

CHRIST IS RISEN

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..... I N D E E D

BORN: 1972, Madison Heights, Mich.

WIFE'S NAME: Serena

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 5

COLLEGE: Concordia University Chicago (1995)

SEMINARY: Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1999)

YEARS AS A MEMBER OF SYNOD CONGREGATIONS: 54

YEARS AS A ROSTERED MEMBER OF SYNOD: 27

YEAR OF ORDINATION: 1999

PASTORATES

- St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Dedham, Mass. (1999–2004)
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, Brookfield, Ill. (2004–2012)
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hamel, Ill. (2012–Present)

SYNOD AND DISTRICT OFFICES

- Sixth Vice-President, Central Region (2019–2023)
- Second Vice-President, Central Region (2023–Present)
- Second Vice-President, Southern Illinois District (2018–2019)

OTHER SYNOD SERVICE

- Convention Delegate (2007, 2016, 2019)
- Participant, LCMS Model Theological Conference (2010)
- Doctrinal Reviewer (2013–2019)
- Assistant Chaplain, LCMS Convention (2013)
- Planning Committee Member and Presenter, LCMS Institute on Liturgy, Preaching and Church Music (2014, 2017)
- Member, Convention Floor Committees: Seminary Education, Structure and Administration (2016, 2019)
- Chairman, Committee for Convention Nominations (2019–2023)
- Chairman, Convention Floor Committee: Schools, Family, Young Adults and Youth (2023)
- Regent, Concordia University, Nebraska (2023–Present)

OTHER DISTRICT SERVICE

- Member, Convention Floor Committees (2000, 2015)
- Member, New England District Worship Commission (2001–2004)
- Circuit Counselor, Northern Illinois District (2006–2009)
- Member, Northern Illinois District East Region Pastoral Conference Committee (2006–2010)
- Secretary, Northern Illinois District Nominations Committee (2009)
- Circuit Visitor, Southern Illinois District (2015–2018)
- Chairman, Southern Illinois Commission on Convention Nominations and Elections (2017–2018, 2024–2025)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT SERVICE OR EXPERIENCE

- Pastor-in-Residence, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2002)
- Supervisor of Deaconess Field Workers, Concordia University Chicago (2005–2012)
- Book Reviewer, *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* (2016)
- Member, Board of Directors, Metro-East Lutheran High School, Edwardsville, Ill. (2017–2019)
- Contributor, *The Lutheran Witness* (2020, 2024)
- Contributor, *The Emigration of the Saxon Lutherans in the Year 1838 and Their Settlement in Perry County, Missouri*, Concordia Publishing House (2022)
- Supervisor of Field Workers, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2015–Present)
- Vicarage Supervisor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2021–Present)
- Head Boys Basketball Coach, St. Paul Lutheran Squires, Hamel, Ill. (2022–Present)
- Founding Member, The Evangelical Lutheran Hunting Club of Saline, Montgomery, and Other Counties (2006–Present)

PRESIDENTIAL BIOS

Benjamin T. Ball

Candidate for LCMS President



Q&A

1. Tell us what you love about the LCMS.

I love the people of our Synod. Everything I have has come from God through the Synod's people. From my parents and maternal ancestors who were members of LCMS congregations, to my wife (we met on my vicarage), to my education provided by our congregations, all my daily bread has come from God through the people of the LCMS. I love that the people of our Synod love the Word of God and the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. I love that they want it to be shared in their communities and around the world.

2. Church membership is declining in the LCMS, as in most church bodies in America. What should the congregations of the Synod do to address this, and how should the Synod support them?

Lutherans across our Synod want their congregations to grow. They want more people to believe in Christ and confess His name, and are working to spread God's Word. Congregations should judge whether their preaching, teaching and activities are faithful to God, His Holy Word and our Confessions. Where they have fallen short, they should repent. The Synod should encourage all members to live faithfully in Christ and trust in His provision. Also, we should encourage faithful, diligent work. We must not sit back in apathetic despair, but recommit ourselves to the Word, and show Christ's love in all we do. We leave the results to God.



3. What does it mean to be Lutheran?

To be a Lutheran is to be a Christian. To be a Christian is to follow Jesus Christ and His Word. A Lutheran, having been justified by faith alone, renounces the devil; believes in the Holy Trinity; holds all the prophetic and apostolic Holy Scriptures as the inspired, inerrant Word of God; and confesses the doctrine of the Small Catechism to be faithful and true. By the grace of God, a Lutheran lives according to the Word of God and in faith, word and deed remains true to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit even to death.

4. How would you describe the proper relationship between the church and the government/politics?

The church should preach the truth of God's Word to the governing authorities. We must call them to fidelity to their offices and remind them of their duties. The Augsburg Confession reminds us that both the church and the governing authorities are established by God and are to "be honored and acknowledged as God's gifts and blessings" — but that confusing the power of the church and of the state "has produced great war and riot" (AC XXVIII). Lutheran citizens have a duty not just to obey the governing authorities (ROM. 13), but particularly in our country, to participate in making decisions for the good of our neighbors.

5. In an ideal world 30 years from now, what does the LCMS look like? What is the same? What is different?

In an *ideal* world, the LCMS would be the largest church body in America — indeed, the *only* church body in America — because everyone would join together with us in unified confession and life! I pray that Scripture and our *Book of Concord* will be preached and taught among us. That congregations will be full of people hearing God's Word and living by it; families strong; Christians showing love for their neighbors and zealous in outreach. I hope that we may grow more united in our confession and practice — for example, that all congregations will be practicing closed Communion and singing God's Words from the same hymnal.

6. What actions would you like to see come out of this upcoming Synod convention?

I hope that all our resolutions would extol Christ and His doctrine and be helpful for the lives of our congregations. We should leave the convention unified and resolved to stop bickering, which hinders our witness and diverts our attention away from kingdom work. To that end, the matters surrounding pastoral formation need to be resolved. I hope that a resolution is passed to begin the reform of our dispute resolution and ecclesiastical supervision processes. I believe these have been shown to be broken and are hampering our ability to live and serve together.

Personal Statement

It is an honor to be nominated for president of the Synod; it is in fact humbling. I was taught at seminary to assent when asked to serve the church. However, I believe my duties in parsonage, pulpit and school are such that if I were to continue to serve the Synod in an elected capacity, doing so as a vice-president would be more prudent. It is my prayer that this statement of President Friedrich Pfotenhauer will always be true: "The preaching of the Gospel — that is the proper business of the Missouri Synod."



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PRESIDENTIAL BIOS

Joel D. Biermann
Candidate for LCMS President



Q&A

1. Tell us what you love about the LCMS.

I have been nurtured and shaped into the follower of Christ that I am in the LCMS. At the heart of that formation is our solid doctrinal foundation grounded in the *Book of Concord*. For two decades, the Synod has entrusted me with the task of inculcating a love for our doctrine into future servants in the church. There is no greater joy than encouraging our church's leaders faithfully to confess the reality of Christ with their words and through their lives. Our Synod's unifying common confession of God's truth — the truth that formed me — is what I most appreciate.

2. Church membership is declining in the LCMS, as in most church bodies in America. What should the congregations of the Synod do to address this, and how should the Synod support them?

Living in a post-Christian culture is hard, and the demographics paint a bleak picture. Nevertheless, a faithful church is not measured by numbers, but by her witness to the world as she follows Christ. Congregations must gather often not only to worship but to encourage and form one another through shared meals, service, sorrows, celebrations and ordinary life. The Synod should provide teaching and exemplary leadership that reinforces the centrality of Christ's church for the lives of her people. Congregations that are vibrant communities of

BORN: 1960, Waconia, Minn.

WIFE'S NAME: Jeannalee

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 3

COLLEGE: Concordia College, Ann Arbor, Mich. (1983)

SEMINARY: Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1987)

OTHER DEGREES: Ph.D., Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2002)

YEARS AS A MEMBER OF SYNOD CONGREGATIONS: 54

YEARS AS A ROSTERED MEMBER OF SYNOD: 38

YEAR OF ORDINATION: 1987

PASTORATES

- Trinity Lutheran Church, Bemidji, Minn. (1987–1988)
- St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Holt, Mich. (1988–1998)
- Lutheran Church of Webster Gardens (2000–2016)
- Vacancy Pastor in St. Louis (2016–2026)

OTHER FULL-TIME POSITIONS

- Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2002–Present)

OTHER SYNOD SERVICE

- Member, Commission on Theology and Church Relations (2016–2026)

Personal Statement

In Colossians, Paul beautifully describes the work of the church: “We preach Christ, instructing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone complete in Christ” (1:28). Three things: We cultivate faithful *practices* in worship and living that form people into the fullness that God intends for His creatures. We embrace our *purpose* to deliver God's truth revealed in Christ to the world and shun petty disputes or fears that hinder our work together. We *proclaim* the Gospel to everyone, because Christ has died for everyone. This threefold emphasis should direct all who serve in the church.



faith witness the reality of Jesus to the world — and trust God for the growth.

3. What does it mean to be Lutheran?

Lutherans follow Jesus Christ. Lutheran is not a denomination or one version of Christianity. Lutheran is the name we give to those who rightly confess with their words and lives that Jesus is Lord. Normed and directed by the Bible, Lutherans teach the fullness of God’s truth that the apostles taught. To be Lutheran is to know the wonder of God’s forgiveness in Christ, to have purpose in daily life grounded in the vocations God gives, and to wait with eager expectation for the arrival of Christ’s kingdom in its full glory on the Last Day.

4. How would you describe the proper relationship between the church and the government/politics?

Jesus is Lord over His entire creation. He exercises a two-fold rule through the church and the government. With the sword, government thwarts evil and cares for those in need. With the Word, the church delivers the Gospel that makes creatures right with their Creator. While church and state must be kept distinct, they cooperate to accomplish God’s purposes until Christ returns. A good government adheres to God’s Law, helping creatures to live well together. A faithful church proclaims the Gospel and seeks neither to control government nor to curry its favor but encourages it to uphold God’s justice.

5. In an ideal world 30 years from now, what does the LCMS look like? What is the same? What is different?

If we are faithful and choose to do the necessary work, the LCMS will be blessed with a future that is marked by unity; a determination to use insights, gifts and resources from all in the Synod; and an unwavering commitment to build one another up into mature followers of Christ. Anchored in God’s grace, we will eagerly worship together, generously serve our neighbors, and provide the world with a vibrant witness of the joy that comes when we walk in the truth of God’s Gospel. We will be a people who show the world the reality of new life in Jesus.

6. What actions would you like to see come out of this upcoming Synod convention?

Paul’s exhortation to the Colossians provides excellent direction: “We preach Christ, instructing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone complete in Christ” (COL. 1:28). Accordingly, we should: encourage faithful **practices** in worship and daily living that form people to be fully human creatures of God; embrace the church’s defining **purpose** to deliver God’s truth revealed in Christ to the world around us, and sharpen this focus by rebuking petty disputes or fears that hinder our work together; and determine to **proclaim** the Gospel to everyone. Proclamation is not an option — Christ died for everyone.



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PRESIDENTIAL BIOS

Brady L. Finnern

Candidate for LCMS President



BORN: 1979, Sartell, Minn.

WIFE'S NAME: Amy

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 4

COLLEGE: Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn. (2002)

SEMINARY: Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2006)

YEARS AS A MEMBER OF SYNOD CONGREGATIONS: 46

YEARS AS A ROSTERED MEMBER OF SYNOD: 20

YEAR OF ORDINATION: 2006

PASTORATES

- St. John Lutheran Church, North Prairie, Wis. (2006–2010)
- Messiah Lutheran Church, Sartell, Minn. (2010–2022)

SYNOD AND DISTRICT OFFICES

- Vice-President, Minnesota North District (2018–2022)
- District President, Minnesota North District (2022–Present)

OTHER SYNOD SERVICE

- Member, Board of Directors, Lutheran Church Extension Fund, St. Louis (2015–2024)
- Chairman, LCMS Council of Presidents (2025–Present)
- Board Member, Concordia University System (2025–Present)

OTHER DISTRICT SERVICE

- Circuit Visitor, Minnesota North District (2012–2018)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT SERVICE OR EXPERIENCE

- Track and Field Coach, Sartell High School, Sartell, Minn. (2013–Present)
- Fellow, DOXOLOGY Collegium, Waukesha, Wis. (2017–2025)
- Host, "Thy Strong Word" and "Concord Matters," KFUO Radio, St. Louis (2021–Present)

Personal Statement

Lord, have mercy! I am humbled to be nominated for Synod president as we serve our Lord in this favorable yet challenging time for the church (2 COR. 6:2). I pray for a Synod renewed in bold proclamation of the Gospel, steadfast in our Lutheran Confessions, and united in doctrine and practice. Together, we will strengthen congregations through robust visitations (ACTS 15:36–41), diligent searching of the Scriptures (ACTS 17:11), exhorting everyone to holy living by the Holy Spirit's power (1 COR. 6:11), and zealously witnessing Christ's atoning blood and empty tomb to our communities. The Lord grant it.

Q&A

1. Tell us what you love about the LCMS.

I love how everything we do in the LCMS centers on giving sinners a clear conscience before God in Christ (ROM. 5:1). Our congregations, schools and missions are committed to proclaiming the full counsel of God's Word: calling sinners to repentance (LUKE 24:44–47), comforting hearts with the Gospel (2 COR. 5:21), exhorting one another to sanctified living (EPH. 5:8–9), and bringing everything to the feet of Christ in prayer (1 THESS. 5:17). Freed by the blood of Christ, we love and serve our neighbors (MARK 12:30–31). The LCMS faithfully confesses the unchanging, inerrant Word of God, which soothes the terrified conscience (HEB. 9:14).

2. Church membership is declining in the LCMS, as in most church bodies in America. What should the congregations of the Synod do to address this, and how should the Synod support them?

Our only hope is in the LORD who brings faith by His Word (MARK 4:26–29). Pastors — keep preaching (2 TIM. 4:2). Commissioned workers — faithfully serve in Christ's name (PHIL. 2:3–5). Priesthood of all believers — stay strong in the LORD (EPH. 6:10). Earnestly pray for those who have walked away from Christ's gifts. The community surrounding your congregation is your mission field. How can your church extend Christ's mercy and be ready to defend



the hope we have in Christ (1 PETER 3:15)? Synod supports our congregations by assuring that we are faithful to the Scriptures and strengthening the church through visitations.

3. What does it mean to be Lutheran?

As Lutherans, we have confidence that we are received into God's favor and forgiven for Christ's sake, entirely apart from our own merit or worthiness. We believe, teach and confess that salvation is in the shed blood and resurrection of Christ by grace alone and through faith alone (EPH. 2:8-9), brought to sinners through the external means of Word and Sacrament. In a world of uncertainty, Lutheranism delivers the sure promise of the forgiveness of sins (COL. 1:13-14) and the hope that by the work of the Holy Spirit, we can live in holiness as His living sacrifices (ROM. 12:1-2).

4. How would you describe the proper relationship between the church and the government/politics?

Governed by our LORD's desire for all people to believe in Christ and live according to His way (1 TIM. 2:1-4), we pray for and submit to those in authority as unto the Lord (ROM. 13:1-7). The church calls the baptized to engage faithfully in civic life for the good of our neighbor and to speak God's truth humbly yet clearly when authorities promote sin (ACTS 5:29). Our goal is not to seize earthly power, but to reflect Christ's mercy and righteousness in the public square.

5. In an ideal world 30 years from now, what does the LCMS look like? What is the same? What is different?

In 30 years, we pray the LORD keeps our foundation unshaken: that every church, school and mission confesses the inerrant Scriptures (2 TIM. 3:16) and Jesus as the only Savior (JOHN 14:6), and stands steadfast with a *quia* subscription to the *Book of Concord*. That week by week, the saints still hear the voice of their Good Shepherd (JOHN 10:27; SA III, VIII). My prayer is that, regardless of size, we have robust, purposeful visitations to every congregation, school, circuit and district each triennium, ensuring that we remain steadfast in the one true faith and grow together in Christ's kingdom (ACTS 15:36-41).

6. What actions would you like to see come out of this upcoming Synod convention?

I pray that the convention reaffirms our joyful commitment to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and that, through us, the LORD would strengthen the baptized to proclaim Christ's excellencies (1 PETER 2:9), equip families to teach the faith diligently in the home (DEUT. 6:4-9), celebrate and bolster our universities and seminaries as they form servants for the harvest, and remind every believer that they are not alone in a divided world. Christ still reigns (LUKE 24:5-6). Nothing can overcome His church (MATT. 16:18). The LORD sends us forth knowing that Christ is risen, risen indeed!



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PRESIDENTIAL BIOS

Matthew C. Harrison Candidate for LCMS President



BORN: 1962, Sioux City, Iowa

WIFE'S NAME: Kathy

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 2

COLLEGE: Morningside University, Sioux City, Iowa (1984)

SEMINARY: Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (1989)

OTHER DEGREES:

- S.T.M., Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (1991)
- LL.D., Concordia University Ann Arbor
- D.D., Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne
- Graduate studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

YEARS AS A MEMBER OF SYNOD CONGREGATIONS: 64

YEARS AS A ROSTERED MEMBER OF SYNOD: 35

YEAR OF ORDINATION: 1991

PASTORATES

- St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Westgate, Iowa (1991-1995)
- Zion Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Ind. (1995-2001)
- Village Lutheran Church, Ladue, Mo. (2010-Present)

SYNOD AND DISTRICT OFFICES

- President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (2010-Present)

OTHER SYNOD SERVICE

- Member, Synod Nominations Committee (1994-1995)
- Convention Delegate (1995, 1998)
- Member, LCMS Board for Mission Services (1998-2001)
- Executive Director, LCMS World Relief and Human Care (2001-2010)
- Member, LCMS Board of Directors (2010-Present)
- Founding Board Chair, Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (2015-Present)
- Board Chair, International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (2007-Present; Chair since 2019)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT SERVICE OR EXPERIENCE

- Missionary to Native Canadians, Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots (1983-1984)
- Graduate Assistant, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. (1990-1991)
- Co-Founder, St. Peter's/Zion Project for Neighborhood Renewal (1995-2000)
- Board, Project Renew (Neighborhood Housing Corporation) (1995-2001)
- Fort Wayne Urban League Building Committee (1999)
- Catholic/Lutheran Dialogue; LCMS President's Church Relations Cabinet (1996-2001; 2001-2010)
- Lutheran Services in America Board; Lutheran World Relief Board (2001-2010)
- Author/translator/editor of numerous publications, most recently: *Walther, Church and Office*; *Second Thoughts on Living Together*; *Gerhard, Meditations on Divine Mercy*; *Sasse, Lonely Way, Letters to Lutheran Pastors*, vol. 1-3; *At Home in the House of My Fathers*; *Christ Have Mercy*; *A Little Book on Joy*; *Luther, A Simple Way to Pray*; *Chemnitz, Church Order*; *Letters from a Pastor's Heart*; *Women Pastors?*; *Closed Communion?*; *One Lord: Two Hands?*; *Lutheran Preaching?*; *Why Am I Joyfully Lutheran?*; "A Theological Statement for Mission for the 21st Century"; *Take Courage*
- Managed the Synod's national responses to Haiti earthquake, Asian tsunami, Katrina, etc. (2001-2010)
- Board Member, International Lutheran Council (2010-Present)
- Pro-life speaker/activist, St. Louis March on the Arch, Chicago March for Life, D.C. Rose Dinner (2010-Present)
- Concordia Historical Institute Distinguished Service Award (2022)
- Board Member, The Bolick Foundation (2022-Present)

Q&A

1. Tell us what you love about the LCMS.

Warts and all, she's the best thing goin'. I've seen every corner of the LCMS, all its global work. I love our salt-of-the-earth people who love Jesus and show it in myriad ways. I love our congregations and workers committed to their communities, our schools and staff, our seminaries and universities, our youth. I love our dedicated clergy who are true shepherds and missionaries. I love our mercy work. Most of all, I love what drives it all, the inerrant Scriptures, our *Book of Concord* and our profound theology. All for this: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son" (JOHN 3:16).

2. Church membership is declining in the LCMS, as in most church bodies in America. What should the congregations of the Synod do to address this, and how should the Synod support them?

Good news! There has been a significant bounce in adult Baptisms/confirmations. Yet we've faced two huge factors (and more) for a half century: 1) The birth rate has plummeted, now at another record low. District attendance numbers mirror the decline of the local birth rate. 2) Our wretched culture has lured our brothers and sisters, sons and daughters away from the church. Answers? Retention. Evangelism/outreach. Youth work. Healthy pastors/workers. Schools (new tax law — huge opportunity). All Nations Ministry (527 LCMS ethnic groups!).



Families/discipleship. Church planting. Quality preaching. Substantive worship. Our Office of National Mission is flat out on helping congregations in all this and more.

3. What does it mean to be Lutheran?

“The gospel is the power of God unto salvation,” not my works, decision, nothing in me. “He was put to death for our sins, raised for our justification” (ROM. 4:25). Our catechism teaches: The Commandments convict us of sin (ROM. 3:21). The Creed tells us who God is and who we are. He redeemed us and “calls, gathers, enlightens” the whole church. We live as His. He “tenderly invites us to pray.” “He saves us through the washing... ” We confess. He forgives. He gives “His true body and blood ... for forgiveness.” We cling to the inerrant Word and live for Him through others.

4. How would you describe the proper relationship between the church and the government/politics?

“Render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (MARK 12:17). Secular government and church “must not be confused” (Ap XXVIII 12). Pulpits are for proclamation of the truths of Scripture, especially the Gospel. Our people serve. We vote (AC XV). We have First Amendment protections. Government is to keep order and control evil (ROM. 13). Law and order is good. Where government fails, we have spoken (abortion, racism, negative aspects of DEI, homosexuality and trans ideology). We have also advocated compassion for immigrants. We are not a political party. We are all about Christ and His Gospel and the “whole counsel of God.”

5. In an ideal world 30 years from now, what does the LCMS look like? What is the same? What is different?

You can bet there won’t be an “ideal world.” But Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (HEB. 13:8). We shall be what the church has always been. “We have this treasure in jars of clay, ... the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken ... always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies” (2 COR. 4:7ff). I pray we remain faithful, biblical Lutherans, growing, planting and serving.

6. What actions would you like to see come out of this upcoming Synod convention?

Strong, biblical resolutions that confess Christ in a world of chaos. Continued commitment to the priority of strong residential seminaries, with faithful flexibility to serve the needs of congregations. Focus on congregations and pastors. Focus on *Set Apart to Serve* and our increasing numbers of church

work students. Continued aggressive domestic and international mission. Thanksgiving that we have no debt and no guarantees on any debt. Upcoming catechism and Augsburg Confession anniversaries. Improvement of reconciliation bylaws. More authority for mission boards. Luther said the Gospel passes from a people for thanklessness. “Thank the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endures forever!” (PSALM 136)

Personal Statement

“The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanses us from all our sin” (1 JOHN 1:7). It’s an honor to serve even in these tumultuous times. I am convicted by the inerrant Scriptures. I believe the public confession of this church with all my heart. My greatest desire has been to lead, ever urging us to proclaim the incomparable, freeing, forgiving grace of Jesus. It’s a miracle we are still here, confessing Jesus and inviting sinners. After 100 district visitations, 120 district conventions, and more, I can only thank God for you. Thanks be to God. Let’s go (MARK 1:38)!



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PRESIDENTIAL BIOS

Peter K. Lange

Candidate for LCMS President



BORN: 1962, Houston, Texas

WIFE'S NAME: Marcia

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 4

COLLEGE: Concordia University Chicago (1984)

SEMINARY: Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (1988)

OTHER DEGREES:

- S.T.M., Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (1998)

YEARS AS A MEMBER OF SYNOD CONGREGATIONS: 64

YEARS AS A ROSTERED MEMBER OF SYNOD: 36

YEAR OF ORDINATION: 1990

PASTORATES

- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Concordia, Mo. (1990–1999)
- St. John's Lutheran Church, Topeka, Kan. (1999–2015)

SYNOD AND DISTRICT OFFICES

- First Vice-President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (2019–Present)
- First Vice-President, Kansas District (2012–2015)
- District President, Kansas District (2015–2019)

OTHER SYNOD SERVICE

- Doctrinal Reviewer (1998–2009)
- Convention Delegate (1998, 2007, 2013, 2016)
- Vicarage Supervisor (2002–2007)
- Member, LCMS Council of Presidents (2015–Present)
- Chairman, Convention Floor Committees (2016, 2019)
- Member, LCMS Board of Directors (2019–Present)
- Member, Commission on Theology and Church Relations (2019–Present)
- Chairman, Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry (2019–Present)
- Chairman, Colloquy Committee for Commissioned Ministry (2019–Present)
- Member, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Board of Regents (2019–Present)

Q&A

1. Tell us what you love about the LCMS.

I love its shared commitment to biblical, Christ-centered preaching and teaching; its serious confession of and commitment to the entire *Book of Concord* in both doctrine and practice; its culture of and commitment to a well-formed clergy; its culture of strong lay participation in receiving God's gifts through worship and in congregational life; its commitment to national and international mission; its long-held commitment to parochial, secondary and higher education; its strong engagement with church bodies of a shared confession around the world; its emphasis on assisting and developing those partner churches; and its rich tradition of liturgy and hymnody.

2. Church membership is declining in the LCMS, as in most church bodies in America. What should the congregations of the Synod do to address this, and how should the Synod support them?

Pastors should continually strive for excellent preaching and teaching, inspire and equip increasingly more laity to give witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their daily vocations, and lead by example. Congregations should be intentional with local outreach efforts and work with neighboring congregations to make the best use of decreasing resources. Those that are able should seriously consider church



plants. The national office of Synod provides resources for the things listed above. Furthermore, the national office of Synod can support congregations by redoubling its efforts to listen to the needs expressed by congregations and districts and respond appropriately as resources allow.

3. What does it mean to be Lutheran?

Being Lutheran is to confess faithfully the truth of God’s Holy Word according to *all* the Lutheran Confessions contained in the *Book of Concord* of 1580. This includes rejecting all false teachings that the Confessions reject. Central to the Lutheran confession is Christ *for* us, earned on the cross and delivered through His Holy Word and blessed Sacraments.

4. How would you describe the proper relationship between the church and the government/politics?

The Lord instituted the church and commanded her to minister His Word and Sacraments through which He blesses those who receive His gifts and equips them for their vocations. The Lord also blesses the people of this world through earthly governments which receive their authority from God and exist to maintain peace and order. Christians live as citizens of both realms and are free to participate in government and politics through which they can be a salutary leaven on society as they participate in accord with their conscience formed by the Word of God.

5. In an ideal world 30 years from now, what does the LCMS look like? What is the same? What is different?

The LCMS is *unified* in its clear, Christ-centered confession of God’s Word according to the Lutheran Confessions. It is unified in its public worship, ministry and mission, having worked through former divisions and agreed upon God-pleasing limits to the variety of practices in its congregations and schools. Its universities and seminaries are cherished by all; supply all the needed pastors, missionaries, teachers and other church workers that can be supported; and are boldly Lutheran, full of students learning from excellent curricula. Every congregation, school and agency vigorously reaches out to those who do not know Jesus with Christ’s Word and Sacraments through which He grows His church.

6. What actions would you like to see come out of this upcoming Synod convention?

Regarding pastoral formation, I would like to see the members of Synod recognize and appreciate the years-long conversations and processes that have led to this convention (as human and imperfect as those processes are) and then live peacefully with whatever decisions emerge from the convention whose delegates represent every member of Synod. Regarding disputes as well as the mutual encouragement, instruction and admonition that are to take place among rostered members of Synod (Bylaw 4.8.2), I would like to see clarification and simplification of the process(es) by which concerns may be addressed so that these agreed-upon processes are more easily navigated and widely used.

Personal Statement

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them” (ROM. 12:6). It’s an honor to have received sufficient nominations to be placed, for a second time, on the ballot for president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The vote of confidence is humbling, and if this is where the Lord leads, I’m willing to serve. That said, I’ve enjoyed serving as LCMS first vice-president and would very much welcome an opportunity to continue in that role, building on my work during the last seven years and supporting the able and faithful leadership of our current Synod president.

