

The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



Lutheran Concerns Association
1320 Hartford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55116

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Parish Pastor Remembers Synodical President Harrison as True Pastor/Shepherd & Theologian

"BUZZ LIGHTYEAR REALLY CAN FLY!" These were the words I spoke to President-elect Matthew Harrison at the President's Reception which he received with a smile of remembrance. He and I served together at Zion in Fort Wayne. I was his associate pastor for those six years. And the joke between us during that time came to be that he was "Buzz" and I was "Woody." If you know the movie, *Toy Story*, you will get the meaning. As I would usually be busy with my nose to the "nuts and bolts," he would look up and ahead to the next "to infinity and beyond" task that needed to be done. I would usually doubt (and envy) quite a bit along the way ("Buzz, you're just a toy!"), but he would usually come through with flying colors accomplishing that which was needed for the Lord's church and the community. In President-elect Harrison's case, unlike "Buzz", it was not just blind luck and not knowing he's "just a toy," but rather it was that he knew WHOSE instrument he is. He trusts his Lord to be at work in and through His Word as He promises, and to prosper a work done for His Kingdom as it is best for His people.

"With President-elect Harrison, I trust the Lord will show us our true unity, our Christian Fellowship, in God's Word."

President-elect Harrison has a gift of taking overwhelmingly complicated situations and problems and identifying the center of attack for solving them. He has been chosen by God to face a big task at this time. Our Synod is not walking together. We are not united in confession and practice. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than when we are in convention together. We see two "sides" with each having positions and slates of candidates. We see important decisions in disputed matters all too frequently made by slim majorities. Depending on how an election goes, there is elation on one side and despair on the other. It should not be so in the Lord's church. One side sees the other as holding on to the past and hindering the Lord's mission. The other side sees the one side as departing from our faithful Scriptural confession trading it for a misguided pragmatism that discounts the efficacy of God's Word in Christ. Former Synodical President Al Barry was correct. Get the Message straight Missouri. Get the Message out Missouri. From working with and under Presi-

dent-elect Harrison, I am convinced of his commitment to this and confident he will lead accordingly.

It's Time that we all sit down together as a Synod and talk together seriously and honestly so that we may walk together again. Only the Lord can restore unity to our Christian Fellowship. He will do so using the same Means by which He called each of us to faith in Christ, by which He gathered us together as His Church and by which He first showed us our unity in the confessional fellowship we call the Missouri Synod, that is, by His Holy Word in Christ Jesus. We will NOT be unified by avoiding issues which may be divisive, nor by filtering them out by floor committees at conventions, nor by ramming them through by a slim majority. We will NOT be truly united by the might of bylaws or synodical structure. ONLY together in the Word will we find again our true unity in the right teaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments of Christ. I am convinced that is exactly what you will find in President-elect Harrison.

If any Missourians are fearing this change of leadership, fearing that President-Elect Harrison will come down on you unevangelically with a heavy hand for errant doctrine or practice, please do not fear. If any Missourians are desiring and expecting him to do so and quickly, please be patient. That is NOT the President-elect as I know him. There is indeed a time for discipline in the Church, but a body must be healed before it can be kept in discipline. President-elect Harrison **IS** a PASTOR, AN UNDER-SHEPHERD OF CHRIST, and he will lead with the Voice of The Good Shepherd, with the Gospel of Christ. President-elect Harrison will teach us! He WILL trust the Lord Jesus to heal and unite and lead us in God's Word. If we cannot find our unity there, we are not truly a synod at all and will not be. With President-elect Harrison, I trust the

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Lord will show us our true unity, our Christian Fellowship, in God's Word. Dare I say it? "To unity and beyond!"

Rev. Paul Kaiser, Pastor
 Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Edna, TX

Mark Your Calendar!

January 17, 2011 - LCA Annual Conference and Annual Meeting 

The 64th Convention of the LCMS has ended and is now history; but the REAL work is just beginning!

Plans are being finalized as to the content of the LCA annual conference. Presentations will be given on some adopted Convention resolutions and the impact they may have on Synod's members, entities and congregations.

Other presentations will cover the need for catechesis within the Synod as well as updates on Seminary matters (enrollments, foreign students, the sale of the building that housed the seminary in Latvia, etc.).

There will be ample time for questions/answers from you, the attendees. A free lunch will again be served early registrants. See page 5 of this issue for the registration form.

Seminary Students, Faculty and Staff will have registration fees waived but to receive lunch at a cost of \$5.00, registration MUST be received no later than January 10, 2011.

2010 LCMS Convention — It was theological!

Why did the delegates to the 2010 LCMS Convention adopt structural changes proposed by President Kieschnick's Task Force that dramatically increased the power of the President and then turn around and elect a new President? While not immediately apparent on the surface, a close evaluation reflects a strong desire to return to the Synod's theological foundation to guide the Synod's future direction.

First it is important to recognize that the delegates cannot be pigeon-holed into specific categories. President Kieschnick and his supporters failed to recognize this fundamental principal when growing increasingly confident the first two days of the convention as delegates rejected an effort to move up in the agenda the election of the President and then adopted Resolution 8-08A, which significantly increased the power of the President and made other major changes to the Synod's structure. These actions were viewed as indicating that a majority of the delegates favored the re-election of President Kieschnick. Some saw his re-election as a virtual certainty.

But Resolution 8-08A and other structure changes were not adopted because a majority of delegates viewed them as a good solution to a problem. Certainly, there were some delegates who held this opinion. But a large num-

ber considered the structure changes as the "lesser of two evils." They were forced to decide between the status quo, which was categorized as broken, and a less-than-desirable solution. They were not pleased with the options given them. Resolution 8-08A squeaked by with 51.9% of the votes, 613-568. Many who voted for 8-08A nonetheless viewed it and the result as a failure of President Kieschnick's leadership. Certainly there were solutions that could have been more uniting. And perhaps more significant was the huge focus on structure when we as a **Confessional Lutheran** church body should be **focused on the Scriptures** and efforts toward unity within our membership.

That brings us to the election of a new Synodical President. Here the delegates were not so sharply divided. In Matthew Harrison, the delegates saw a candidate who had a clear message where the Synod looks to the Word of God for direction on missions, mercy, working together, and striving for unity. Harrison also had demonstrated that this message could be put into practice, relying on the power of God's Word.

President Kieschnick, on the other hand, had a tenure marked by structure changes, expensive programs, control leadership, and sharply divided conventions. It is not that President Kieschnick has advocated false theology or overtly discarded our theological heritage. But theology has not been prominent. This was evident by the first two days of the Convention that focused exclusively on non-theological matters.

Here it is important to recognize the dramatic margin of victory the delegates gave to Matthew Harrison. Keep in mind that in the last 50 years this is only the third time an incumbent has been defeated for LCMS President. Alvin Barry defeated Ralph Bohlmann on the 4th ballot in 1992 by 12 votes. J.A.O. Preus II defeated Oliver Harms in 1969 on the 3rd ballot by an even smaller margin. Matthew Harrison won on the 1st ballot – the first time in the history of the LCMS that a sitting president was defeated on the 1st ballot!

And he won by 116 votes! When considering the difficulty in defeating an LCMS incumbent President, the history of elections in the LCMS, the structural changes adopted, and the control President Kieschnick maintained over the convention, this margin of victory is huge!

When given an opportunity with the election of the Synodical President, the delegates overwhelmingly chose **theological** leadership over structure, programs, and control leadership. This message from the delegates continued through the convention. Resolutions prepared by floor committees give delegates limited options. It is either yes or no, with an occasional amendment. Many major structure changes therefore passed with less than 52%, until a majority of the delegates decided they had had enough

*"...the delegates overwhelmingly chose **theological leadership over structure, programs, and control leadership.**"*

structure changes. But elections give the delegates the ability to determine a direction of the Synod. The 2010 Convention delegates made clear that they wanted a **theologically-based** direction.

Christian A. Preus

Board of Regents, Concordia University-St. Paul (1989-1992)
 LCMS Board of Directors (1995-2007)
 Elected to Board of Regents, Concordia University-Ann Arbor 2010
 Delegate to 2010 Houston Convention
 Partner in Meagher & Geer Law Firm

Selected Thoughts on the 2010 Convention

The 64th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is now in the books. And although much has already been said or written about it, I will offer a few of my own observations.

On July 13, 2010, Rev. Matthew Harrison was elected as the 13th President of the LCMS on the first ballot. What followed the election was truly amazing. Even though there were more than 1,600 people in the convention hall, there was total silence in that huge arena as the vote totals were announced and the Chairman of the Committee for Registration, Credentials, and Elections declared that Matthew Harrison had been elected. The silence was profound; there was neither celebration nor remonstrance. That silence was a demonstration of respect for President Kieschnick, and the expression of a desire that under President-elect Harrison's leadership sinners would come together under the cross, join hands, and again prayerfully "walk together."

Following Rev. Harrison's obviously heartfelt acceptance speech, the official minutes of the convention reflect: "As the convention prepared for the next election, a delegate asked that the minutes reflect the support of the entire convention for the newly elected president, as demonstrated by a standing ovation. The Doxology was sung as an expression of gratitude for President Kieschnick's service."

A day earlier, Resolution 8-08A was adopted by a vote of 613 to 568, or 51.9% to 48.1%. Resolution 8-08A was the central feature of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) that was put forth on the theory that the Synod's current structure was "broken" and inefficient. Despite an outside consulting report that did not endorse the proposed action and regional gatherings for delegates to promote the BRTFSSG Report for which Synod incurred expenses that approached a million dollars, Floor Committee 8, led by several members of the BRTFSSG, spent two convention days promoting the changes, but succeeded in developing only a slim majority on this key resolution. Resolution 8-08A resulted in the elimination of program boards and their direct elections by delegates, creation of a Board for National Missions and a Board for International Missions, both of which are "advisory," and a concentration of power in the office of the presidency that Rev. Matt Harrison did

Lutheran Concerns Thanks You

Your support has made it possible to bring you **The Lutheran Clarion** since September 2008. THANK YOU! Your continuing support is truly needed to continue to bring you **The Clarion** with substantive articles by well-qualified authors on serious issues affecting YOUR Synod. Please continue your support!

The Lutheran Concerns Association also expresses thanks and gratitude to Rev. Richard Bolland, who served as a Board member and with distinction as Chairman of the Editorial Committee of **The Clarion** from the outset through June 2010.

The Lutheran Concerns Association expresses its thanks and gratitude to Mr. Don Kaiser and his wonderful team of volunteers from Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Houston for keeping the LCA table stocked with **Clarions**, the LCA DVD's, Dr. Wallace Schulz's "Connecting the Dots" and the daily paper of the Confessional Lutherans during the Houston Convention.

Thanks go to the two-lady gourmet cookie baking team of Our Savior's Lutheran—Houston who baked probably thirty pounds of cookies. Thanks also go to volunteers Mrs. Kari Anderson, Mrs. Ginny Valleau and Mrs. Karen Goetz for assistance near the LCA table. These volunteers daily set up the table in the Convention Center and at the conclusion of each day took the materials back to the Hilton Hotel. Many people made daily visits at the LCA table. Visitors would comment they had received and read **Clarions** on the table and ask if there was a later issue. Favorable comments were also received on the DVD's sent to delegates and on Dr. Wallace Schulz's, "Connecting the Dots." Contributors should be pleased with the reaction of such delegates and visitors.

LCA also thanks Mr. and Mrs. Carl Pigors who brought a van load of materials from Kansas City to Houston and to the Reverend Paul Kaiser for accepting materials for distribution. Thanks to all of you!

Walter C. Dissen, President, LCA

not support. Only time will tell if Resolution 8-08A, as implemented, will assist the LCMS in its walk together.

Finally, speaking of "regional," Floor Committee 8 succeeded in achieving another slim majority when the Convention adopted Resolution 8-14A (611-567) which required "regional" representation on the praesidium with the election of five vice presidents (two through six) from five geographic regions to be established by the Board of Directors and the Council of Presidents. This dovetailed quite nicely into Resolution 8-16A which was also adopted and requires in part that five laypersons, one each from each of the designated geographic regions, be elected as members of the Synod's Board of Directors. Both Resolutions are to become effective with the next Synodical Convention in 2013.

Although the LCMS does not readily lend itself to regionalization because of the large number of congregations and baptized members who call the Midwest their home, the idea of regions does not improve upon but seems to exacerbate the disparity that already exists in district representation. It also smacks of a quota system, requiring the Convention to ignore many capable individuals who are more likely to be found among the more populous districts

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in the Synod. Finally, Resolution 8-16A caps the size of Synod's Board of Directors at fourteen voting members. However, it excludes the Secretary of Synod from the list of those required voting members, and ignores the requirement of Article XI (F) (1) of the LCMS Constitution that the Secretary be a voting member of the board. Consequently, a careful review of the constitutionality of Resolution 8-16A may be in order.

Given the limited time available to Floor Committee 8 for meetings prior to the Convention, perhaps a more careful and deliberative process would have been beneficial before making amendments on the fly and adopting these and other structural changes. I do, however, pray earnestly for and take comfort in the election of Rev. Matthew Harrison, a theologian with a pastor's heart, who will, with God's help, patiently address these and the many other issues which confront the Church.

David Hawk

Attorney at Law with Hawk, Haynie, Kammeyer and Chickedantz, Ft. Wayne, IN
Member of LCMS Board of Directors 2001-2007
Elected to Board of Directors, Concordia University System at Houston in 2010

Houston, We Have A Problem...Or Do We?

There is little doubt that the 2010 Houston convention will go down in the annals of LCMS history as of particular significance. The first couple days were, of course, spent on the restructuring proposals. The delegates demonstrated a mind of their own. They more often than not adopted anything the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance and Committee 8 posited as streamlining the bureaucracy, but largely left in place the previous shape of things on the district and circuit level. The votes on almost all of the proposals were quite close and generally ran 51% in favor to 49% against. Truly, Rev. Peter Bender spoke a word of wisdom to the convention when he reminded us that no pastor sitting in that room would permit such drastic changes in our own congregations with such a slim majority.

Since the restructuring took place at the beginning, and a move to relocate the election of the President to the start of the convention failed early on, there was a growing sense among many of the attendees that this convention would be like the last several conventions also in the elections.

Electrifying is the only way to describe the moment of the President's election. Many of us came into the room preparing for what we thought would be another 51% to 49% vote, leaving the former administration in office. There were some who held out hope, though, that the restructuring was its own issue and not specifically related to how people would vote for the President and Vice Presidents. They were proven right.

Immediately after the results were flashed on the screen and District President Sommerfeld announced Pastor Matthew Harrison as the winner after a single ballot, there was a long silence. The pain on President Kieschnick's face was palpable and we don't think there was a single delegate in the room who wasn't touched by his expression. He clearly had not expected this.

Balance-Concord, Inc., Remembers...

Balance-Concord, Inc., has contributed 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 for many years. Thank you!

In the silence, President-elect Harrison made his way to the front. He opened his mouth and Scripture came out—1 Cor. 12—and spoke immediately to the pain that was pulsating through the room, matched only by the joy that I and many others were feeling. He spoke Gospel in a very brief time to us all. And I think the very way that he addressed the delegates who had not supported him won him some friends then and there.

The supreme irony was that the man who had not sought the extended powers that this convention placed into the hands of the Synodical President, was elected to office. The man who had sought them was not reelected. And the presidential election turned out to be the harbinger for almost all the elections. From the Praesidium to the new boards and everything in between, the so-called United List was overwhelmingly influential in guiding the convention's votes.

So, we walked away from Houston with a new structure for our Synod, hopefully streamlined and financially responsible, and with an overwhelmingly new leadership from top to bottom. I have more hope for the future of my Synod than ever before. It was very much an *Issues, Etc.* convention. Just look at the new Praesidium and you see frequent guests on the show and there were many fans among the delegates. Rev. Martin Noland has noted that it was in many ways the passing of a generation, and I think that is right. I was amazed at how many younger delegates there were – well, younger than me. Just like the Synodical President who is also my junior now. Weird feeling! The passing of a generation indeed.

Rev. William Weedon

Pastor, Hamel, IL
Elected to Board of Regents, Concordia University Chicago at Houston in 2010
Frequent Guest on *Issues, Etc.*
www. weedon.blogspot.com

A Prayer

LORD, JESUS CHRIST, WHO in these days placed before Your Church a mighty opportunity for witnessing and service, awaken us and all who call you Savior, Lord and Master to our holy privilege of laboring for You. We give thanks for giving us such servants who have faithfully served Your Church these past years as officers, Board and Commission members of our Synod. We ask Your blessing on them as they continue to serve Your Church. We also ask your guidance and strength for those now undertaking those offices to which they have been chosen so to accomplish Your will. We ask this so through the activities of Your Body, the Church, the Gospel of Christ of redeeming love may be known to the healing and saving of the souls of people throughout the world. This we pray in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rev. Thomas Queck
Vice-president Lutheran Concerns Association,
Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Annandale, MN.

LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Monday, January 17, 2011

The Lutheran Concerns Association extends a cordial invitation to all LCMS Congregants to attend the LCA Annual Conference. We look forward to meeting you and working together to make the LCMS a faithful and strong voice for Evangelical Lutherans.

The conference will be held at Don Hall's Guest House. They have a special rate of **\$79.00** + taxes for a single; **\$89** + taxes for 2-4 per room. When making your reservation, mention that you are attending **THE LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CODE: GROUP #6161**. There is free airport shuttle service from the airport to Don Hall's. At the time of check-in, coupons will be given for a free breakfast to each guest. The maximum of dinner coupons given to guests of 2 or more per room is a total of 2 dinner coupons per room. A free lunch will be served in the meeting room. **Registration for the free lunch MUST BE RECEIVED by January 10, 2011.** You must make your own Guest House reservation; **to get the special room rate, reservations must be made by January 10, 2011.**

LCA CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"ROOTED, BUILT UP and ESTABLISHED" (Col 2:6)

January 17, 2011, will be the day to get an early insight on some resolutions adopted at the Houston Convention as well as an update on Seminary matters and the need for catechesis in the Synod. Registration opens at 6:45 a.m., Bible Study led by Rev. Peter Bender at 7:00 a.m. Rev. Dr. Robert Kuhn will lead Devotions at 8:30 a.m., followed promptly by the program.

Bible Study	Rev. Peter Bender
Devotions	Rev. Robert Kuhn, Synod President, Emeritus
Catechesis: What, Why & How	Rev. Peter Bender
Synod Wide Study on Worship Practices, Res 2-05A	Rev. Paul Strawn
Seminary Matters	Rev. Dr. William Weinrich (FtWayne), Rev. Dr. David Adams (StLouis)
Synod Wide Study on Conditions of Membership, Res 8-30B	Rev. Dr. Martin Noland
Synod Wide Study on Relation of Synod to Its Members, Res 8-32B	Rev. Dr. Martin Noland

Likely other critical topics with knowledgeable speakers.



REGISTRATION FORM

Lutheran Concerns Association Annual Conference - **January 17, 2011**
 Don Hall's Guest House
 1313 West Washington Center Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46825
 260-489-2524 • 800-348-1999 • www.donhallsguesthouse.com

Annual LCA Membership: \$35

I will attend the meeting:

Name

Address

Phone Number

Email Address

LCMS District

Annual membership fee (\$35) enclosed: _____.

2011 conference registration fee [for paid-up LCA members] (\$35) enclosed: _____.

Non-member conference registration fee (\$50): _____.

I will pay at the door: _____.

*A free lunch will again be served **early registrants** who pay the applicable registration fee whether in advance or at the door.*

SEMINARY STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF will have the registration fee waived but to receive lunch at a cost of \$5.00 the registration MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER than January 10, 2011.

Make check payable to: **LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION**

Please detach this registration form and send to: Lutheran Concerns Association
 1320 Hartford Avenue
 Saint Paul, MN 55116-1623

The Lutheran Clarion

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Published regularly to support issues and causes within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which build faithfulness to true Confessional Lutheranism and to be a clear voice of Christian concern against actions and causes which conflict with faithfulness to the One True Faith.

The principal place of business for all matters pertaining to the LCA is:

1320 Hartford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55116

Other faithful Lutheran individuals who are members of LCMS congregations are invited to submit articles of approximately 500 words for consideration to:

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

Articles should be approximately 500 words in length. Inquiries are welcome. Manuscripts will be edited.

The Board of Directors for the LCA:

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Rev. Joseph Fisher Rev. Thomas Queck
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Mr. Scott Meyer Mr. Donald Zehnder
Dcs. Betty Mulholland

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