP). DVPs are supported by the national office staff in St. Louis.

For over 43 years, our mission has been to make sure “financial resources and related services” are avail-



able for the church—we intend to keep doing it for the next 40 years and beyond.

## ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

2021 has been volatile, and looking back at the past 12 months, it's clear that some aspects of the economy have improved greatly while others remain challenged by the pandemic. The U.S. economy has continued to improve since the onset of the 2020 pandemic. Q3 of 2021 expanded by over 30%, and although a record, it was not enough to offset earlier losses, including the Q1 5% decline in gross domestic product (GDP) at an annual rate, signaling the onset of the 2020 recession.

The new recession, which began in March 2020, ended 128 months of expansion, the longest in U.S. history. In Q2, the economy contracted by a record 31.2%. Quarterly GDP had never experienced a drop greater than 10% since record-keeping began in 1947.

In April 2020, retail sales were down 14.7% as officials closed nonessential businesses, but by May, sales recovered, increasing by 18.3% as shops and restaurants slowly reopened safely. While there have been several months in late 2020 and early 2021 with small declines, none have been as dramatic, and by June 2021, sales were up 0.6%.

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) has remained committed to a low interest rate environment and has held the benchmark rate at its current level of 0.1% until inflation reaches 2% over an extended period of time. The pandemic also restarted the FOMC's quantitative easing program, which grew their balance sheet to its current level of \$8.1T as of June 2021. Speculation has begun regarding the timing of their tapering of the security purchases. The FOMC has remained patient while inflation has been on the rise. Time will tell if or to what degree the current inflation is transitory.

Throughout the challenges over the past 12 months, LCEF has worked with our advisors to navigate the volatile investment markets. With their help, we have been able to strengthen our capital position and better position LCEF for future growth. While the financial markets provided many challenges, we saw FY 2021 close out with gains of over \$15.5M.

## RELATED SERVICES

LCEF has long been connected to every part of the church, from the Synod to the districts, and right down to the individual ministries and members that make up our church body. This unrivaled access and intimacy to the front lines of LCMS ministry have provided LCEF with a unique perspective to be the trusted partner in providing solutions that inspire ministry, innovation, and growth.

Out of this perspective, **LCEF Ministry Solutions** has developed into a first-in-class Lutheran consultation service with values and processes uniquely designed to engage our LCMS congregations, schools, and other ministries.

The path to Ministry Clarity varies for each church, but our end goal is clear: Your leadership is confident in the path and purpose God has laid before them. Your congregation knows God's vision for them and is inspired to pursue it. Your leaders are equipped to lead your congregation and generate a dynamic strategic plan to move ministries forward. Your congregation has a campus master plan that works to match your facilities to your ministries. Your leaders have a clear vision of your congregation's financial future in support of your ministries. As the clarity process comes to a close, our final goal is to support your communication of findings and plans to your congregation.

LCEF has been guiding congregations through campaigns, traditionally called capital campaigns, for over 30 years. We have learned a lot over the decades and have come to operate under some clear and critical



theories.

Campaigns are about ministry. We are not saying financial commitments are not necessary; rather, we help frame the financials within the big picture: God is calling your congregation into the future and your members to commit to that future. Financial resources are part of that larger commitment. Our process flow is time-tested but made flexible to fit your congregation. We need to hear from Christ; and we need to hear from each other. We design the three-year fulfillment phase to include celebration events, reminder mini-campaigns and stewardship emphasis moments.

Love your neighbor... know your neighbor. LCEF has been providing demographic intelligence to the LCMS for over 30 years to help answer strategic ministry questions in your community.

Open a world of ministry opportunities for your church by discovering more ways to connect with your community. Use addresses from your church as a starting point to plot your community, so you can begin to respond to many of the concerns churches face today. Understand local religious preferences, practices, and beliefs. With LCEF's demographic resources, you will make more informed decisions, become more effective with your ministries, and build confident leaders. Demographic information and resources are available through your LCEF District Vice President.

## MORE INFORMATION

Peter A. Labenberg

Atlantic District Vice President

Stewardship and Finance

LCEF Vice President

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Lutheran Church Extension Fund

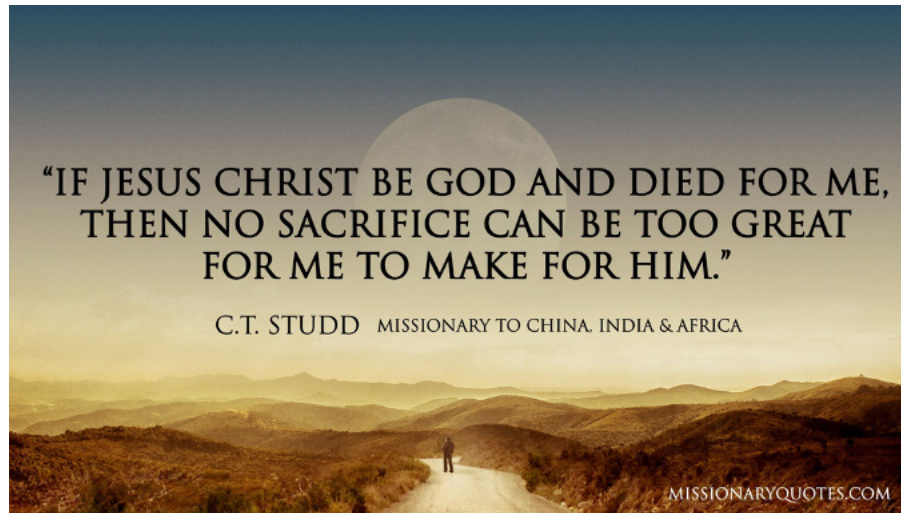
[lcef.org](http://lcef.org)

800-843-5233



# REPORT OF THE MISSION SOCIETY

Atlantic District LCMS Convention 2022



## Goal

Begun in 1998, the goal of the Mission Society is to recruit Atlantic District LCMS Lutherans to join together to give prayer and financial support to the Mission outreach efforts of the District. In partnership with the money received from Congregational giving and grant initiatives, these individuals are able to expand the work of the kingdom in our part of the world.

It is indeed a privilege to serve as Mission Society Coordinator for the Atlantic District. Our missionaries and pastors work hard daily to share the gospel with those who do not know it. They seek to serve their Lord as they are led by the Holy Spirit in a climate that sometimes seems hostile to the message as well as during an unprecedented pandemic. Despite this, in the past three years and due purely to the grace of God, the Mission Society has sought daily to encourage the congregations and missions within our district to *Engage the World with the Gospel of Hope*.

## Prayer

We have always wanted to join together with like minded folks from across the District in bold prayer for our churches but have always been held back by distances. Now however, due to new technology innovations such as zoom **we can and do** hold monthly prayer meetings on the second Friday of the month at 7 pm. People from every geographic area of the District jump on the call and join together to pray for the churches, schools and ministries of the District. We also initiated a monthly prayer calendar with written prayers for congregations to use in corporate worship. These lift up in prayer one congregation a week so that all our churches are prayed for at least once during a two year span.

## Fundraising

The Mission Society raises money for the work of Atlantic District missions in the following ways:



**Two Annual Appeals during Advent and Easter** – these appeals are done as a personal letter to our database of donors.

**Witness in the Public Square Luncheon**– started in September 2003, this luncheon raises money for missions while honoring local and national leaders who have shown exemplary leadership in the public arena or made an outstanding contribution to missions. These leaders have come from many walks of life and in the past three years, these people have included the following: Ralph and Dorothy Schultz, Mark and Kathleen Helge, Kenneth Ko, Randy and Linda Gast, Tom and Penny Cedel, John and Monique Nunes, Ross Edwards, Bong Yu and Paulina Janssen-Mesloh. Annually, between 200 and 250 guests attend and to date the luncheon has raised over three million dollars for Atlantic District missions. Praise be to God!

**Convention appeal** – every three years a special convention appeal is sent to our congregations in order to give them a chance to give gifts in praise and thanksgiving to God. All of these funds are earmarked for our missions and ministries.

**Fink Scholarship Appeal** – every September we also solicit gifts to be used as scholarship money for those studying to be full time church workers, whether pastors or commissioned ministers.

**Disaster Appeals** – When we are faced with a major disaster, we send out an appeal to all congregations to solicit gifts. Those funds are then sent to what we have deemed the most effective service agency to receive them. This is not always the Synod. Sometimes those funds are funneled through Districts or even individual congregations on the ground.

## Engage

I have been sending out quarterly editions of *Engage* in an email format. Engage is a collection of stories about mission and ministry collected from across the District. The idea is to both inform and inspire people to think about their own mission outreach activities.

### Festival of Workshops

My work as Mission Society Coordinator has expanded to include the planning of the Festival of Workshops. This has dovetailed well as many of the workshops have a mission, outreach or evangelism element to them. We have generally had around 35 workshops with 400 people in attendance. They are held early in March unless it is a Convention Year. Due to the closure of Concordia College New York our next one will be held at Village Lutheran Church in Bronxville on Saturday March 11th, 2023.

In conclusion, the Atlantic District Mission Society continues to be a vehicle to raise awareness, funds and prayer so that God's mission can be accomplished in our region.

Submitted by Carol Mittelstaedt  
Mission Society Coordinator





# THE LUTHERAN CARE NETWORK

## Report to the July 2022 Atlantic District LC-MS Convention

Caring for older adults is what drives The Lutheran Care Network. As in the AD Convention theme, we are about Living Love. Founded in 1875, we currently serve the needs of seniors in several ways: in our beautiful community of cottages and apartments designed for adult independent living; by affording independence through housing at five low-income housing sites; and through the professional care provided in our nursing/rehabilitation/adult day care center. In addition, the Adult Foster Family Care program is flourishing...placing seniors in need with a loving family in a private home.

The Lutheran Care Network serves more than 1,000 seniors and their families annually. Our sites are located from Long Island to the Albany Capitol District:

### **Independent Living**

*Coburg Village* - Rexford

### **Skilled Nursing Care & Rehabilitation**

*Lutheran Care Center at Concord Village* - Poughkeepsie

### **Community Housing**

*Samaritan Senior Housing* - Delmar

*Castle Court* - Poughkeepsie

*The King's Apartments* - Pawling

*Martin Luther Court* - Brooklyn

*Martin Luther Terrace Apartments* - Kings Park

### **Adult Day Health Care & Senior Foster Care Program**

*Lutheran Care Center at Concord Village* - Poughkeepsie



The Lutheran Care Network is committed to providing for the spiritual well-being of all our residents and families. Lutheran pastors are on staff at our centers and available to our community housing residents. Residents are valued as family – all are part of God’s household.

Linking Care in Congregations is one way we serve congregations. Please contact us for resources or about our Lunch & Learn presentations on topics of interest to seniors, their families and caregivers.

**The Atlantic District is an integral part of our ministry. We value those who have served on staff or as volunteers on our boards since the last Atlantic District Convention:**

*Atlantic District Clergy & Deacons on Staff:*

Rev. Kelly-Ray Meritt, Rev. Patrick Singh and Deacon Glenn Schermerhorn

*Atlantic District Supply Pastors:*

Rev. Henry Albrechtsen and Rev. Donald Lee

*Community Housing Pastoral Volunteers:*

Rev. David Benke, Rev. David Demera, Rev. Jason Tabor, and deacons and volunteers from their Brooklyn congregations; Rev. Stefan Gramenz and members of Christ the King, Pawling

*TLCN Board Members:*

John Mesloh (chair), Rev. Robert Hartwell, Chris Jones, Peter Mazer, Mrs. Lynette Taylor

*Affiliate Board Members:*

Bishop Derek Lecakes, Judith Benke, Rev. Dan Cohn, David Hahn, Deacon Ed Kleinke, Jim Regan, Thomas Roemke, William Teator, Rev. Alfred Thiagarajan, Rev. Adam Wiegand

## **The Lutheran Care Network Partners with these Lutheran Organizations**

- The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod - Registered Service Organization (RSO)
- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - Social Ministry Organization (SMO)
- Lutheran Services in America
- Lutheran Partners – CPE
- Atlantic District Lutheran Women’s Missionary League
- Thrivent Choice Dollars
- Lutheran Church Extension Fund

For information, speaker ideas, or to volunteer contact Janet George, Director of Church & Community Engagement: [jgeorge@tlcn.org](mailto:jgeorge@tlcn.org) or 914-960-7680

View our Annual Report and links to our sites at: [www.tlnc.org](http://www.tlnc.org)

*The Lutheran Care Network is a ministry of healing, hospitality  
and community through partnerships in caring.*





# REPORT OF THE ARCHIVIST

Since the convention in 2018, I have continued to organize and maintain the records of congregations, pastors, other church workers, ministries, and organizations within the Atlantic District.

I have organized the following collections:

- Task Forces Files (beginning in 1996)
- Deacon Files
- Council of Presidents Meetings (2000-2010)
- Selected Bequest/Estate files (1980's-1990's)
- St. Mark's Lutheran Church and School, Bushwick, Brooklyn
- Christ Lutheran Church (Western Ave.), Albany
- St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Hastings-on-Hudson

I met with the following people:

- Rev. Paul and Mary Nordeen (items from St. Mark's)
- Travis Basso, Concordia College archivist  
(materials for our archives)
- Pastor David Benke and Professor Kathryn Galchutt  
(information for their 9/11 Oral History project  
for the 20th anniversary of 9/11)
- Ben Herbrich (possible archive plan for Martin Luther High  
School)

In the summer of 2020, I scanned all of the Constitutions, By-Laws, and Certificates of Incorporation that we have on file from of all the district churches.

In the spring of 2021, I began rearranging certain files in the basement to make more efficient use of the space in all of the file cabinets.

During July, August, and September 2021, many hours were spent preparing for the two moves from #4 Concordia Place. The first move was relocating the district office to its new location in Manhattan. The second move was relocating our archives to 102-03 Springfield Blvd. Queens Village, NY 11429.

The move to Queens Village was a 2-part process. First part - moving all of the district files/records and their file cabinets from the lower level of Concordia's Scheele Memorial Library to QV at the end of August. We took possession of the archives of Concordia College, NY. They are now in a shared space with the district archives in QV.

The second part of the process was in September - moving all of the archive materials from #4 (on the 3rd



floor, the 2nd floor, and the basement - about 485 boxes!) and other larger/fragile items/artwork taken separately. All of the file cabinets were set up first - many thanks to David Dejesus for all of his help! Then the process of unpacking all of the boxes began!

All of the Atlantic District archives are now housed in ONE place in one very large room at QV. There is a separate storage area that includes boxes of files from Lutheran Schools that have closed, as well as other records, including those from the LWML.

It has taken a few months to get everything arranged and set up. In that time I created a new MASTER LIST of the holdings in our archives - the files and locations. All of the file cabinets and shelving units are labeled.

As archivist, one of my responsibilities is to handle requests for information. Some are from people in the district or on staff who have questions about congregations or church properties. Other requests are from outsiders who have questions regarding family history - records of baptisms, weddings, and the like, from churches that have closed. Since July 2018 there have been 43 requests. (6 in 2018, 10 in 2019, 15 in 2020, 10 in 2021, and 2 in 2022).

As part of the district staff, I have participated in our weekly zoom meetings (since March 23, 2020) and have also helped where needed with large events - the Festival of Workshops (2020) and Witness in the Public Square.

Marcia Kollmann

Atlantic District Archivist (March 2022)



# ATLANTIC DISTRICT LAY DEACON PROGRAM

+ In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit +

It is in thanksgiving to God that it can be reported, despite the interruption by the COVID-19 pandemic, that the Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program, including its training program, remain viable and a blessing to the Church. 72 active and Certified Lay Deacon, 7 Emeritus Lay Deacons and 20 Interns are serving their congregations throughout the Atlantic District.

Since the last District Convention, 21 individuals, including 3 under the auspices of the East Coast Cooperative Effort, have completed the academic portion of the Atlantic District Lay Deacon program and are on their way to also complete the required 200 Service Hours prior to Certification as Atlantic District Lay Deacons. In addition, 20 plus serving Lay Deacons have taken advantage of the academic offerings as fulfillment of their Continuing Education requirement for Re-Certification, of which all active Lay Deacons has accomplished.

Certainly, the academic portion of the Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program is its centerpiece, but by no means all that it does. During the days of the pandemic, monthly Virtual Coffee Hours were held via the ZOOM platform to stay in touch when face-to-face opportunities were being so severely curtailed. On-line regional Bible Studies were held, as well as monthly Saturday Morning Lay Deacon Breakfasts [region 3] once the pandemic began to ease its grip. This September, the Annual Lay Deacon Retreat – the first since 2019 and the onset of COVID-19 – will be held at Tuscarora Inn and Conference Center, Mt Bethel, PA, certainly a highlight of the year affording both fellowship and teaching; this year's theme: "Lights, Camera, Jesus – Christ and Cinema."

Just as a primary responsibility of the Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program is the training for future service, so the Program looks for ways to improve. A review of the academic offerings is underway with the goal of creating greater interest and challenge for the Program's students. A similar review is planned for the Guidelines of the Atlantic District Lay Program with the goal of further defining and answering challenges that have come up since its first writing in 2015. However, most exciting of all is the restoration of regional and District-wide activities long since cancelled because of the pandemic, particularly regional brunches at which there is both fellowship and teaching.

Of all the challenges the Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program faces the greatest is getting the word out about the Program, its benefits to the individual and the blessing it is to the Church. We rely upon Pastors and Lay Deacons to share this with people whose gifts and talents can be of service Christ and His Church. In that regard, as always, the prayers of the members of the Atlantic District are jealously sought, as well as your partnering with us to promote the Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program.

Soli Deo Gloria

Rev Henry Albrechtsen, III  
Pastor, All Saints Lutheran Church, Lagrangeville, NY  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Hurley, NY  
Registrar & Atlantic District Lay Deacon Program Coordinator



# PROPERTIES COMMITTEE REPORT

## Committee Overview

The purpose of the Properties Committee is to oversee the management of properties owned and/or operated by the Atlantic District. The committee is comprised of:

- Rev. Derek Lecakes, Bishop/President Atlantic District
- Mrs. Sonia Holder-Bowman, Treasurer Atlantic District
- Mr. Renato Matos Esq., Atlantic District Counsel of Record  
– Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld
- Mr. Peter A. Labenberg, Executive for Finance & Stewardship, LCEF District VP
- Mr. David DeJesus, Director of Properties.

## District Properties

The following is a listing of properties currently owned by the District:

- 4 Pax Lane, Pottersville and wooded acreage (formerly SonRise): Son-Rise Lutheran Church utilizes one home as a parsonage/office.
- 250 Blake Ave., Brooklyn: Church, school building and apartment. This space is currently leased to a charter school.
- St. John the Evangelist, Brooklyn: Includes church, school, and parsonage. St. Johns pays no rent but is responsible for insurance, maintenance and repairs.
- Bayside Parsonage: Housing for District Bishop.

## Sold and Transferred Properties

The following properties were sold or transferred since the last convention:

There were no properties sold or transferred in the last 4 years.

