

# The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



**Lutheran Concerns Association**  
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## **Christian Response to the U.S. Supreme Court Decision on Same-Sex Marriage**

The recent landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court, in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, that legitimized same sex marriage in all 50 states,<sup>1</sup> should give devout Christians a wake-up call. Although it has been described in the secular press to be “nothing like legalizing abortion,”<sup>2</sup> as held in the landmark abortion decision of *Roe v. Wade*,<sup>3</sup> for devout Christians the two respective cases are equally contemptible and shameful for their defiance of God’s perfect creation. As acknowledged even by two well known observers in the secular area:

Marriage between man and woman has been the core institution in every civilization in history. It is an institution older and more important than government. It is honored in every major religion. It transcends race and nationality. It is not merely favored in the Bible, it is treated as a sacred calling, and a bond with our Creator.<sup>4</sup>

No less than did Justice Harry Blackmun’s majority decision in *Roe v. Wade* fail to settle the abortion issue but, instead, unleashed a 40 year culture war, it can be expected that the majority decision written by Justice Anthony Kennedy in *Obergefell v. Hodges* “will unleash the legal furies against those who disagree with it.”<sup>5</sup> The vigorous and ominous arguments made in each of the four separate dissenting opinions (by Chief Justice John Roberts, and Justices Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas, and Samuel Alito) in this divided 5-4 decision should be taken seriously. As well-stated by Peggy Noonan, a writer and former special assistant to President Reagan, “You can hardly get more ominous, more full of warning, than these opinions, which should be read in full.”<sup>6</sup> In this brief paper, let the following excerpts of these ominous warnings suffice. Thus, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that “for those who believe in a government of laws, not of men, the majority’s approach is deeply disheartening . . . .” It bespeaks “Stealing this issue from the people . . . .” It is “an act of will, not legal judgment.” (Roberts dissent, pp. 2-3.)

Justice Antonin Scalia wrote that “This practice of constitutional revision by an unelected committee of nine . . . robs the People of the most important liberty they asserted

in the Declaration of Independence and won in the Revolution of 1776, the freedom to govern themselves.” (Scalia dissent, p. 2.)

Justice Clarence Thomas wrote that though the majority believe they are advancing the “dignity” of same-sex couples, human dignity is “innate” and “The government cannot bestow dignity. . . .” (Thomas dissent, pp. 2, 16-17.)

Justice Samuel Alito predicted that the court’s decision “will be used to vilify Americans who are unwilling to assent to the new orthodoxy,” and “By imposing its own views on the entire country, the majority facilitates the marginalization of the many Americans who have traditional ideas.” (Alito dissent, pp. 6-7.)

For devout Christians, the majority decision will not settle the issue of marriage unless they relent in its culture war.

But there should be no letting up or pullback by Christians in a culture war that is directed against the teachings of Holy Scripture, for “a little leaven, leavens the whole lump” (Gal. 5:9). Notwithstanding the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, Christians need to sustain their commitment to the unchanging teachings of Holy Scripture, and not abandon their fight in the culture war. As exhorted by the apostles, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29), and by the Apostle Paul, “Fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12). As pro-life Christians have done in the culture war over the issue of abortion, so also Christians need to speak out publicly on the issue of same-sex marriage.

**“We ought to obey God rather than men.”**

*The Apostle Paul (Acts 5:29)*

**Scott J. Meyer, B.S., M.B.A., J.D.**  
Patent Attorney, Monsanto Company, Retired  
Board President, Concordia Historical Institute

- 1 *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. \_\_\_\_ (2015), Nos. 14-556, 14-562, 14-571 and 14-574. June 26, 2015, slip opinion.
- 2 See David Gibson, Religious News Service, “Marriage decision is nothing like legalizing abortion,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 4, 2015.
- 3 *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973).
- 4 Richard A. Viguerie and Mark Fitzgibbons, “Distinctly conservative,” *The Washington Times*, June 15, 2015.

In this Issue of **The Lutheran Clarion**

<b>Christian Response to Same Sex Marriage</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Visitation: Contact and Control</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>And be Thankful</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Presenters at the 2016 LCA Conference</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>2016 LCA Conference Registration Form</b> .....	<b>7</b>

- 5 William McGurn, "Justice Kennedy's Bitter Truth," in "Main Street," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 30, 2015.
- 6 Peggy Noonan, *The High Court's Disunited State*, in "Declarations," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 3, 2015.

*Thank You* **Balance-Concord, Inc.**

Balance-Concord, Inc., has been a most faithful contributor to **The Lutheran Clarion** in honor of the sainted **Rev. Raymond Mueller** and the sainted **Rev. Edgar Rehwaldt**, both of whom faithfully served the Synod and Balance-Concord, Inc., for many years.

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## Visitation: Contact and Control [A necessary tension?]

*Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders, President of the Iowa District East, presented this paper on January 19, 2015, at the 2015 LCA Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana.*

### Introduction

As is seen in the title to this paper there is a self-imposed tension in the office of visitor. Anyone who has carried out visitations can testify to the apprehension that seems to preclude the actual visit. Why is he coming? What does he want? What have I done wrong? What agenda is he pushing? These are only a few of the questions that run through the mind of the pastor or congregation being visited. It might even run in reverse through the mind of the visitor. While tension is usually not perceived as healthy, in the case of a visitation it seems to be necessary.

Visitation must include the two aspects of contact and control. Maybe a better way to put it is that a visitation entails both "pastoral care" and "pastoral oversight." It is not correct to label one of them Law and the other Gospel. Law/Gospel is a component of both pastoral care and pastoral oversight. The visit serves a double purpose. In a pastoral way it should serve as a mutual encouragement in the faith, and as a church-supervisory function it should check on the local conditions of doctrine and practice. In the Rule and Norm section of the Solid Declaration in the Formula of Concord (Tappert *Book of Concord* 503:1) we are shown how unity in the church requires unity in doctrine.

"The primary requirement for basic and permanent concord within the church is a summary formula and pattern, unanimously approved, in which the summarized doctrine commonly confessed by the churches of the pure Christian religion is drawn together out of the Word of God."

Doctrine, drawn from the Word of God, is not only con-

fessed with the lips of the pastor and people; it is also practiced in the liturgical and catechetical life of the congregation. In essence the purpose of visitation is to maintain unity in the church. Unity in doctrine, unity in confession, unity in practice. The church is the Body of Christ believing and working together for the sake of Jesus' blood shed to cleanse sin-filled souls and to tabernacle in the hearts of the elect. The purpose of visitation lies within the doctrine of Church and Ministry.

### Scriptural support for the office of visitor:

**Luke 1:68-75.** At the birth of John the Baptist his father Zechariah is able to speak once again. He opens his mouth and a song of prophecy comes forth. It is a song about Jesus and John. Verse 68 tells us "because he has come (*visited*) and has redeemed his people." Jesus is a visitor (cf. 1 Pet. 2:12 επισκοπη). He comes to be with His own for a purpose. He comes to "redeem", to "raise up a horn of salvation", to "show mercy to our fathers", to "rescue us from our enemies", to "allow us to serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness." His visit included both pastoral care (68-74) and pastoral oversight (74-75).

**Luke 1:78.** Zechariah's direct prophecy concerning his son John the Baptist. He will prepare the way for Jesus' visit by pointing to "the rising sun which will come to us from heaven." John exercises visitation in Israel when he preaches to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him. His sermons call everyone to repentance and to be baptized for remission of sins.

**Luke 7:16.** Jesus overcomes death as only He can do. He approaches a funeral procession and speaks to the deceased saying "get up." The dead boy resurrects from the dead validating who Jesus is and the work He has come to do. The crowd acknowledges something beyond human power has taken place by saying "God has come (*visited* επισκεφατο) to help His people." Jesus comes to help the lost, helpless, condemned, and dead.

**Acts 6:3.** A visitation was made by the apostles in the selection of the seven men. "To choose" is actually επισκεφασθα from the root word επισκεπτομαι with additional meaning "to oversee, Bishopric of inspection or visitation." The apostles exercised oversight by determining who among them was full of the Spirit and wisdom. At the very least questioning and observation would have been a part of the process.

**Acts 7:23.** Stephen sermonizes on the history of Israel and speaks of Moses who went to "visit" his people the Israelites. Moses had been living as royalty in the Pharaoh's household. Knowing he was an Israelite he went to visit them, to identify with who he was, to see their plight. Because of the visit he engages in an effort to defend his fellow countryman from mistreatment. One cannot condone his killing of the Egyptian yet one can see the value of visitation.

**"Barnabas [visited the congregation] to examine them by the Word of God and teach them how they would remain in the Kingdom by remaining true to the Word."**

**Acts 15:36.** The council in Jerusalem had concluded its work and made it clear that salvation was not limited only to the

Jews. The Church was also the Promised Land for the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas would make plans to “go back and visit (*episkejwmeqa*, Bishop) the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” A contrast in opinion resulted in Paul taking Silas with him but they “went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening (*επιστηριζων*) the churches.” To strengthen means to “support, rest on, be grounded in, be directed to, or even to fix.” Both elements of pastoral care and pastoral oversight are included in Paul and Silas’s visitations.

**Acts 8:15-25, 9:32-43.** Peter and John are sent to new congregations in Samaria, and Peter travels to an older one in Lydda. Upon their visits they pray for the congregation and the pastor. They also bear witness to the Word of God making sure it is being preached and taught in its truth and purity (25). When Peter visits Lydda and Joppa he bears witness to the resurrection with the same words Jesus used earlier (LK. 7:14) “get up” (9:34) to a paralytic and “get up” (9:40) to a dead girl. In each case they rose demonstrating Jesus still visits His people through the Word preached (*predigtamt*) and/or spoken. Peter stayed for some time probably caring for the flock.

**Acts 11:22-23.** Upon the diaspora a new congregation formed in Antioch. Barnabas was sent to them for a visit. He saw evidence (both in hearing what they confessed as well as the living of their lives around the Means of Grace) of the grace of God. He then “encouraged (*parekalei*) them to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.” To encourage means more than to offer words of support to do well. It points to the accomplished work of Christ for the Church. The TDNT [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament] says,

“The sense of comfort occurs in connection with salvation history. In this sense the terms express God’s aid to the churches in present affliction on the basis of the saving work of Christ and with a view to final deliverance. Asking thus presupposes that God’s salvation is manifested in Jesus, exhorting that it is effected by the Spirit, and comfort that it will finally be consummated by the Father. The words relate, then, to the saving work of the triune God which leads the needy as suppliants to the Son, which is preached as exhortation in the power of the Spirit, and which carries with it already the eternal comfort of the Father.”

Barnabas did not visit the congregation to inform them



While preparing for the 2016 LCMS convention, don’t forget two articles in the November issue of the *Clarion*. First, Montana District President Terry Forke wrote on the types of dispute that go into the reconciliation process in light of the present bylaws and the need for

change. Second, Rev. Dr. Marty Noland’s *Reforming LCMS Polity and Practice*, which included three suggested overtures:

**Overture One, To Support Proper Ecclesiastical Supervision in Synodical Districts.**

**Overture Two, To Require that District Presidents give Church Worker Information to Congregations and School Call Committees when Requested.**

**Overture Three, To Review the Powers of the Synodical President, Synodical Secretary, Commission on Constitutional Matters, and District Presidents.**

These three overtures are at <http://lutheranclarion.org>. The deadline for submitting overtures is **February 20, 2016**.

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they can say, think and do whatever the cultural scene allows. He was there to examine them by the Word of God and teach them how they would remain in the Kingdom by remaining true to the Word.

**I Thessalonians 3:2-12.** Paul is unable to leave Athens, so out of great concern for the congregation in Thessalonica, experiencing persecution, he sends Timothy (his representative) to “strengthen and encourage you in your faith so that no one would be unsettled by these trials.” The trials most certainly included those of a physical nature. There may have also been a further concern of Paul. Not wanting the Thessalonians to be “unsettled” (*σαλινεσθαι*) may be referring to a fear they would be deluded or sweetened into unbelief. The word Paul uses is one that indicates a dog is wagging his tail in joyful anticipation of something to come. It is used in reference to humans as “flattery.” Timothy’s visit would require him to warn the Thessalonians of the need to watch out for false doctrine that may look very good on the surface but in essence be absent of Christ and Him crucified. He would be warning them against what Luther later called “The Theology of Glory.” Pastoral care also involves pastoral oversight. Paul prayed for the church and has intention of making a visit himself so that he can “behold their face and ‘fix, restore’ what is lacking in their faith” (vs. 10). It is Paul’s desire that the congregation have an increase in love toward one another and be strengthened in faith (vs. 12-13).

**I Corinthians 4:18-21.** Paul is letting Corinth know he is planning on a visit to them. Clearly he has grave concerns over the congregation and will exercise discipline if needed. He calls sin what it is, sin (vs. 18-19). His desire is to come in love and with a gentle spirit but He will come with a whip if necessary for the sake of their souls [cf. Luke 19:41-44 (*επισκοπησ*)].

**I Timothy 1:3, 4:11, 6:2.** Paul is offering to his representative the need to watch out for correct doctrine in the congregations of Asia Minor.

**I Timothy 4:13, Titus 2:15.** Paul gives authority to admonish when needed.

**I Timothy 5:20, 6:17, Titus 1:13.** Paul is expressing the need for guidance in a visit.

**I Timothy 1:3, 5:20.** Paul once again expounds on the use of discipline for the sake of returning lost souls to the fold.

To quote a church body studying and implementing the office of visitation,

“In the visitation the Church, through its visitors, sees to it that the Word of God is proclaimed according to the Scriptures, that



the sacraments are administered according to the Scriptures and that from this the Church of Jesus Christ will develop in a lively and manifold way in the congregations.”

The only addition we in the LCMS might make to this statement is in conjunction with the ordination and installation vows “and the Lutheran Confessions.”

**The Lutheran Confessions:**

Interestingly enough is the fact that the Lutheran Confessions spend very little time addressing the issue of “oversight” or “visitation”, most often called the Office of the Bishop. AC XXVIII and The Tractate speak of the abuses of Bishops and attempt to define their jurisdiction but in no way do they try to eliminate or speak ill of the office. The Reformers speak of the overseer as one elected from among equals. He has no divine authority apart from the Word as the Lutheran Confessions exhibit the Word to us.

Complaints against the Bishopric centered on the authority they claimed for themselves. It began with the Papacy declaring that it was not merely a human office but a divinely appointed office. It continued to err when the Papacy enacted authority over both church and state. Finally it erred in saying that salvation depends on believing in the position and power of the Pope. This bled down to the Bishops who took upon themselves authority to introduce ceremonies in the Church or establish regulations concerning foods, holy days, and the different orders of the clergy (BOC 85:30). The Bishops went so far as to attach justification before God in the act of the ceremony rather than the ceremony being a means that communicates God’s justifying act to the sinner.

**“In the days of the Reformation visitation had the task of comprehensive stock-taking and a correction of deficiencies in view of congregations and their pastors...”**

The responsibilities of the Bishops by “divine right is to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel, and exclude from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest...On the other hand, if they teach, introduce, or institute anything contrary to the Gospel, we have God’s command not to be obedient in such cases...” (BOC 84:21-23).

In the days of the Reformation visitation had the task of comprehensive stock-taking and a correction of deficiencies in view of congregations and their pastors—from the condition of the building and of the finances to school, church discipline, the order of the service, the confession and the basic religious knowledge of the congregations, to confession/absolution, theological education and performing of the office of the pastor.

Because the Church is both local and trans-congregational

visitation is necessary to bind together congregations in a certain area. It also can demonstrate to the local congregation that there is a church-at-large where there is both encouraging assistance to receive or to render. Congregations are not isolated units standing alone. Just as Christians watch out for each other so do congregations look out for one another. Together they contribute to the work of the Kingdom through district missions, planting congregations, partnering with Synod for work around the world.

**What a Visitation Might Look like Today**

It ought to have the same aspects of “contact” and “control.” Are we more comfortable with the terms “pastoral care” and “pastoral oversight”? In either case they are for the sake of unity in the Word of God and the confession of the church. All of the biblical elements studied above apply to the visit today.

- 1 Evaluate sermons. (see below format used in Iowa District East)
- 2 Evaluate catechesis. Ask doctrinal questions with application of the pastor.
- 3 Meet with the pastor and his wife. Talk about life in the parish. Pray for and with them. Discuss their devotional life.
- 4 Evaluate the pastor’s library to see what he is reading and what is being gained from further study.
- 5 Help to talk through any problems the congregation may be having.
- 6 Identify areas of concern and offer suggestions for support to resolve the issue.
- 7 The visit can be a time for confession/absolution although I recommend the pastor have a regular Father Confessor other than the visitor.
- 8 Talk about church discipline and how that is carried out in the congregation when needed.
- 9 Meet with congregational leaders if not able to meet with the congregation.
- 10 Talk about taking care of the pastor, missions local and around the world.
- 11 Talk about the “absent saints” of the congregation and what is being done for their sake.
- 12 Check on the facilities including the parsonage if possible.

This is just a small check list of what a visitation might include. It is a practice the church has engaged in since the time of Jesus in the first century. It has had need to develop throughout the centuries to a more formal standing. It has ebbed and flowed in the life of the church but has proven to be a blessing when carried out for the reasons studied above. God bless His Church, She belongs to Him, He cares for Her. In Him there is no need for tension during a visitation.

**Rev. Dr. Brian Saunders**  
 President of Iowa District East  
 Marion, Iowa

## Iowa District East Sermon Evaluation

During his presentation, Dr. Saunders shared the Iowa District East form that he uses to evaluate the sermons of the Circuit Visitors of Iowa District East. In return, the Circuit Visitors use this form to evaluate the sermons of the pastors in their Circuits.

### I. Textual

- Did the sermon text come from the lectionary readings established for that Sunday in the Church Year?
- Did the sermon stay within the confines of the text?
- Was there a clearly defined theme in the sermon? State the theme or the aim of the sermon.
- Was the sermon theme consistent with the theme of the text?
- Did the hymns relate to the textual theme?
- When the text required it, was the historical setting developed for the hearers?
- If the historical context was developed, were the hearers simply given a history lesson or were they placed into the context of the text? Give examples.

### Law

- Was there explicit law that brought condemnation to the sinner? Give examples.
- From where did the law application come? The sermon text and the context of the text? The Law themes of the book from which the text was chosen? From the lectionary for the Sunday? Was it imported from another text?

### Gospel

- Did the sermon preach Christ crucified for you?
- Did the Gospel address the maladies that the Law pointed out? Give examples.
- Was forgiveness of sins and resurrection to eternal life proclaimed?
- Did the Gospel predominate in content and emphasis?
- Was there food for thought concerning the power of the Gospel in the Christians life? Give examples.

### II. Delivery

- Was the sermon read or preached?
- Was the sermon delivered from the pulpit or from free standing?
- Was there adequate eye contact with the congregation?
- Did the pastor preach at an understandable rate of speed?
- Did the delivery have variance in the volume of the pastor's voice? Did the emphasis of his voice lean toward the Law points or the Gospel points?
- Was every word of the sermon preached at the hearing and understandable level of the congregation? Give examples where this may have been violated.
- Were theological terms defined and applied?
- Were there images posted on a screen while he preached? If so, did they correspond to the text and the theme of the sermon?

**Suggestions for improvement:**

## And be Thankful

The below article, by Southern Illinois District President Timothy J. Scharr, was published in the November District News, Southern Illinois insert to the *Lutheran Witness*. It is reprinted below with permission.

Where does thankfulness rank in your daily priorities? Is it your general disposition? Is it an afterthought? Does it routinely appear on your radar screen? Some of us are curmudgeons who see the negative in everything. The proverbial glass filled to the midpoint is undoubtedly running out. Others are more positive and want to believe the best in any given situation. The glass is half full for them. Most are probably somewhere in the middle depending upon the issue.

The Holy Scriptures have much to say regarding our life together in the body of Christ. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has gone and new things have come (2 Corinthians 5:17). We know all about the old Adam. It is the natural inclination of the human flesh. It is what people instinctively do without much thought. It often is the initial reaction to a given situation. The new creation takes time manifesting itself in these mortal bodies. In fact it is a life-long struggle this side of heaven (Romans 7). The New Testament epistles routinely compare and contrast the old and the new (cf. Galatians 5:16-26).

A beautiful comparison comes in the third chapter of Colossians. The apostle lifts eyes to things above, where Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father. Our true life is hidden with God in Christ. When He returns we will also appear as we really are in Him (Colossians 3:1-4). Until then it is not always obvious who we really are through casual observation. Fruits of the Spirit and the works of the flesh co-mingle in the same person. We can be hypocrites both ways. Outward actions may appear pious and godly but the heart is angry, bitter or ungrateful. A scoundrel who lies, cheats, curses and swears with every other word may come to faith. The change in his words and actions may take time to catch up. The inconsistency may be pointed out. "You are a Christian and you speak like that."

Paul never tires of exhorting believers to good works. He describes the fruit of the Spirit so that it may be recognized what it is. He shows the superiority of a life of faith to one still trapped and governed by the flesh. He holds up the blessed life of the new creation as a desirable goal of a body of believers. **"12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which**



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binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Three times in these precious verses a call to thankfulness is voiced. The first makes it seem like an afterthought: And be thankful (v. 15). It is a bridge to the verses ahead. Jesus teaches that those who are forgiven much, love much. Likewise those who receive the forgiving love of others are thankful. The peace of Christ changes those it touches. It comes as we are in the Word and that Word has its way with us in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. In the Divine Service we are filled to overflowing with grace, mercy and forgiveness. He who does not treat us as our sins deserves is worthy of thanks, honor and praise now and for eternity.

And be thankful (Colossians 3:15). More than an afterthought, it is the disposition of a chosen, holy and beloved child of God. It is vulnerable to the works of the flesh that wish to overwhelm it with anger, bitterness, jealousy or covetousness. As you observe Thanksgiving Day, begin it within the Lord's house where the body of Christ learns to put thanksgiving into practice.

## Presenters at the 2016 LCA Conference

**Rev. Dr. Roland F. Ziegler** - *The Foundations Must Stand—Contemporary Issues in the Doctrine of Inspiration*

Dr. Roland Ziegler is Associate Professor for Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS). A native of Germany, he studied at the Universities of Tübingen, Erlangen, and at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oberursel. A scholarship enabled him to study as an exchange student at CTS in Fort Wayne. Dr. Ziegler received his Dr. Theol. from the Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in 2011.

**Dr. David Menton** - *Implications of Evolutionism: Should the Christian make Peace with Darwin?*

A former professor at Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. Menton received his PhD in Cell Biology from Brown University, Providence, RI, and his BS from Mankato State University, Mankato, MN. Dr. Menton is Technical Advisor for the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego, CA. After retirement, he joined Answers in Genesis, which operates the Creation Museum at Petersburg, KY, near Cincinnati, OH. Dr. Menton has lectured throughout the United States and Canada on anatomy and during recent years on the creation-evolution controversy.

**Dr. Jack Kilcrease** - *Matthew L. Becker's Theological Vision: Revisionist and Provisionist*

Dr. Kilcrease is an LCMS layperson and an adjunct professor of theology at the Institute for Lutheran Theology and of philosophy at Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, MI. He attended Luther College in Iowa (B.A. History and Religion) and Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN (M.A. Doctrine and Theology). In 2009, he graduated from Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, with a Ph.D in Systematic Theology. He has published articles in *Lutheran Quarterly*, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, *Pro Ecclesia*, *LOGIA*, and *Concordia Theological Quarterly*. He lives in Grand Rapids, MI, with his wife Bethany and daughter Miriam.

**Rev. John T. Pless** - *Women's Ordination: Test Case for Biblical Authority in Global Lutheranism*

Rev. John T. Pless is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at CTS, where he also serves as Director of Field Education. He is a graduate of Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, Texas (B.A.) and Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH (M.Div.). With LCMS President Rev. Matthew Harrison he is editor of *Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective*. He served on the Agenda Committee for the *Lutheran Service Book*. He is book review editor for *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* and a member of the editorial council of *Lutheran Quarterly*.

**Rev. Dr. Martin Noland** - *A Brief History of the Justice and Disciplinary System of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

The Rev. Dr. Martin R. Noland is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Evansville, IN. He was the Director of Concordia Historical Institute, Saint Louis, MO, from 2002 to 2008. He received his Ph.D. degree in 1996 from The Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, and his S.T.M. in 1986 from CTS. He was on the Board of Directors of the Luther Academy from 1993 to 2008. Since 1996, he has been an associate editor of *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology*. He has written over two hundred articles on the Lutheran church, its history, its theology, and related topics. Dr. Noland's wife is Karla Noland nee Kuhlman and they have three teenage daughters.

**Mr. Walter C. Dissen, Esq.** - *Reconciliation, Adjudication, and Appeal Pre-July 1992—A Gold Standard Trashed*

Mr. Dissen received his Juris Doctor from the University of Akron, OH. He served on the Board of Control and Secretary, at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, 1971-83; on the Synodical Commission on Appeals 1983-1995; and as Secretary and Chairman, Board of Regents and Secretary, CTS, Fort Wayne, 1995-2007. In 2013, Mr. Dissen was elected to the Board of Regents, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis. He is on the Board of Trustees, Concordia Theological Foundation; Rev. Dr. E.C. Weber and he submitted reports to Synodical President J.A.O. Preus that appear in the well-known *Blue Book* and in the 1973 Synodical Convention Workbook that summarized what was being taught and tolerated at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis.

**Rev. William R. Kilps** - *Reconciliation – A Kingdom Matter but Which One?*

In November 1982, Rev. Kilps was awarded the Masters of Divinity degree from CTS. He received his first call to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Marengo, WI. In 1986, he accepted a Call to Zion Lutheran Church in East Moline, IL. During his ministry there, Rev. Kilps was a Circuit Counselor, Second Vice President of the Central Illinois District, a Synodical and District Reconciler, and on the Synod President's panel for dialogue with RIM (Renewal in Mission). In 1999, Pastor Kilps accepted a call to his present congregation, Good Shepherd in Two Rivers, WI. He also serves as an adjunct instructor at Concordia University – Wisconsin. Rev. Kilps is married to Lori Louise Gottschalk. The Lord has blessed the Kilps with two sons—Nathanael and Billy.

**Mr. David Hawk, Esq.** - *The Dispute Resolution Process: Who does it serve?*

Mr. Hawk is the senior member of the law firm of Hawk, Haynie, Kammeyer & Smith LLP and has been engaged in the general practice of law in Fort Wayne since 1973. He served on the Synod's Board of Directors 2001-2007. Elected to the Concordia University System Board in 2010, Mr. Hawk serves as Vice Chairman. He was recently appointed to the Board of Regents of CTS and he is President of the Concordia Theological Foundation. He has been a voting delegate to District and Synodical conventions. Mr. Hawk and his wife are members of St. Paul's in Fort Wayne. They have three married children (who are lawyers), and nine grandchildren ages 6 to 16.



# LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Monday, January 18, 2016

## LCA CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

...[T]hy Word is truth. [John 17:17]

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine,  
for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...* [2 Timothy 3:16-17]

*[T]he Word of the Lord endures forever.* [1 Peter 1:25]

6:40 a.m. - <b>Registration Opens</b>
7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. - Bible Study
8:00 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. - Opening Devotion
8:10 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. - Welcome and Greetings from the LCA ( <b>Mr. Walter Dissen, Esq.</b> ) and the LCMS Indiana District
8:20 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. - <b>Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler</b> - The Foundations Must Stand—Contemporary Issues in the Doctrine of Inspiration
8:50 a.m. to 9:20 a.m. - Questions and Answers
9:20 a.m. to 9:35 a.m. - Break
9:35 a.m. to 10:05 a.m. - <b>Dr. David Menton</b> - Implications of Evolutionism: Should the Christian make Peace with Darwin?
10:05 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. - Questions and Answers
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - <b>Dr. Jack Kilcrease</b> - Matthew L. Becker's Theological Vision: Revisionist and Provisionist
11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Questions and Answers
11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon - <b>Dr. John Pless</b> - Women's Ordination: Test Case for Biblical Authority in Global Lutheranism
12:00 noon - 12:10 p.m. - Questions and Answers
<b>12:20 p.m. to 1:20 p.m. - Lunch Served in the Meeting Room</b>
1:20 p.m. to 3:10 p.m. - The LCMS Reconciliation System and the former Adjudication System <b>Rev. Dr. Martin Noland</b> - A Brief History of the Justice and Disciplinary System of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod <b>Mr. Walter Dissen, Esq.</b> - Reconciliation, Adjudication, and Appeal Pre-July 1992—A Gold Standard Trashed <b>Rev. William Kilps</b> - Reconciliation – A Kingdom Matter but Which One? <b>Mr. David Hawk, Esq.</b> - The Dispute Resolution Process: Who does it serve?
3:10 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. - Questions and Answers
3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - <b>Panel Discussion with All Presenters</b>
5:00 p.m. to 5:10 p.m. - Closing Remarks and Closing Prayer
5:30 p.m. - <b>LCA Annual Business Meeting</b> (Paid Members Only)

The conference will be held at Don Hall's Guest House. The rates are **\$85.00** + taxes for a single; **\$95.00** + taxes for 2-4 per room. When making your reservation, mention that you are attending **THE LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CODE: GROUP #117**. To be guaranteed a room, reservations must be made by December 17, 2015. There is free airport shuttle service from the airport to Don Hall's. At the time of check-in, breakfast and dinner coupons (free breakfast and free dinner) will be given for each room (maximum two of each per room). A free lunch will be served in the meeting room (if registration is postmarked by 12/13/2015). You must make your own Guest House reservation.

## REGISTRATION FORM

LCA Annual Conference · January 18, 2016

Don Hall's Guest House · 1313 West Washington Center Road · Fort Wayne, IN 46825

260-489-2524 · 800-348-1999 · [www.donhallsquesthouse.com](http://www.donhallsquesthouse.com)

**Annual LCA Membership: \$35.00**

I will attend the meeting:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

LCMS District \_\_\_\_\_

**Lunch Preference:**  Swiss Steak  Chicken

Annual membership fee (\$35) enclosed \_\_\_\_\_.

Paid LCA member conference registration fee: \$55 if postmarked by 12/13/2015; \$60 if postmarked thereafter. Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_.

Non-member conference registration fee: \$65 if postmarked by 12/13/2015; \$70 if postmarked thereafter. Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_.

Half day (AM or PM) registration fee is 50% less of above fee. If lunch is desired, add \$10; must be postmarked by 12/13/2015.

Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_.

**Seminary students and personnel** will have the registration fee waived, but to receive **lunch for \$10**, registration must be postmarked by 12/13/2015.

I will pay at the door \_\_\_\_\_.

**A free lunch will be served to early registrants who pay the applicable registration fee by 12/13/2015, or at the door.**

Make check payable to **LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION**. Please detach this registration form & send to

Lutheran Concerns Association · 149 Glenview Drive · New Kensington, PA 15068-4921

**The Lutheran Clarion**

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The address for all matters pertaining to the LCA is:

149 Glenview Drive  
New Kensington, PA 15068-4921

Editorial Board: Mr. Walter Dissen (Chairman)  
Mr. Scott Meyer  
Rev. Jerome Panzigrau

Mrs. Ginny Valleau: Layout, Printing & Mailing

Faithful Lutheran individuals who are members of LCMS congregations are invited to submit articles of approximately 500 words for consideration. Inquiries are welcome. Manuscripts will be edited. Please send to: Mr. Walter Dissen

509 Las Gaviotas Blvd, Chesapeake, VA 23322  
(757-436-2049; wdissen@aol.com)

The Board of Directors for the LCA:

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Lutheran Concerns Association  
January 2016



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