



Celebrating 100 years of God's blessings
as we continue to
serve, connect, and grow.

Moving in Mission

THE ENGLISH DISTRICT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

33100 FREEDOM ROAD ~ FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN 48336-4030

248.476.0039 ~ FAX 248.476.0188 ~ WWW.ENGLISHDISTRICT.ORG

ISSUE 9 ~ FALL 2011

FAITH DRIVEN-FUTURE FOCUSED



Rev. David Thiele
English District
Mission Executive
[packerrev@
englishdistrict.org](mailto:packerrev@englishdistrict.org)
248.476.0039

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Canadian Celebration	5
English District Facts	7
Faith Driven Future Focused	1
Planted and Planting	2
Project 100	4
Sharing the Gospel	7

I am a look forward kind of person. History was my least favorite subject! Why did I need to memorize all those dates and places, especially when Google was in my future? Give me a math problem or hypothesis and I am up for the challenge.

The English District is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Anniversaries can easily be turned into a history lesson and a feel-good pat on the back. The English District anniversary theme does not allow us to sit around and reminisce. **Faith Driven-Future Focused** is filled with challenge and the power of God at work.

Faith Driven

I am always surprised by the words Luther wrote in his explanation to the third article of the Apostles' Creed.

"I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith even as He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian

church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith..."

God is at work! For someone like me who is always wondering what is in the future and is energized by the challenge of what's next, I can become impatient and cynical. As much as I hate to say it, I need to look back at history. I need to hear the promise that the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, and enlightens me and the whole church. Look back over the last 100 years, 2000 years, and since creation, and we find God in the midst of the challenge of the day. God is at work redeeming the world through the gift of His Son.

Future Focused

God is at work! In this issue of Moving in Mission you'll read about congregations using the 100th anniversary of the English District as a means to make connections with people by serving in their communities. This is the spirit of the English District. With an

entrepreneurial zeal or maybe with the practical realities that surrounded the Lutheran Church in the late 1800s, pastors, teachers and congregations stepped out of their comfort zones and began worshiping in the English language. They were Future Focused!

With a focus on the future, the members of the congregations of the English District are being asked to give a special offering for the planting of a new church in the Atlanta, Georgia area. Christ the Shepherd Lutheran Church in Alpharetta, Georgia is stepping out of their comfort zone as they seek to plant a new church. Please keep them in your prayers.

Faith Driven- Future Focused

Join with the congregations of the English District and celebrate our anniversary by having a special event that serves the people of your community, depending upon the power of God working through His Word and the Sacraments.

Rev. David Thiele

Christ the Shepherd Lutheran Church
 4655 Webb Bridge Road
 Alpharetta, Georgia 30005
 770.475.0640
 www.cts.org

Planted ... and Planting

The Vision ...

“I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also.”
John 10:16

We were once a church plant. Every church had to start somehow, somewhere. We were a church plant of the English District and the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Atlanta.

Over the years Jesus has added many souls to that part of “His pen” we call *Christ the Shepherd* in Alpharetta, Georgia. Some transferred to us from His other pen locations and some were lost sheep who heard our Shepherd’s Voice calling them through the Gospel. It never would have happened without the vision of Jesus becoming the vision of our District and congregations of it like Ascension.

Days of adventure and unknowns ... wonder and amazement

“...and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened...” Acts 3:10

I remember those church planting days well. They were days of adventure and unknowns. They felt like my own personal book of Acts. There was wonder and amazement, fear of the Lord because of the incredible things He was doing, and fear (sorry, I’m human) because at times I didn’t know if we’d make it.

We tried all kinds of ways to reach out to people: a telephone marketing campaign called “The Phone’s for You;” an outreach ministry called “Open Arms Child Development Center;” and, of course, my personal favorite, the “Soles for Souls” door-to-door canvassing through numerous subdivisions surrounding our intended church site (there was no internet to speak of). By the way, this last way of outreach surprised me in terms of the many connections I made. Some of our first members and my closest friends were discovered as I knocked on their door and the Spirit knocked on their hearts.

Now *Christ the Shepherd* is hearing the call of our Shepherd to experience the adventure and the unknowns, the wonder and amazement, once more. But this time as a planting congregation. And, as He provides, we would like to plant multiple churches. I believe this “pull” is a result of the Spirit’s conviction, our District’s modeling, and Dave Thiele’s guiding and prodding. We are certainly honored to receive support for this first plant through the English District’s 100th Anniversary Offering. What a blessing!

Proposal-Action-Plant Teams Move Us Forward ...

“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” Acts 15:28

So we move forward. But we know it is the Holy Spirit that leads. We are trying to insure that we are humble and listen to the Spirit and the Word and to one another as we proceed. We began a year ago with a **Church Plant Proposal Team**, who conducted seminars on church planting and town hall meetings for CTS members to share and discuss (very well attended). The result was overwhelming support by our Voters. Next step was to form a **Church Plant Action Team**. This Team is currently operating to move us forward in calling a pastor, identifying prime sites, determining policies and procedures, and encouraging prayer, missional education, and input from within the congregation. I see in these Team members the same kind of excitement I remember as they pursue the adventure and face the unknowns. After their work is completed we will form the **Church Plant Core Team**, those folks from *Christ the Shepherd* who will align with the new church plant either permanently or for a season.

cont’d on page 3



Looking North ... Again!

“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went...” Acts 8:4

Atlanta is not bound by any natural resource like an ocean, mountain, or river. It just sprawls in all directions. Ascension once looked 22 miles north to a growing suburb called Alpharetta to plant a church. We are looking into sites in counties where the sprawl continues, generally north again. Here is an example. Heading north along a corridor called ‘GA 400’ there is Forsyth County (30041) which has grown 23.8% in the last five years (40.1% of families have children) and 54.9% of the population is un-churched. Again, if we look to the northwest in Cherokee County we see a 32.5% population growth rate in the last five years (37.0% families with children) and 54.9% of the population is un-churched. Using tools like MissionInsite, prayer walks, and current members in these areas who “commute” to CTS (mainly from the north), we will be able to provide a church plant pastor a researched array of possible sites.

Our Main “Church Plant” Thing ...

“You know the message God sent ... announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, Who is Lord of all.” Acts 10:36

One of the amazing and compelling things we see (and you see it too) is how many people are disconnected from the church (a community of Christians gathered around Jesus through Word and Sacrament). Many people will identify themselves as Christians but have no church connection. Many others will say they believe in God but find God in their own way and want nothing to do with what they call “organized” religion. Still others have attached to different faith communities (Islam, Mormon, etc.) but not faith in Christ. We want our church and our church plant to reach out to these people as well as those already following Christ by faith. That means we don’t know exactly the shapes, styles, and strategies our new church plant will employ (adventure/unknowns). But we do know this: it will always share who Jesus is and what Jesus has done and why trusting Him changes everything in a person’s life and destiny. Our church plant will share the Gospel and we will pray for harvest. And we will be filled with amazement and wonder at what the Lord is doing.

But, Who Will the Spirit Call?

“He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord” Acts 11:24

We know the Holy Spirit will lead us in the adventure and through the unknowns of our church plant. And one of our most exciting tasks under the Spirit’s guidance is calling a church plant pastor ... who will it be? We are already working on this with some names of pastors in the field, and we have been told there are also some candidates at the Seminary. If you have made it to this point in the article I would invite you to share any names of possible candidates for developing a new church.

We Will Keep You Informed

“...they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.” Acts 14:27

On behalf of Christ the Shepherd, I want to thank you for partnering with us in this church plant effort. We will report to you on how God leads and blesses. Please keep this noble project in your prayers.

Pastor Kevin Elseroad
Christ the Shepherd Lutheran Church

“Project 100”

project 100



Backpacks for Family Services



Baby Items for CareNet



Dollars for CareNet

“Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

1 Corinthians 15:58

When all of us at Ascension of Christ first found out that the English District was celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, we did not immediately know how to respond. Should we put a poster up on our already-cluttered bulletin board? Or should we include an announcement or prayer in a Sunday morning service? But then in late January, we received an e-mail from the District with a list of numerous suggestions for congregations like ours to brainstorm and implement ideas for promoting its anniversary both within the congregation as well as out in the community. After reading and thinking through those suggestions, our Kingdom Project Team met together and planned a year-long initiative called “Project 100.”

“Project 100” is a series of 12 consecutive monthly service projects (May 2011–April 2012) that are centered on the number 100. After some initial research and prayerful consideration, we decided to direct these monthly projects at two organizations in our surrounding community: CareNet Pregnancy Information Center in Berkley, Michigan and The Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS) of Michigan: Metropolitan Detroit Region in Oak Park, Michigan. So here is a quick summary of what Project 100 has looked like so far:

May 2011

We invited the Executive Director of CareNet in Berkley, Laura Farrugia, to come and speak to our congregation about their organization and how we could help them as they meet the needs of abortion-vulnerable individuals in our community. That led to an initial collection project totaling 116 of their most requested items for their material

goods and clothing closet: diapers, wipes, bottles, socks, crib sheets, undershirts, baby wash, shampoo, diaper cream and infant formula.

June 2011

After CareNet graciously allowed us borrow 100 of their baby bottles, we distributed them to our members and their friends for a month-long coin collection. At the end of the month, we raised a total of over \$600 to give to CareNet for them to purchase much needed larger items like strollers, cribs and car seats. We would like to recognize our member, Rick Hart, for creating the “crib” we used to hold the money as it “poured in!”

July 2011

Instead of asking our members to once again purchase items or donate money for CareNet, we asked them to express their words to the mothers who come in and out of the Berkley facility with over 100 hand-written cards of prayers, blessings and other words of Christian encouragement. We also gave the volunteers of CareNet a big thank-you card filled with expressions of gratitude for all the good they are doing in our community.

August 2011

We invited the Deputy Regional Director of LCFS in Oak Park, Carolyn Radford, to speak to the congregation about who they are, what they do and how we can help provide support for their foster-care families. This in turn led to a collection of over 75 backpacks and numerous other back-to-school

cont'd on page 5

“Project 100” ~ continued from page 4

supplies for their annual “Backpack Jam” event in late August.

We are excitedly awaiting the opportunities that are being planned for the remainder of the year, a trivia night fundraiser (with 100 questions, of course!), 100+ Christmas gifts for foster families and 100+ winter clothing items collection, etc.

Project 100 has been an extremely humbling and uplifting experience for our congregation. We are increasingly

recognizing that as we seek to serve as a blessing to others, it is the Lord Himself who is blessing us. Our Kingdom Project Team and entire congregation here at Ascension of Christ would like to thank the English District for its first 100 years of ministry and mission and the privilege of being part of the future that the Lord has in store for all of us together. Keep those excellent e-mails and ideas coming!

Pastor Mark Biebighauser
Ascension of Christ, Beverly Hills, MI

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

Galatians 6:9-10

A Canadian Celebration

Peace and blessings to all our brothers and sisters in the English District from the congregation of the Church of Saint Mark-Lutheran, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

Early in 2011, St. Mark’s made plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary of our English District. By God’s grace, we held an Anniversary Sunday in May with a special joint service followed by a celebration luncheon to launch a year of events in honor of the English District. It was a huge success. A committee of approximately eight people, together with a great team, worked to plan events through June, 2012.

The bulletin cover for the service was designed by our administrator’s talented teenage son. Banners for the sanctuary were designed and made by both the Sunday and Nursery School children. A banner with the anniversary emblem and logo hung from the pulpit.

The kick-off for a 100 km walk was

launched during the service with sign-up sheets for participants to log their kilometers and to make a voluntary donation to LCMS Missions at the end of the anniversary year.

The luncheon was an array of salads, buns, cheese platters, cold cuts and crudités followed by a huge cake with the 100th anniversary emblem. It was flanked by a poster, flowers and candles. This was accompanied by homemade cookies made by the ladies of the church.

Mite boxes from the LWML were designed for children and given to the nursery school. Each child could sign their names and put in 100 pennies to be allocated to LCMS Missions.

In keeping with the “100” theme, a valiant effort was made to sign up 100 new St. Catharine’s Seminary Guild memberships. We out did ourselves with 75+ new memberships; that was the most any one church has succeeded in doing in one year. The seminary was thrilled to receive over \$375 on Guild Day in April.

Still to come are presentations of

interviews with founding and other members, St. Mark’s expansion and seasonal activity photos from over the years.

In September there will be a collection of non-perishable foods that will be donated to a local food bank. October is time for fall clean-up of the large expanse around St. Mark’s and the congregation will be encouraged to bring out 100 rakes to beautify the gardens to the Glory of God. Many hands make light work.

In keeping with our Lord’s great provision for all our needs, Thanksgiving will be a time for another collection of non-perishable food items which will go to a local charity to share Christ’s love for others. Sunday and nursery school children will be encouraged to participate in this food drive.

During Christmas Noel – a St. Mark’s tradition for over 50 years

cont’d on page 6

A Canadian Celebration ~ continued from page 5

consisting of live Nativity, caroling with hot cider and cookies – 100 cupped/lit candles will be handed out to the community who will be invited to share what God has meant to them in their lives.

Lent and Easter are sure to be times of sharing and caring as members of the committee will oversee the gathering of items for 100 hygiene kits which will be sent to Canadian Lutheran World Relief in 'We Care' bags for overseas missions.

During April and May we will have Operation Spring Clean-up. We accept that our church is a gift from God and as such we are to be good stewards of

church property of which we have been given the privilege to manage. We will be encouraging all church members to take an active role in beautifying the church inside and out - to the Glory of God.

Additionally, a special Spring Tea for our revered seniors will be held before the anniversary year is out. The congregation is encouraged to get involved and offer their services throughout the year.

In keeping with the anniversary theme "Faith Driven - Future Focused", the opening hymn at our celebration service was 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness.' St. Mark's has followed

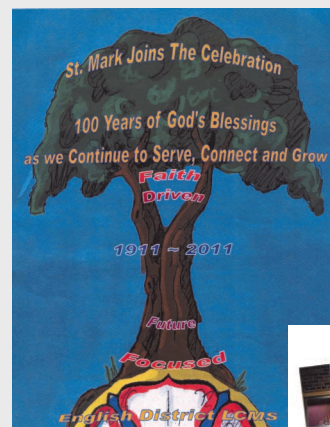
in the train of the faith of our fathers for over 60 years. We have also made sure that the youth have had every opportunity to participate in this year's events, thus setting the stage for youth involvement in planning St. Mark's future.

"With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free." Ephesians 6:7-8

Sharleine M. Haycock
Committee Chair



St. Mark's Celebration Day



Pastor Jeffrey Miskus & Chairman, Doug Askew
LCMS Anniversary Sunday, St. Mark's May 15, 2011



Church of Saint Mark - LCMS, Mississauga, Ontario Canada - Celebration Luncheon May 15, 2011



Celebrate by Sharing the Gospel

Faith Lutheran Church in Naples, Florida will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the English District by sharing the gospel with 100 individuals. To get to this goal the congregation has been revamping its evangelism program and the way it invites visitors.

To begin this effort, a Visitors Welcome Center was constructed at the entrance to the sanctuary. Greeters and ushers received initial training on how to welcome visitors. Training especially focused on attempting to get names and telephone numbers from our guests. Pamphlets on what it means to be Lutheran and defining baptism and communion are also at the Welcome Center, along with a gift of a Bible. One of the members of Faith then receives the information about visitors and contacts them by telephone and/or email, telling them that Faith was pleased they worshiped with us and setting a time for a home visit by a pastor and trained evangelists.

Five evangelists were recruited and have received training in the "Share Jesus Without Fear" strategy of sharing the gospel. Calls are made on Tuesday evenings. Training and calls began in May and

so far the team has shared the gospel with eleven people. Only 89 more to go!

In order to reach more unchurched people, Faith held two canvasses this past year. The first canvas was held right before Christmas when nineteen members of Faith went door to door to distribute five hundred invitations to Christmas services. Before Easter thirty-two members went door to door and distributed seven hundred invitations to Easter services.

One of our evangelists in training is a woman from Pakistan who aspires to share the gospel with Muslim and Hindu women. She has begun a weekly Bible study for unchurched women, specifically to reach out to Muslims and Hindus. We are partnering with the English and Florida/Georgia Districts to find support for her work. It is our prayer that many more will come to know the love of God through our sharing of His gospel.

In Jesus,

Pastor Bob Scudieri
Mission Equipping Pastor
Faith Lutheran Church
Naples, FL

Editor's Note: *Moving in Mission* has a new look. This issue marks the beginning of our third year. If you would like to share this publication with other leaders from your congregation, please send their addresses to Peggy Oke in the District office, poke@englishdistrict.org. If you have suggestions for future issues, contact Rev. David Thiele, English District Mission Executive, packerrev@englishdistrict.org or editor, Bob Fischer (contact information below).

EDITOR: Robert (Bob) Fischer (Fairlawn Lutheran, Akron)
e-mail: rfischer80@neo.rr.com

The English District 1911 ~ 2011

The English District is one of thirty-five districts of the LCMS.

The English District was an independent Lutheran Synod in North America, organized in 1888 as the "English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri." Our history goes back to colonial times.

The Henkels, a prominent Lutheran family, provided pastoral leadership for the church in Virginia.

In 1851, the Henkel family published the first English edition of the Book of Concord, the Lutheran Confessions.

In 1911, the English Synod was accepted into the "German Missouri Synod" as a non-geographic district of the synod.

Today, the District numbers 161 congregations, mission starts, and social ministries.

The English District sees itself in the role of the servant. It is a servant to the congregations, servant to other districts, and servant to the entire Synod.

The English District, igniting Christ's Church in Mission.



THE ENGLISH DISTRICT
OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD
33100 FREEDOM RD.
FARMINGTON, MI 48336-4030

WWW.ENGLISHDISTRICT.ORG



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Igniting Christ's Church in Mission Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the English District:



- Seeks opportunities to increase the planting of new missions and to foster revitalization of congregations
- Develops, supports and partners with urban and ethnic ministries and Lutheran schools and other educational ministries
- Resources congregations and professional workers to help members grow in faith, discipleship, leadership, stewardship, personal sharing of the Gospel, and mission work
- Celebrates and shares successful ministry models
- Promotes unity, fellowship, and collaboration among congregations, other ministries, and professional Church workers
- Gives increasing prayer, financial, and personnel support to District and Synod missions