

The LCMS is “simply the best thing going,” said Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison in his opening remarks at our Synod’s Convention this last week. What follows is my edited summary of an article by Rachel Bomberger of the *LCMS Reporter* about President Harrison’s re-election acceptance to begin the convention.

The convention theme verse (1 Cor. 15:20–22): “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58).

Harrison stressed the joy of the resurrection; the hope of the Gospel; and the need for repentance, forgiveness and unity in the church’s life together. He also reemphasized “two main goals” that have been foundational throughout his 16-year tenure as president: retaining “our clear confession and practice” and “urging and training for witness and outreach.”

Challenges

Harrison acknowledged long and short-term challenges facing the Synod, including ongoing patterns of demographic decline.

“The LCMS enjoyed 150 years of growth, and now it has experienced 50 years of decline. No Synod president, no program, no district president (no matter how missional), no board of directors, no band of pastors (no matter how zealous) has been able to reverse that trend.”

He spoke also to the recent downsizing of Concordia University Ann Arbor, tension between those who support the Synod’s two residential seminaries and those calling for a fully online Master of Divinity program, and the disproportionate growth of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program. “Forgiveness and charity [are] needed throughout this convention on all these issues,” said Harrison.

‘Good things’

Harrison also highlighted numerous positive developments in the LCMS, especially the return of adult confirmation rates to pre-COVID numbers: “The LCMS has one of the highest rates of adult conversions – 30% – of all denominations,” he said. “We also know that the LCMS has a larger core of



The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, president of the LCMS, stands with his family during the 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Phoenix on Sunday, July 19, 2026. LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford

young families producing children than any other mainline denomination. We know that our adult retention rates are much higher than evangelicals. We know that young men and families are showing up in our congregations in increasing numbers, as reported to me across the nation.”

The financial state of the Synod, Harrison reported, is also strong – a \$115 million swing from 16 years ago; erasing \$65 million in debt.

“Today...we are nearing the goal...of having one year of operations cash on hand.” “We have no debt. We are not responsible for the debt of any other entities.”

Other “good things” mentioned in Harrison’s report include:

- The Million Dollar Life Match, which has “energized” congregations, life ministries...and brought practical help and Gospel comfort to “some 670,000 women and children in crisis.”
- Stronger partnerships with sister churches around the world...many of which look to the LCMS as “the leading force for global *Book of Concord* Lutheranism.”
- The adoption of the church worker recruitment initiative *Set Apart to Serve* by all 35 LCMS districts; the largest total enrollment at LCMS seminaries in a decade.
- A renewed emphasis on church planting both

nationally and internationally, with 100 new church plants in process.

- Robust efforts toward “All Nations” ministry involving 527 different ministries and related groups.
- A thriving Concordia Publishing House and record numbers of grants from Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) for the work of the LCMS Offices of National and International Mission.

‘Therefore, my beloved brothers’

Looking ahead to the work of the convention, Harrison anticipated vigorous debate on many of the resolutions under consideration and issued a call for love and unity among both the delegates on the floor and those following the convention from afar.

Even as Harrison acknowledged the reality of political wrangling on the convention floor, he also emphasized the power of forgiveness, his love for the LCMS, and his gratitude for the Lord’s blessings: “We will sin against each other this week. We will become impatient. We will take offense. And we will forgive. We will all see the Synod, warts and all. Despite all that, and all the nonsense that leads up to these events, I am of the unwavering, determined conviction that the LCMS is simply the best thing going. At the end of the week, we will thank God for His wonderful blessings.”

After Harrison’s reelection to the Synod presidency was formally announced and certified, he was joined on the convention stage by his wife, two sons, daughters-in-law and three young grandchildren as he accepted and offered a brief response to the election results saying, “I’m so blessed. I’m a blessed man. And I realize that the greatest blessings come

through the greatest crosses at the same time.”

Speaking both to the convention delegates and to his wife, Kathy, with whom he celebrated 45 years of marriage on June 18, he concluded, “I’ll do my best to serve you in these three years to come. God bless you all.”

Having served as a pastor in the LCMS, beginning my 30th year now, I whole-heartedly agree with President Harrison, that even with all of our “warts”, disagreements and challenges – and especially as I talk with other pastors and members of other churches and church-bodies, we truly are blessed by God to be part of “the best thing going” that I know of on this side of heaven itself. When I confess in the Nicene Creed that “I believe in the One Holy Christian and apostolic Church”, I think of our beloved *Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod*, you, the saints the Holy Spirit has gathered here at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church and all of our brothers and sisters in the faith around the world who confess Jesus Alone, Scripture Alone, salvation by Grace Alone through Faith Alone, and the fact that Jesus has kept us faithful to Him through the centuries so that you and I are not only saved, but now have the blessing to pass Christ’s saving truth on to generations to come. Yes, “...we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture, will give thanks to You forever; from generation to generation we will recount Your praise” (Ps. 79:13).

Blessed to be serving Jesus ... and you,

Pastor Keith Beed

The Altar Guild has had a member move to take a job out of state. We would love to have additional members for our team. Please let me know if you have an interest in working with us.

We want to plan a date to repair or replace banners. If anyone is interested in helping with that project, please talk to Mary Ann. It’s anticipated that we could spend time on a Saturday and get some of them taken care of or start on new ones. They are an enhancement to our services and we need to have them look presentable to the glory of God.

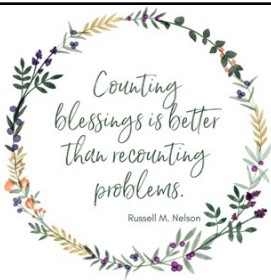
For our current members, please be sure to check that the amount of wafers is correct. Also, make sure the lids are tight on the containers as the swamp coolers are running and the wafers do not stay as crisp.

We do have new gluten free wafers: they will stay fresher if left in the freezer and only have a small amount in the container in the refrigerator. Members please watch that we do not have too many in the containers.

“I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.” Psalm 84:10

Christ’s humble servant, Mary Ann Merritt





CELEBRATING OUR BLESSINGS!

It's easy for us to find things to gripe about, but God's blessings abound!

- ✦ For God's amazing Grace that knows no bounds.
- ✦ We had such a great turnout for our church picnic and kickball—with visitors!
- ✦ That the warm summer is now yielding harvests for many of us.
- ✦ That despite the hot days, we are in a state that still cools down at night.
- ✦ That Colorado is celebrating 150 years of statehood.
- ✦ That we have medical doctors who know how to diagnose and treat serious conditions.

**These are just a few of the MANY blessings bestowed on us at Mt. Calvary.
Instead of counting our complaints, let's try counting our blessings from God!**

Count Your Blessings

Board of Human Care

We are now looking for help sending get well cards and sympathy cards only. We are so thankful for Becky deciding to do the cards for birthdays and anniversaries. We have a box of cards and stamps that we would give you along with a calendar with all the dates. This can be done from your home and is a great way to serve and care for our church family. Please pray about this and if it is a good fit for you and let us know!

Thank you and best regards,
Board of Human Care
Cathy Newell, Jan Hagan, Christina Kraemer

"that the members may have the same care for one another..." I Corinthians 12:25b



The quilters have been busy!

Go to the church website and look at the newsletter to see the quilts in color!



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Gospel Outreach
through the Digital
Mission Field

**Grant amount:
\$100,000**



This grant to **Lutheran Hour Ministries** will cover the cost of expanding mass media/proclamation activities and audience engagement, including social media, website, Bible courses, and training, encouraging open and honest conversations about life, faith, and Jesus.

Young Adults – "Thred" High school – "Spiritual Conversations"

Grade & Middle School – "Gospel Adventures"

Thank you for your mighty mites!

Board of Education REPORT

The Board of Education

July was a fun month of activity for the Board of Education! We had three fun, and educational nights of VBS, and one Sunday morning, at the beginning of the month watching Zootopia and looking at the worldviews found in the movie. Please look at the Youth Bulletin Board for pictures.

On the 25th we had a delicious picnic and a lively game of kickball! It was a great day of fellowship with our members and members from Eternal Savior Lutheran Church in Lafayette who joined us. Thank you to all who participated in both activities! (See pictures below or in color on our website.) Look for information to come as Sunday School resumes in the fall and for more fun and educational activities!

- Corinne Gabel



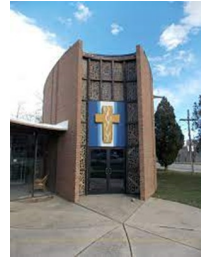
Please remember that we cannot be a Youth Group without YOU! All school age kids are welcome:



Currently we have at least 12 kids in Middle and High School that need both leadership and guidance. What are we doing to encourage them to continue coming to church? Unfortunately, **we need Adults** to plan everything. Presently there are only 2 Youth Board members (one—a parent of 2). Please prayerfully consider joining them in planning activities and meetings!

The University Lutheran Chapel is looking for help to provide a dinner for students following Sunday services.

These meals provide invaluable time for students to connect and form relationships as they seek to Gain, Regain, and Train believers for the future.



Here are the Sundays:

August 30	October 4	November 1
September 6	October 11	November 8
September 13	October 18	November 15
September 20	October 25	December 6
September 27		

Here are some details:

- Plan for between 18-26;
- Gluten free options are appreciated, but not necessary;
- We have beverages, you do not need to provide those;
- We have many condiments available in our refrigerator, please ask if you have a need, we need to use them up;
- We have table service.

Please reply to ulcofficecu@gmail.com with a date



In March 1522 Martin Luther returned to Wittenberg from the Wartburg and

preached a series of eight sermons to quiet the disturbances caused by the image breakers. In his sixth sermon on Friday, March 14, Luther explains the proper preparation for Holy Communion, and refers to Isaiah 66:2, **"All these things My hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares Yahweh. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My word."**

Here is the second half of Luther's sermon, translated by A. Steimle: "See, such rich, immeasurable treasures, which God in His grace showers upon us, cannot be the possession of every one, but only of those who suffer either bodily or spiritual adversity: the bodily through the persecution of man, and the spiritual by despair of conscience; outwardly or inwardly, when the devil causes your heart

to be weak, timid and discouraged, so that you know not how you stand with God, and when he reproaches you with your sins. And in such terrified and trembling hearts alone God desires to dwell, as the prophet Isaiah says. (Isaiah 66:2) For he who has not felt the battle within him, is not distressed by his sins nor has a daily quarrel with them, and wishes no protector, defender and shield to stand before him, is not yet ready for this food. This food demands a hungry and longing man, for it delights to enter a hungry soul, one that is in constant battle with its sins and eager to be rid of them. He who is not thus prepared should abstain for a while from this sacrament, for this food is not



for a sated and full heart, and if it comes to such, it is harmful. Therefore, if we think upon, and feel within us, such distress of conscience and the fear of a timid heart, we shall come with all humbleness and reverence, and not rush to it pell-mell, with insolence and without fear and humility. We are not always fit for it; today I have the grace, and am fit for it, but not tomorrow, yea, it may be that for six months I have no desire nor fitness for it. Therefore are they the most worthy who are constantly vexed by death and the devil, and they receive it most opportunely, to remind them and strengthen them in the faith that no harm can come unto them, for He is now with them, from Whom no

one can take them away; let come death or devil or sin, they cannot do them harm. This is what Christ did, when He prepared to institute the blessed sacrament. He brought anguish upon His disciples and trembling to their hearts when He said that He would go away from them, (Matthew 26:2) and again they were tormented when He said: One of you shall betray me. (Matthew 26:21) Think you not that

that cut them to the heart? Truly, they received the word with all fear, and sat there as though they were all traitors to God. And after He had made them all tremble with fear and sorrow, then only did He institute the blessed sacrament as a comfort, and consoled them again. For this bread is a comfort for the sorrowing, a healing for the sick, a life for the dying, a food for all the hungry, and a rich treasure for all the poor and needy. Let this be enough at this time concerning the proper use of this sacrament. I commend you to God."

- Michael Kraemer, Elder



Mt. Calvary's Ministry Plan – Monthly Update

Target Group #2 Board of Trustees



Our Target: **We are good stewards of the property God has given us.**



Thank you for your patience as we work on different parking patterns to see what will discourage parking lot vandals. They have caused not only damage to the parking lot, but also to church windows by making “cookies” in the parking lot. The police are aware, but the vandals must be caught in the act.

Watch for a Fall Clean-up day!



Missions update: We have several letters of thanks from different groups that our church has donated to: Gems of Madagascar, Hope First Family Resource Center, and Veteran's Community Project. Please take a moment to read their letters and see what they have been up to. They are posted on the big Bulletin Board on the lower right, near the “Missions” area.

Board of Spiritual Outreach

Many thanks to everyone who has been donating their medicine bottle caps. Again, a reminder that they will not accept caps from pharmacies that have another name on them i.e.: Safeway, Walmart, Walgreens, Kaiser. They can have “Dale's pharmacy” or be generic. The container was just emptied and about 70 caps were given for the support of Miracle House, Ft. Lupton.



The donation for Soul Dog Rescue in Ft. Lupton has been successful! Mary Ann took them to Soul Dog along with a letter explaining where the donations came from. We included a church magnet and let them know if, in the future, they have a need for supplies to contact us and we will schedule another donation event. We are hopeful that the staff and potential adopters will see that we support the efforts of Soul Dog and maybe want to come check us out.

One of our local friends is collecting plastic for recycling. The goal is to collect 250 pounds by the end of the year. The items are specific and this is the list:

- + plastic tablecloths that are NOT lined
- + bread bags
- + plastic packaging of paper towels and toilet paper
- + some veggie bags

The rule of thumb is that the plastic must stretch and not break. I will put a box in the narthex to start collecting them. I was amazed at how many items are in this category. Check your plastics and save them for us please. The plastic is then sent to TREX and they will make a bench that they will donate to a member or branch of service members to be placed somewhere under the oversight of the DAR.

Our board will be coordinating National Night Out to be held in front of the Middle School in Fort Lupton on August 4th from 5-8 PM. It is a fun, safe event for all ages and we welcome and encourage your support and participation.

That's it for this time...take time to share your faith and love for Jesus. I had several opportunities on my recent trip and it felt so enlightening to open up and share with others, church and unchurched. You never know when the seed is planted what will be the potential growth.

In Christian love and service, Mary Ann Merritt