



WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER



January 2011
No. 1

News and Notes from the President's Office

EXPANDING THE CIRCLE

Restructuring at the International Center

By Barbara A. Below

A Restructuring Work Group (RWG), established by the President's Office, began its important work on December 6 in St. Louis and will continue through the beginning of February 2011.

The purpose of the RWG is to look closely at the budgets, personnel, functions, and processes of, primarily, LCMS World Mission, World Relief and Human Care, Communications and Fund Development efforts of the national office, and then to make recommendations to the Transition Team of the President's Office. Other areas of the national office will also be included in their work and in restructuring efforts.

Led by consultant Jim Lowitzer of Collierville, Tenn., the RWG will identify areas of ministry overlap, consider new processes to put in place to enhance the work of the church, and make recommendations to the Transition Team as to how the national office can best be organized within the new structure to move into the next fiscal year. The goal of the Transition Team and the RWG is to have a new national office structure defined by February 2011 so that budget development for the next fiscal year can begin and a good, strong budget can be submitted to and adopted by the LCMS Board of



Consultant Jim Lowitzer convenes the first meeting of the Restructuring Work Group on Dec. 6.

Directors at its May 2011 meeting.

This work group is composed of 12 talented national office employees from a diversity of disciplines, with a variety of expertise and talents that will benefit the restructuring work:

- Rev. Dave Birner, World Mission
- Kama Bernabo, World Mission
- Travis Torblaa, World Mission
- Jeff Craig-Meyer, World Mission Fund Development
- Rev. John Fale, World Relief and Human Care
- Al Dowbnia, World Relief and

- Human Care
 - Maggie Karner, World Relief and Human Care
 - John Lewis, World Relief and Human Care Fund Development
 - Myron Koehn, Information Technologies
 - David Strand, Communications
 - Adriane Dorr, Communications
 - Rachel Asbury, Worship (admin. support)
- In addition to these group members, Rev. Herb Mueller, First Vice President, will serve as

Theologian in Residence, and Barb Below and Rev. Jon Vieker will serve as the President's representatives.

All national office employees have been asked to engage in the restructuring effort so that together a new structure can be developed that best serves districts, congregations, Synod members, and partners. People outside of the international office may also be asked to be involved in or offer consultation to the RWG. All are encouraged to prayerfully consider serving in any capacity if asked by the RWG to lend consultation or expertise.

The challenges the Synod faces in the future years regarding restructuring of the national office, as well as other matters the convention resolved to address in the next few years, are complex and multifaceted. There is an urgency to this work, but at the same time, it must be well thought out, calculated, realistic and make use of all the gifts endowed by God to the Synod.

This will not be easy and will require wisdom for good decision making, clarity of mind to dig through the complex factors, patience to continue when it is frustrating, and steadfastness to His Word throughout it all. The President, the Transition Team, and the RWG ask for prayers from all of Synod as they move forward to take on the challenge of restructuring.



MAKING IT REAL

Reflections on Witness, Mercy, Life Together

By Herbert C. Mueller Jr.

Take a good look at the logo at the top of this page. WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER interlock around the cross. Our LIFE TOGETHER, our fellowship (*koinonia*), flows from Christ who received our sin and death on the cross so that He might give us His holiness and righteousness. Forgiven and made alive in His resurrection, we testify, bear WITNESS (*martyria*) to all that He has done, confessing His saving truth before the world. Sent out with His name, we cannot help but show His MERCY by serving (*diakonia*) others in His love.

If one is weak, the others shrivel as well. As each grows stronger, the others increase accordingly. However you may order WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER, each interlocks with the other two, and all of them flow from the cross and into each other. As WITNESS grows, it leads to more works of MERCY in the world and draws us closer in our LIFE

TOGETHER. The Church's work of MERCY increases opportunities for WITNESS and strengthens our LIFE TOGETHER. Our fellowship in the Gospel, our LIFE TOGETHER, draws us into God's Word to forgive, renew, restore, and send us out in WITNESS and in MERCY.

WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER are helping us keep our bearings as we begin the work of restructuring the national office of Synod, for at the heart of each of them is the cross.

- Jesus speaks of giving Himself, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever, and the bread which I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world" (John 6:51).
- Peter declared that Jesus "carried our sins in His body on the tree in order that dying to sin we might live to righteousness. With His wounds you are healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

- In speaking of the faith of Abraham, which God counted for righteousness, Paul concludes, "It will be reckoned to us who believe in Him who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead, who was handed over on account of our trespasses and raised again for our justification. Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 4:24-5:1).

These three interlocking themes, then, grow from our justification by faith alone in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The heart of our WITNESS for Christ must be the proclamation of Law and Gospel—namely, that the whole world is dead in sin and in need of resurrection. But God has done what we could never do: declared us righteous on account of Christ, covered our sin, and raised us to life in Him. The real motivation for MERCY, then, is that Christ died for all,

that all are precious to Him. Our LIFE TOGETHER also flows from our justification, for Christ Himself is our peace and the connection between us, since we are baptized into His body. Now cleansed and fed by Him, we draw our life from His body and blood in His Supper, from His "flesh for the life of the world" (John 6:51).

So everything radiates from the cross, more specifically, flows from the means by which Christ gives the benefits of His cross—the proclamation of Law and Gospel, the life-giving water of Baptism, and the holy meal of His body and blood. These are not abstract ideas but concrete realities, for God sends flesh and blood pastors into His ministry to preach and teach His Word. And God makes it all real, so that we can see it and touch it for ourselves when He gathers His Church around pulpit, altar, and font: real, living, flesh-and-blood people,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Q&A on Restructuring And the First 100 Days of a New LCMS President

These questions were among those submitted by employees of the International Center and answered at a series of employee forums by President Harrison on November 8-10, 2010.

What's the status of the hiring of a Chief Mission Officer and the Chief Financial Officer?

The call for nominations for the CMO was issued from the Office of the President with a deadline to submit names to be nominated by December 31. We are encouraged by the many nominations for the CMO position that we have received. We are working on finalizing the timeline for conducting the reviews of the applications and interviews of nominees in January. The bylaws require that the President appoint the CMO after consultation with the Board for National Mission, and with the mutual concurrence of the LCMS Board of Directors. We are hoping that recommendations for a CMO will be ready for discussion at the board meetings in February 2011.

Will there be more position eliminations at the International Center? If so, when and how many?

There is more evaluation and financial analysis that needs to occur regarding how the national office can best be structured for the future. It is possible that there will be more positions impacted, but we are hoping that if positions are eliminated, it will be as few as possible. We desire at every opportunity to be good stewards of the gifts given to us through generous donors and supporters. I know that our donors desire for our good work to continue, and we will seek every possible way for that to happen. We thank each of our donors for their support for our continued work.

Given that the November Reporter story noted that giving has increased, what implication does this have for the Synod's budget and for restructuring?

The Reporter article has to do with giving at the congregational level. As you know, unrestricted funding for the Synod flows up from congregations through the districts. Both congregational giving to districts and, as a result, district giving to Synod at the national level has been on a downward trend for many years, which is part of the reason for restructuring.

Is there a transition plan for picking up the work that was done by the people whose positions were eliminated? How will the work transition to the districts?

The leadership (e.g., district presidents, district execs, etc.) of those districts that have been impacted by the elimination of functions at the national office are being invited to collaborate with national office staff on workable solutions for the future. Other program areas of the national office, other individuals within the same department, or other partner entities related to the LCMS have already picked up some of the work that was being conducted by individuals in positions that were eliminated. We are appreciative of the cooperative attitude shown by so many who are committed to special areas of ministry and willingly advocate for and carry on the good work in many program areas.

What is the role of the National and International Mission Boards in restructuring?

These two boards will provide input, feedback, and consultation to the President and Transition Team regarding restructuring, but their role is primarily focused on establishing the policies by which the Offices of National and International Mission will conduct themselves. The boards make broad decisions regarding the program areas by establishing boundaries, parameters, and principles for the work of the two new offices.

Besides creating policy, what else do the two boards do?

The boards also participate with the President in setting goals and defining success for the two offices. While the boards have a relationship with the mission offices and provide oversight of the implementation of policies, it is the President and CMO who provide direction to the mission offices and supervise their day-to-day activities. The boards are not responsible for the specific programs, staff matters, or budgets related to the program areas like past boards have conducted their work. These issues, according



to the new structure approved by Res. 8-08A, rest with the President. While we are waiting for the CMO to be selected, the President and his Executive Staff are responsible for all matters related to program areas (World Mission, World Relief and Human Care, school ministry, youth ministry, etc.) of the national office.

Will you bring back KFUI-FM and Issues, Etc.?

The transfer of the FM license is final. However, the station has been streaming classical music at www.classic99.com since the transfer took place. There are no specific plans for Issues, Etc. at this time, but all options remain on the table.

Does the installation of the two new mission boards mean the elimination of our largest branded ministries—World Mission and World Relief & Human Care?

Absolutely not. The work of these ministries will continue. The goal is to streamline and eliminate redundancies, but these brands will continue and carry forward. Both brands have been successful fundraising tools for the national office, and over the last several years, both departments have brought in many new donors, supporters, volunteers, and advocates to the witness and mercy work of the church through the use of these two powerful brands. Restructuring work will look only for ways to enhance these brands and the ministries they represent.

How will communication efforts of the national office be included in the discussion of building a new structure that is leaner and brighter for the future?

The President's Office has established a Restructuring Work Group (see page 1) that will work with the Transition Team to identify the ways in which the communication efforts of the Synod can be more focused, driven to

a common goal, establish consistent messaging, and save money. Res. 8-08A identified that there is some duplication in communication efforts in the national office, and the Restructuring Work Group will be analyzing the communications that come out of the national office and identifying ways in which this can be done with the greatest value at the most reasonable cost. In addition to looking at current communication tools, the RWG will also make recommendations to the Transition Team about enhancing new communication options (such as increased use of video and social media) which the Synod has yet to fully develop and which could better enhance fund development efforts for program areas.

Is the new Witness, Mercy, Life Together logo now the new logo for the LCMS?

No, the burgundy, tripartite cross design remains the logo for the LCMS. Witness, Mercy, Life Together are the President's emphasis for the work of the church and are used as the underpinning for the restructuring work to suggest a strategy for moving the church into the future. The Witness, Mercy, Life Together emphasis has already been widely received in the LCMS and is easily understood by both youth and adults. The logo is a tool that anyone can use when thinking about your district, congregation, school, or personal life. These are the three areas of the work of the church that are present in whatever the church does—proclaiming the Gospel, sharing Christ's mercy with others, and living in fellowship with Christ and with one another.

What has been the most challenging aspect of the President's first hundred days in the office?

Coming into the President's Office has been like trying to drink from a fire



CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



'There Be Lutherans' . . . in Siberia!

By Albert B. Collver

After the LCMS fellowship discussions in Siberia at the end of October 2010, some may have said, "Lutherans, in Russia? Siberia, Russia? How did that happen?" Perhaps, even more surprising to learn is that before the Russian Revolution of 1917, there were actually millions of Lutherans in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltics, and other territories that would eventually comprise the Soviet Union. Some have estimated that there were 1.2 million Lutherans within Russia and Siberia proper, and another 2-3 million in the other territories. In fact, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Lutheran presence in Russia was larger than The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is today. Yet, by 1937, every Lutheran congregation had been liquidated and their pastors arrested, exiled, or executed. The communists were quite effective in destroying the Lutheran Church in Russian lands.

Early Russian Lutherans

There are reports of Lutherans—primarily German merchants, craftsmen, and engineers—arriving in Russia as early as the 1520s. These groups held worship in their homes. Other Lutherans arrived in Russia after the Livonian War of 1558, when Ivan the Terrible relocated Lutherans from the Baltic region to the environs of Moscow. Like other czars, Ivan had a certain fascination with Lutherans and other Protestant preachers, listening to them with favor on some occasions, and at other times with great displeasure. In fact, there is an account of Ivan the Terrible smacking a Lutheran preacher on the head with his scepter because the preacher dared to compare Martin Luther to St. Paul.

During the reign of Peter the Great (1682–1725), Lutherans were given a constitution and religious freedom within Russia. Peter the Great even travelled to Wittenberg in 1712 because of his interest in Lutheranism. His interest was as much political as it was religious, as Peter had the goal of modernizing Russia and decreasing the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church. As early as 1718, Lutheran chaplains from Sweden had reached Tobolsk, the historic capital of Siberia, to establish Lutheran congregations. Lutherans later arrived in other Siberian cities such as Tomsk, and Lutheran congregations were found throughout many parts of Russia until the Russian Revolution of 1917.

One Lutheran, One Small Catechism

In 1987, young Vsevolod Lytkin from Novosibirsk, Siberia, had pro-Western views and was no longer convinced that the Soviet system was good. Since the Soviet system disapproved of religion, Lytkin began investigating religion through the *Atheistic Dictionary of Religion*. When he read about Lutherans, his interest was piqued. He learned "there be Lutherans" in the Baltics, so he got on a train and arrived in Estonia three days later. He sought out a Lutheran church, where the pastor gave him the Small Catechism. Through his conversations with the pastor and the study of the Small Catechism, Lytkin was baptized at Holy Spirit Church in

Tallinn a few days later.

After returning to Siberia, Lytkin and other young Christians began to give lectures on the Bible to the students of Novosibirsk State University and other interested people from the scientific community of Academic City (Akademgorodok). By 1991, a Bible study group was formed that came together regularly to pray, read, and study the Scripture. Through the study of the Bible, the Small Catechism, and Lutheran theology, this fledgling assembly of young Christians transformed from a generic Protestant group into a congregation that desired to be truly Lutheran.

Theological Education Welcomed

In 1993, Vsevolod Lytkin was ordained in Estonia as pastor of Bible Lutheran Church in Novosibirsk. Shortly after this, Archbishop Janis Vanags of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church introduced Pastor Lytkin to Rev. Wallace Schulz, editor of *Good News* journal and then Lutheran Hour speaker. These contacts helped introduce this young Siberian Lutheran group to the LCMS.

In 1994, Rev. Vsevolod Lytkin and Deacon Pavel Khrarov visited Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. This trip acquainted them with the theology of the LCMS and marked the beginning of closer ties. A larger group of about 20 people from Siberia visited the United States in 1995. The men visited Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind., while the women visited Concordia University in Seward, Neb. In 1996, the Russian Project began at the Fort Wayne seminary under the direction of Rev. Dr. Timothy Quill, with summer seminars held in Russia and other former Soviet Republics. Ultimately, about 35 people came to the seminary in Fort Wayne for theological training. The people who formed the SELC sought out the Missouri Synod because they wanted a conservative, Lutheran theological base. The training they received at Concordia Theological Seminary strengthened these theological ties even further.

It soon became evident that a seminary in Russia was needed to train future pastors and to enable this young church to eventually become self-sufficient. Pastor Lytkin approached President Wenthe requesting assistance from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne in the establishment of a Russian seminary in Novosibirsk. The founding of the Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) in Novosibirsk was made possible by a generous grant from the Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation. Over the years, a number of guest professors from the United States, Germany, and Australia have taught at LTS. Presently, the seminary is registered and licensed as an academic institution in Russia.

Fellowship with the LCMS

In July 2010, twelve years after the Siberian Lutherans first requested fellowship discussions with the LCMS, Bishop Lytkin sent a letter to then LCMS President-elect Rev. Matthew C. Harrison. In that letter, Lytkin wrote, "With your election and



Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin and pastors and deacons of the SELC gather with Rev. Dr. William Weinrich, Rev. Dr. Timothy Quill, and President Dean Wenthe of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

introduction in the office of the president, discussions between our church bodies concerning church fellowship will gain new momentum and will come to a proper conclusion." The trip by LCMS officials in October was Harrison's response to Lytkin's letter. The LCMS delegation concurred that while differences in practice exist in some areas, there are no differences in the doctrine confessed. Full fellowship has been recommended.

Of course, the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) is not the only Lutheran Church in Russia. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is already in fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR), based in St. Petersburg. This church body has congregations that date back to the 1600s, but like the SELC has some ties to the Estonian Church. The other legally recognized Lutheran church in Russia is known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States (abbreviated ELKRAS). ELKRAS is the largest Lutheran body in Russia but is not in fellowship with the LCMS or the other Lutheran churches in Russia. The Missouri Synod, with her two partner churches in Russia (ELCIR and SELC), has an opportunity to impact Lutheranism in Russia.

A Lesson for Today?

The story of Lutheranism in Russia is both heartbreaking and encouraging. In this story, we see how a church can be brought to the brink of extinction through persecution. Much more could be told! Stories of martyrdom and great faith abound—stories about Lutherans in the Baltics, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, St. Petersburg and other places. We also see how the Lord works life from death. The Lutheran Church in Russia today is not as "glorious" or impressive as it was under the Russian Empire, but she lives under the cross of Jesus. The Lord's hand was at work, preserving His Church against the gates of hell, but doing it in such a way that we know the success of His Church does not depend on us.

This history is a good reminder for us that what happened to Lutherans in Russia in the past could also, as unimaginable as it might be, happen to us. The story of Lutheranism in Russia ought to bring us to our knees in repentance, drive us to the cross of Jesus seeking His forgiveness, and encourage us in how the Lord preserves His Church here on earth. Indeed, by the grace of God, "There be Lutherans" . . . in Siberia!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

hose. Despite having worked in the building for nearly a decade, there has been much to learn and become accustomed to in the President's Office. Restructuring the national office is the most urgent work of the Synod, and it's taking precedence over everything else that we do. In addition to the responsibility of restructuring, we are also trying to balance the scheduling demands required under the new structure for the Office the President, especially during this time when we do not yet have the CMO in place. We have a great team of administrative assistants and executive staff in the President's Office who work hard to put all these components together. We have also been helped by the many talented laypersons and pastors throughout the Synod who have agreed to serve on various boards as the President's representatives. God has blessed mightily, and it has been an incredible hundred days!

What has been the most surprising part of the first hundred days as President?

I would have to say it would be the overwhelming support and encouragement that has come from all parts of the world from all kinds of people who have been so kind and generous to me and the staff. So many people, whether district presidents or local pastors, have said, time and time again, we are praying for you. That is a strength to me during difficult days, and it greatly encourages me.

What do you like most about being President of the LCMS?

I really enjoy people coming into my office, sitting on the couch, and I in the leather chair, and then we talk. We call it the "living room." It feels very much like inviting people into my home. It's relaxed, and I find that we can have some of the most productive and enjoyable meetings sitting together and talking with folks who just want to see their church do well.

MAKING IT REAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

washed and absolved and fed with the real Word of God in real water, bread, and wine. It happens in local congregations, where God sends His people into the world to bear witness for Christ, to serve others, and to live together in love. WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER are concrete realities.

What does this mean for our work as a Synod? We could do many things, but as our two new policy boards write policy for the future of the national office, we need to apply our limited resources to building (and helping districts build) the capacity of our congregations and our international partners' congregations in these core values of WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER. Several basic assumptions and leading questions follow:

1. Lutheran congregations engage in Lutheran missions in order to plant Lutheran congregations. This ought to be self-evident among us. Lutheran congregations are the places where God is at work in the Means of Grace to seek and to save the lost, to send people in WITNESS and MERCY, and where the people of God enjoy LIFE TOGETHER in Christ. What are the best ways to help districts, congregations and our partners around the world plant new Lutheran congregations and refresh old ones? In world mission, what are we doing to plant Lutheran congregations? How are we helping our partners plant Lutheran congregations? In national mission, how does the Synod help districts and congregations plant Lutheran congregations? How do we prepare our people to witness in their daily vocations?
2. Lutheran congregations reach out in MERCY because Christ had mercy on us. We demonstrate mercy simply because there are people in need. As a Synod, how do we help districts and congregations grow in mercy? Internationally, how does what we do help our partners show

mercy through their congregations? How are our people moved to works of mercy?

3. Lutheran congregations live together in love because we are connected in Christ and share one confession of Christ. How will the national Synod work to build fellowship (*koinonia*)? How do we help our partners grow in their capacity and their life together? How do we strengthen our colleges and seminaries for the sake of our life together? How will the Holy Spirit through us recruit pastors and commissioned ministers for our congregations and partners around the world? We have the best confession in the world, bringing the greatest possible comfort to penitent sinners. How do we clarify and strengthen our confessional witness around the world? How will God use our efforts to conserve and promote the unity of the true faith among us?
4. Everything God does among us to build capacity for works of MERCY and to strengthen our LIFE TOGETHER will also increase our capacity for WITNESS to the lost. We have many congregations that are focused inward. How will Jesus, through us, call them to be focused outward in WITNESS and MERCY, so as to be God's means for drawing others into the LIFE TOGETHER we have in Christ? What will you do to ask all these questions and more in your congregation?

These are only a beginning, but the Board for National Mission and the Board for International Mission are both at work, together with your staff in the International Center, to work out the details of the restructuring plan adopted by the Synod in 2010 Resolution 8-08A. To be sure, many judgment calls still have to be made, but our guiding question is this: how will God through our Synod strengthen our congregations and our partners in WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER in the Gospel?

May God show us the way to "make it real"!



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Rev. Matthew C. Harrison—President
Rev. Herbert C. Mueller, Jr.—First Vice President
Rev. Jon D. Vieker—Senior Assistant to the President, Editor
Barbara A. Below, LCSW—Assistant to the President
Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver, III—Director of Church Relations, Assistant to the President

1333 S. Kirkwood Road • St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
Phone: (314) 996-1402 • Fax: (314) 996-1119
E-mail: president@lcms.org
Web site: <http://www.lcms.org/president>
Blog: <http://www.wmltblog.org>

Permission is granted to reprint articles from this insert in church bulletins and newsletters. Please acknowledge the LCMS Office of the President as the source of the materials. Check our website for electronic versions of these articles.



Building the #1
online community of
church professionals.

Join your peers in
recruiting and retaining
church workers for
a vital future.

Can we afford not
to participate?
It's only the future
of the church.

WHAT a WAY

blog.whataway.org



THE CONCORDIA EXPERIENCE

The Lutheran Difference

You don't have to be a trained theologian to understand how theology interacts with education and informs the way professors teach and students learn. But the effective application of theology in the learning process distinguishes one educational experience from another. That is important in the maturing life of college/university students. They will live what they learn!

Our Concordia colleges/universities (10 across the country) are not Lutheran by accident but by choice. Before our forefathers built churches, they built school houses to provide for the ongoing education of their family members who would be the pastors, teachers, bakers, butchers, judges, council members, and leaders of their communities. They left us with a legacy that was built on the theology of the cross, which starts at the foot of the cross where Christ died for the sins of mankind; where Law and Gospel are appropriately applied; where the forgiveness of sins comes through the Word and Sacraments; where all Christians are called by God to a profession or vocation; and where faith and life intersect in our daily walk as disciples of our Savior.

The mission of the colleges and universities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is marked by transformation of people and communities. It is built on the foundation of the biblical message of salvation and footnoted by the highest levels of ethical conduct and a deep sense of building a better world. At our Concordias, faculty and students are engaged in a daily faith-life conversation and experience. Concordia stu-

dents develop a strong set of values, leadership skills, Christian faith, commitment to community service, and a sense of purpose in life. Their daily experiences in a Lutheran college/university shape and imprint their perspective on teaching the faith and impacting lives in their communities.

Lutheran theology emphasizes three important aspects of Christian beliefs. They are summarized from the Reformation as *sola fide*, *sola gratia*, and *sola Scriptura*. Lutherans believe, teach and confess that we are saved by faith in God's gift of salvation and not by good works or activity on our part; that we receive salvation as a free gift from a loving and gracious God and not because of any merit in us; and that the Scriptures are the sole rule and norm for Christian theology. Education within this framework builds moral and spiritual qualities in the character of students who will serve in our churches and communities. Faith-life experiences within a Lutheran environment connect individuals to a life of faithful commitment to proclaim Jesus Christ as the Lord of Life!

A supporter of Lutheran higher education shared an insight of the value of a Christian, Lutheran institution: "The Concordia University System is one of the most powerful and far-reaching tools the Lord of the Church has given the LCMS to take the Good News of life in Jesus Christ to a world desperately in need of hearing and believing in Him, through professional church workers and those trained for other services in our communities."

A teaching church is, indeed, a church in mission!