



**The South Wisconsin District is more than 200 Lutheran congregations across south Wisconsin, each embracing their own heritage and coming from varied backgrounds, yet united in one faith with one purpose: *Confessing Christ for the Next Generation*.**

Our logo is intended to stand for who we are as District together and what we do with and for each other as the Body of Christ. We preach and teach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments with Christ at the center. We cherish Christian education in our schools and in our homes. We live out our lives of faith in service to one another, bearing fruit through the good works prepared for us.

**Tree**—Trees represent life. A part of the natural, created world, trees are symbols of growth, strength, and steadfastness. They also offer shade, shelter, and sustenance. They represent the past, present, and future as they are often used to depict heritage and familial connections. They reflect the seasons and the passage of time. They were once planted by previous generations, are enjoyed by current generations, and cared for and cultivated for future generations.

Trees abound in Scripture and are thus reasonably used in Christian iconography. Simply stated, one cannot recount the salvation story without the presence of a tree. God's perfect creation was marred by Adam and Eve at the foot of a tree and thus our immediate need for a Savior was put in motion. Less obvious perhaps, but God used other trees (or their wood) to put His plan into practice and maintain His presence among His people. Think about Noah's ark, the Ark of the Covenant, or Solomon's temple supported by the cedars of Lebanon. In Isaiah, the Messiah is likened to a shoot from the stump of Jesse. Consider even Zacchaeus pulling himself into a Sycamore tree just to catch a glimpse of Jesus. These minor references to trees abound and we still recognize the wooden shepherd's crook (crosier) as a symbol of the pastoral office today. But ultimately, God used the tree of the Cross as the unlikely final instrument to redeem His lost creation through the crucifixion of His Son. Similarly, we look forward in faith to experiencing this victory of eternal life and the healing of the nations in a restored creation in the presence of the Tree of Life.

**Fruit**—Inextricably connected to the tree and themes of cultivation and growth, we are reminded of the forbidden fruit, the fruit of the womb of the Virgin Mary, first fruits given in faith and thanksgiving, and fruit as the necessary byproduct of a living faith in action.

**Serpent**—The serpent on the tree is not simply Satan, but rather a reminder that Christ gave himself to be sacrificed; humbled and hung on the tree of the Cross and held up for the salvation of all mankind. Like the bronze serpent brought healing to the children of Israel, we fix our gaze on Jesus and His sacrifice for our salvation.

**Book**—The book is reminiscent of one that has been used regularly, with pages curling from regular handling. Is it the Holy Bible? Certainly. But it could also be the *Book of Concord* and other writings on which our faith is founded, classroom lessons and Bible studies, or even sermons and commentaries yet to be written, each one rooted in the Word Himself.

**Alpha & Omega**—The beginning and the end, the first and the last, Christ himself, the same yesterday, today, and forever at the center of all we preach, teach, and confess and the foundation in which we are forever rooted.

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*Faithful cross, true sign of triumph,  
Be for all the noblest tree;  
None in foliage, none in blossom,  
None in fruit thine equal be;  
Symbol of the world's redemption,  
For the weight that hung on thee!* (LSB 454:4)