

**FEBRUARY/MARCH 2002**

**Volume 1, Issue 1**

*We are an association of congregations and individuals, free in Christ, accountable to one another, rooted in Scripture and the Lutheran confessions, and working together to fulfill Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations.*

**Introduction**

Welcome to the first issue of the LCMC newsletter. With plans to publish on a bimonthly basis, our purpose is to serve as the official publication of LCMC, providing information to member congregations regarding all aspects of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. Each LCMC member congregation will receive a copy of the newsletter free of charge. We encourage you to reproduce and distribute the newsletter to your members. We are also including a one page summary sheet to be included in your church news- letter or bulletin.†

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| <b>Please photocopy and distribute to:</b> |                          |
| ✓  | <b>Pastor</b>            |
| ✓  | <b>Council Chair</b>     |
| ✓  | <b>Newsletter editor</b> |

<p align="center"><b>2nd Annual LCMC Convention April 28 &amp; 29, 2002 North Heights Lutheran Church Arden Hills, Minnesota Theme: <i>Status Quo, Status Go</i></b></p> <p><b>Keynote Speaker: Chuck Lindquist of World Mission Prayer League</b></p> <p>Breakout sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Legal Issues</li> <li>✓ Mission Opportunities</li> <li>✓ Update on Pension/Medical Plans</li> <li>✓ Alternative Seminary Opportunities</li> </ul> <p>Registration begins at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 28</p> <p>Opening session begins at 2:00 p.m.</p>
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## Why I'm Excited About LCMC

by David Drum

Why am I excited about LCMC? Let me count the ways.

### 1. Theological integrity

When LCMC talks about the freedom that the gospel brings and the normative authority of the Scriptures, I believe we mean what we say. All who have joined seem to have basic underlying agreements on what used to be widely accepted as traditional Lutheran theological discussion and debate (and anyone who's participated on the listserv can tell you that such debate is common and lively); it is done out in the open, warts and all. Thus far, I have encountered no hidden agendas, no political statements nuanced in order to please everyone, and no power-grabbing. Integrity is sorely lacking in countless areas of societal life, and LCMC is not immune from the effects of sin, nor would it claim to be. Nevertheless, I praise the Lord that integrity between belief and practice is a stated value which has become manifest at multiple levels.

### 2. Mission-minded

As the board met to plan its next convention, we were unanimous in desiring to bring in the best speakers we could find who would help us think outside the box in order to most effectively fulfill Jesus' Great Commission. LCMC has no intention of creating a vast infrastructure as if the church is to be located within the national institution. LCMC doesn't even want congregations to forward lots of benevolence dollars to them in order to be passed along to other missionaries/organizations: "Support them directly, and we'll help you identify some worthy causes if you ask us to." How's that for a refreshing change? We are committed to a streamlined national institution whose sole purpose is to support God's Kingdom expansion plans at the congregational level. So far this means LCMC has facilitated two new mission congregations in its first year, with a paid staff of only one administrative assistant who is

shared with WordAlone, and everyone else volunteering.

### 3. Organizational freedom

How does the phrase go - something like "unanimity in the essentials, freedom in the nonessentials, charity in all"? That's what we're striving for. LCMC is organized so that our basic statements of faith and practice are created by all, treasured by all, and expected to be honored by all. However, beyond those essentials, congregations are encouraged to align themselves with others who have similar interests and passions, and go to work! So, groups are coming together (known as districts) around shared theological statements, geography, worship preferences, and various other shared values. Congregations can belong to as many districts as they wish, or none at all. Congregations can make LCMC their sole/primary church home, or remain with other associations/denominations simultaneously. We're not about power and control, we're about mission and service.

### 4. Forward-looking mentality

History cannot be denied - LCMC was born out of dissatisfaction with things as they were. God often creates something new by first creating dissatisfaction with the status quo. Leaving behind old wineskins, like any loss, means that a certain amount of grieving is necessary before a person/congregation adequately heals. Nevertheless, the tone of our gatherings has already changed, and members are firmly committed to looking forward, not backward, and identifying the things we're for rather than re-hashing the things we're against. I have been so refreshed by the opportunity to contribute something positive as light advances against the darkness, rather than having to spend lots of time plugging holes within my own boat.

### 5. Laundry list

Like any epistle, I'll end by cataloguing a whole bunch of items I won't take time to elaborate. LCMC is healthy and growing. It has the potential to reach out to and be a meeting place

for many different Lutheran organizations in existence (just this last week I've had conversation about LCMC with friends from AFLC, LCMS, AALC, and Lutheran Renewal). I come away from gatherings encouraged and refreshed. New wineskins are being explored in multiple areas. LCMC is an organization I'm eager to talk about rather than embarrassed to admit. Most significantly of all, I believe the Lord's promise to raise up those who truly desire to humble themselves and seek the Lord's guidance.†

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## LCMC Districts by G. Barry Anderson

There is no better example of the grassroots nature of LCMC than district organizations, but understanding what districts are, and how they might work, takes a little effort.

The goal of LCMC is to enable congregations and members of congregations to spread the Good News that is the Gospel and to better carry out the Great Commission. But there are some tasks that are too large or too complicated for a single congregation to handle, including starting mission congregations, seminary education issues, large relief efforts, and the like.

And so our constitution and bylaws specifically permit congregations to join in partnership to accomplish these, and many other as yet unknown, tasks.

How are districts organized? The answer is whatever organization seems most effective for the task at hand. Some may choose a structured "organization chart" while others may have little or no organization. Some districts may be quite large, and others only one or two congregations. Some districts may draw on resources or members outside of LCMC and others will be devoted exclusively to LCMC issues. Some districts are geographical, while others have members from all over the country.

All of this requires us to think differently about organization and power. If districts are so important, why don't we elect our national

board of trustees from districts? Better yet, let each “district” have a vote on the national board. But the more bureaucratically powered districts become, the more we have to worry about “fairness” issues and how that power is distributed, none of which has anything to do with spreading the Gospel. What procedures were used for electing “delegates”? Does each district have the same number of congregations? Were voting procedures fair and on and on, ad infinitum.

So we have chosen to leave the bureaucratic power in congregations who gather in annual convention; those congregations must ratify, or have a veto power over, changes in the constitution and bylaws. And we leave to districts, partnerships of congregations, the more exciting and interesting work of carrying out Jesus’ instructions to us.

So does it work? LCMC has two operational districts so far, the Augsburg Lutheran District, which is engaged in some interesting experiments in consensus building and has recently announced an effort to develop liturgical resources for LCMC congregations, and the Evangelical-Renewal district, which has been discussing alternative seminary arrangements. Other districts, not yet formally organized, are discussing mission congregations, educational resources and lay leadership training, among other topics. It is far too early to tell if this experiment in empowerment works but the early evidence is encouraging.

The problem with freedom, of course, is that it’s messy and disorganized. Some districts will be horrified at experiments underway in other districts. Some districts may have radically inconsistent goals and objectives. Others may fail, or succeed, in spectacular fashion.

But because districts have no authority to impose their views on other districts and congregations, the risks are minimal. And, as an incidental but significant benefit, experimentation is encouraged.

But don’t look for a three ring binder with instructions and procedures on the “right” way to form districts; instead, gather in prayer and fellowship with your fellow Lutherans and look for ways to more effectively carry out the Great Commission. That is really what districts are all about.†

## Launching New Districts

### Augsburg Lutheran District (ALD)

The Augsburg Lutheran District is focused on helping to start mission churches, as well as offering a helping hand to redeveloping churches looking for a new start. For more information contact Lenae Rasmussen ([lasmussen@augsburgdistrict.org](mailto:lasmussen@augsburgdistrict.org)) or Mark Jamison ([mjamison@dakota.net](mailto:mjamison@dakota.net)).

### Evangelical-Renewal District

The second district of LCMC has officially formed and is now accepting membership. The Evangelical-Renewal District is organized around a set of values and purposes, summarized as follows:

- Values: It’s about Jesus, passion for the lost, renewal through the Holy Spirit, high view of scripture, passionate worship, people of prayer, and sanctity of marriage and life.
- Purposes: Pray, share resources, share knowledge, be accountable, plant new congregations, recruit and support seminarians and new pastors, support international mission.

We’ve already begun praying for one another, actively supporting the Master’s Institute (a new congregationally-based seminary program), and praying regarding new congregational mission starts.

For more information, contact Chris Magnell at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Altoona, Iowa (515-967-4818; [cmagnell@aol.com](mailto:cmagnell@aol.com)), or David Drum at Community of Hope, Tucson, Arizona (520-743-7359; [dmdrum@juno.com](mailto:dmdrum@juno.com)).

### **Pacific Northwest District Formation**

Final touches are being applied to plans for the formation of a Pacific Northwest District of LCMC. The initial meeting will be held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Burien, Washington, on March 2, 2002 from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Further information, including a map, will soon be available at [www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net).

The need and desire for this district was recognized by Washington and Idaho delegates to the LCMC Constituting Convention in St. Louis Park, MN, in October 2001.

A number of topics have been proposed including:

- What do we name ourselves?
- Do we need a constitution or shall we operate with by-laws only?
- Shall we elect officers, or operate with chairman?
- Do we incorporate as a not-for-profit or operate our finances through one of our congregation's books?
- How can we help start LCMC Mission churches and where?

But perhaps the most important topic is the one that you, the delegate, have been considering, and will bring to the meeting for the consideration of all who have assembled.

For further information, contact Dave Livermore (425-885-3282), or Robin Lake (208-682-4244).

### **Education District Being Formed**

Just in the beginning stages, a district that will focus on providing educational resources is

being planned by a group of congregations in southwestern Minnesota. For more information, contact Tim Baglien at (507) 877-2316 ([tprbagli@rconnect.com](mailto:tprbagli@rconnect.com)), Dennis Sandmann at (507) 723-6547 ([dennissandmann@yahoo.com](mailto:dennissandmann@yahoo.com)), or Lee Harder at (507) 752-7334 ([harderl@rrcnet.org](mailto:harderl@rrcnet.org)).†

### **Seminary Debt Reduction Fund**

LCMC and WordAlone currently have a joint debt relief fund for seminarians. The fund is administered by a four person committee, two of whom are from LCMC and two from WordAlone. In order to be eligible for funds, a pastor and the congregation served must be members of WordAlone or LCMC or both, and support the principles of the organizations. Further, the pastor must have been ordained under the ELCA exception or by someone other than a bishop (in other words, outside the historic episcopate).

Thus far, the fund has provided grants of \$5000.00 each to Pastor Nancy Harrmann, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Osage, Minnesota, and Pastor Chris Magnell, Lutheran Church of the Cross, Altoona, Iowa. Both are graduates of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and in their first call assignments.

The fund welcomes donations from congregations and individuals. Contributions may be mailed to the WordAlone office at 2299 Palmer Drive, Suite 220, New Brighton, MN 55112.

For more information contact one of the members of the Seminarian Debt Relief Committee:

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## We Accept Prayer Requests

If you have critical votes coming up in your congregation regarding LCMC or other important issues and would like to be placed on our prayer list, please send your request to us by e-mail, phone or mail. †

## LCMC Member Congregations (as of February 10, 2002)

As of February 10, 2002, LCMC has 53 member congregations in 17 states.

- **Peace Lutheran Church** (Mission Status), Orange Beach, Alabama
- **Community of Hope Lutheran Church**, Tucson, Arizona
- **Mount Calvary-Faith Lutheran Church**, West Covina, California
- **American Lutheran Church**, Kellogg, Idaho
- **St. Pauls**, St. Maries, Idaho
- **Lutheran Church of the Cross**, Altoona, Iowa
- **Our Saviour's Lutheran Church**,

- Callender, Iowa
- **Highland Lutheran Church**, Decorah, Iowa
- **Elk Horn Lutheran Church**, Elk Horn, Iowa
- **Christ the King Lutheran Church**, Dodge City, Kansas
- **Sola Scriptura Lutheran Church**, Flint, Michigan
- **Saint Michael Lutheran Church**, Ottawa Lake, Michigan
- **Zion Lutheran Church**, Ottawa Lake, Michigan
- **Word of God Lutheran Church**, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota
- **Christ Lutheran Church**, Comfrey, Minnesota
- **New Hope Lutheran Church**, Comfrey, Lutheran
- **Saint Petri Lutheran Church**, Evansville, Minnesota
- **Saint Johns Lutheran Church**, Howard Lake, Minnesota
- **Tanglewood Lutheran Church**, Hugo, Minnesota
- **Christ the King Lutheran Church**, Hutchinson, Minnesota
- **Faith Lutheran Church**, Hutchinson, Minnesota
- **Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo**, Isle, Minnesota
- **Our Saviors Lutheran Church**, Lamberton, Minnesota
- **St. Paul Lutheran Church**, Springfield, Minnesota
- **Christ Lutheran Church**, Big Sandy, Montana
- **Saint Paul Lutheran Church**, Auburn, Nebraska
- **Lutheran Church of the Master**, Omaha, Nebraska
- **Saint John Lutheran Church**, Sterling, Nebraska
- **Grace Lutheran Church**, Walton, Nebraska
- **Holy Communion Lutheran Church**, Banner Elk, North Carolina
- **Messiah Lutheran Church**, Hickory,

North Carolina

- **Charity Lutheran Church**, Bismarck, North Dakota
- **Atonement Lutheran Church**, Fargo, North Dakota
- **Holy Cross Lutheran Church**, Powers Lake, North Dakota
- **Faith Lutheran Church**, Regent, North Dakota
- **Dawson Lutheran Church**, Steele, North Dakota
- **Trinity Lutheran Church**, Steele, North Dakota
- **Upper Arlington Lutheran Church**, Columbus, Ohio
- **Saint Andrew Lutheran Church**, Farmersville, Ohio
- **Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church-Freemansburg**, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- **Old Zion Lutheran Church**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- **Zion Lutheran Church**, Hartford, South Dakota
- **Our Saviors Lutheran Church**, Burien, Washington
- **Naselle Lutheran Church**, Naselle, Washington
- **First Lutheran Church**, Poulsbo, Washington
- **Our Saviors Lutheran Church**, Sunnyside, Washington
- **Our Savior's Lutheran Church**, Cornell, Wisconsin
- **Immanuel-Trinity Lutheran Church**, Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin
- **St. Johns Lutheran Church**, Gilman, Wisconsin
- **People of the Promise Lutheran Church**, Hudson, Wisconsin
- **Zion Lutheran Church**, Oshkosh, Wisconsin

[www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net)

## LCMC Needs, Opportunities

Two issues have presented themselves to the board of trustees for Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ as requiring more or less immediate attention.

The purpose of this request is to solicit from our membership thoughts and proposals that might address the concerns of the board.

Some background is appropriate and will help in understanding this request for proposal.

At present, LCMC has no paid staff nor does it have a permanent location. It does have the assistance of able WordAlone office employees who have put in substantial hours assisting with various LCMC projects including the immediate past national convention and the planned national convention in April at North Heights Lutheran Church in Arden Hills, Minnesota.

In a related vein, Robin Lake, a member of your board of trustees, had agreed on a temporary basis to serve as executive or administrative director of the association but has recommended, and the board unanimously agreed, that at least a part-time, paid executive director is necessary to manage the affairs of the association.

Because the questions of who serves as executive director of the association is also tied to a more permanent location, the suggestion was made that perhaps both of these issues could be addressed at the same time.

### 1. Executive Director

The board's vision at this point is that the executive director position will be part-time

Check out our new website at

with salary depending on qualifications. It is probable that the position will move to full-time but when this will occur is unknown. Business experience is preferred but not required although management and employee supervision experience is necessary. A commitment to and a passion for the mission of this association is absolutely essential. Also required is the ability to work without a great deal of direction and little supervision since this employee will report to a volunteer board, the members of which are unlikely to be conveniently located at least in so far as the executive director is concerned. The position is available immediately.

## **2. Office Location**

The board has decided that, for the immediate future, approximately 800 square feet will serve LCMC's needs quite acceptably and perhaps less if facilities can be arranged allowing LCMC to have access to certain common amenities such as copying machines, conference rooms and the like. Access to high-speed Internet service is essential. While the board prefers a location in a hub city, any community within an hour or so drive of a major airport would probably meet association requirements. It is important to understand that it is the board's view that the association is looking for a business address adequate for its present needs but as the association grows, matures, and changes, those needs will change and it is likely that the street address, or administrative home, if you will, for the association might change as well. In short, no assumption about the future location of the association should be inferred from its present address.

The board is willing to look at combined proposals involving a location and part-time administrative help as well as separate proposals for administrative help and a location for the office. Although the board had a couple of suggestions that look intriguing and would at least have to be considered possibilities, the board would rather have as many possibilities from which to choose when it comes time to

make this decision.

Proposals may be submitted by e-mail to the LCMC board at the e-mail address given below or by mail to Robin Lake, Executive Director, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, PO Box 357, Kingston, ID 83839.

Applications should be submitted no later than March 31.

Thank you,  
Barry Anderson  
Chair, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ board of trustees †

## **Help Name this Newsletter**

We are currently soliciting suggestions for a name for this newsletter. Possibilities already submitted include:

*Great Commission*

*Mission News*

*LCMC Revelations*

To vote for one of these titles, or to submit another idea, go to the LCMC website at [www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net) or contact us at the address below.†

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**We welcome your comments, questions, letters, and suggestions for future articles. Published bimonthly by Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. Editors are encouraged to reprint articles from this newsletter with appropriate credit.**