

**David Hildebrandt**

Staff Report/June 2018

**Please accept my Staff Report of my involvement with the**

**NJ District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod**

**Entitled: “Change of Life”**

Prior to my eighteen years with the NJ District, I had been with a National and International Steel Company as a Marketing and Sales Representative with Carpenter Technology Corporation--- who moved me and my wife Barbara from the Chicago land area in 1969. **(Change of Life #1)**

After almost twenty years of employment, I was moved to form my own small Steel Company—Lahill Steel Corporation. **(Change of Life #2)**

Almost nineteen year ago, I had a heart attack at work, and was rushed to the hospital. After quadruple bypass surgery and nine months of recovery, we---my wife, family and I—decided on a “life change” not only for me but for us. **(Change of Life #3)** I had been the Congregation President at Calvary Lutheran in Verona and during that time, I had the pleasure of knowing the then District President, Rev. Dr. Sandman, who I reached out to for prayer and direction. His suggestions lead me to an opportunity with the LCMS and in February of 2000 I was offered a position as a Gift Counselor for both the New York and the New Jersey Districts, which I accepted. **(Change of Life #4)**

After a number of years, the LCMS Foundation had a directional change and a new need developed at the NJ District, that of a “dual” role of Gift Councilor and Business Manager, which I was asked to fill. **(Change of Life #5)**

Since that time, I have not only been the Business Manager **(Change of Life #6)**, NJ District Stewardship Leader **(Change of Life #7)** but also a Congregation Revitalization coach. **(Change of Life #8)**

**Change of Life #9** was The Funding of Ministry in the New Jersey District. Over these many years, the funding started with my role as a Gift Counselor. Here, I worked with individuals from a number of the District Congregations in setting up Charitable Remainder Trusts. The trust would be funded in a variety of ways including from a directive in an estate plan; resulting with National and local Ministries having or to receive over THREE MILLION DOLLARS from these activities. I was also asked to develop two District Fund Raisers: The “Seeds Campaign” and “His Way”. The proceeds from these activities of over THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND helped the continuing of ministry in the District and in extending a call to then Mission Executive now District President Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn.

Fifteen years ago I had a dream of bringing together individuals from various Congregations within the District that had like interests; that of a special golf outing that included a district wide fund raiser. From that dream the Mission Golf Classic was developed. We just recently completed the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Mission Classic on May 3<sup>rd</sup> with the net proceeds going to the Kairos Network, in support of new mission and church planting initiatives. The Classic has developed scholarships, funded youth summer camp projects, assisted the Malaria initiative, Backpacks for Life, Comfort Dogs, and youth initiatives, with over a QUARTER MILLION DOLLARS being given out.

Most recently I was asked to be a Property Manager (**Change of Life #10**), as the District sadly experienced congregations that have closed. During the “Property Manager” period of closures and over my prior years of experience, I have had some varied responsibilities. During that time, sadly, I have had involvement in congregation closings at: Clifton-Plainfield-North Bergen-Harrison-Mahwah-Elizabeth-and the Clinton area.

However, most recently, I have been involved, in part, of the newly formed Ministry Management Team (**Change of Life #11**) that has been charged with helping to assist NEW MINISTRY growth within the NJ District.

This final Staff role may very well be the most important activity that I have been part of to date; as the recent congregation assets that have come to the District from the various closings have been the financial support for the NEW MINISTRIES opportunities within the District.

Nineteen years ago I felt it was time for a “Life Change” and as I look to the future, I believe it is time for me, to once again, look to a **“Life Change-----Number 12”**.

With that said, I have prayed to the Lord for guidance as I say to those in the NJ District—Thank You for the opportunity to serve you and the Lord.

A special Thank You of friendship goes out to Reverends Klettke-Izzard-Huneke-Sadlo-Herzberg-Kuppler-Nelson-Steinbronn and to the best Administrative Specialist anyone could ever have—Elaine Schleifer.

**GOD BLESS**