

# BY THE WORD



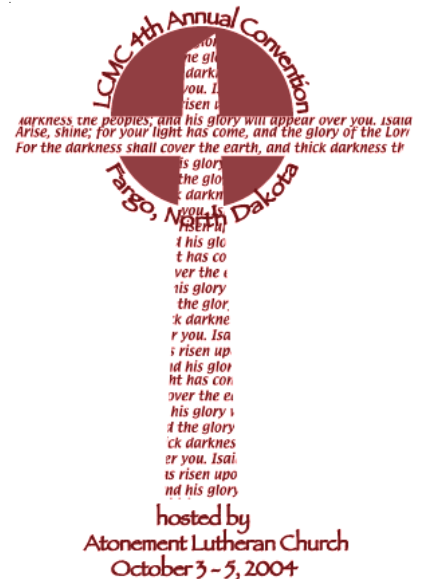
We are an association of congregations and individuals, free in Christ, accountable to one another, rooted in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, and working together to fulfill Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

Volume 3, Issue 2  
2nd Quarter 2004

## "ARISE, SHINE!"

### Fargo Site of Annual Call to Gather

by Bill Sullivan, National Service Coordinator



The 4th Annual Convention of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ will convene on Sunday, October 3rd, 2004 at Atonement Lutheran Church in Fargo, North Dakota. The convention team at Atonement is hard at work making preparations to welcome delegates and guests to Roughrider Country.

The theme of this year's gathering is "Arise, Shine!" The scripture passage from which the theme was taken is found in the 60th chapter of Isaiah: *Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.* (Isaiah 60:1-3)

Keynote speakers for the gathering will be Rev. Gene Appel and Rev. XXXXX. Their messages will challenge and inspire gathering participants. Gene Appel is Associate Pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in Barrington, Illinois. Rev. XXXXX is a native of XXXXX and a Lutheran pastor who has led a Christian mission for many years. (See related articles, page 3)

Rev. John Fahning will preach at the opening worship service. Adding to the excitement, "Three Guys From North Dakota", a program heard on a number of radio stations in the state, will be broadcast from the convention. A variety of informative breakout sessions will be offered. There will be ample time for fellowship and relaxation. A wild game feed will capture the spirit of the bicentennial celebration of the journey of Lewis and Clark across North America.

If you were in Canton, Michigan last year, you know what a tremendous experience those in attendance enjoyed. We look forward to another wonderful time of fellowship, worship, networking, and celebration as we gather at Atonement in October. Plan on joining us!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**July 15-16**  
**Trustees Meeting**  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Eagan, MN

**July 25 - 28**  
**ALC District Gathering**  
The Old Sanctuary  
Brookings, SD

**October 2-3**  
**Trustees Meeting**  
Atonement Lutheran Church  
Fargo, ND

**Oct 3 - 5, 2004**  
**National Convention**  
Atonement Lutheran Church  
Fargo, North Dakota

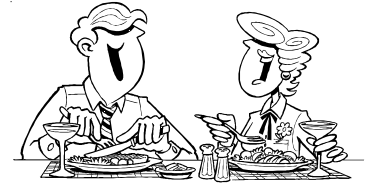
**December 2-3**  
**Trustees Meeting**  
Hilton Garden Inn  
Eagan, MN

Lutheran Congregations  
in Mission for Christ

# 2nd Annual LCMC Leadership Conference Held in Nebraska City

by Lenae Rasmussen

About 70 pastors and congregational leaders attended the second Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) Leadership Conference held at the Lied Conference Center in Nebraska City, Nebraska, April 25-27, 2004. The food and accommodations were a wonderful compliment to the small-group discussions focused on a series of ministry issues:



- ◆ *What is ordination?*
- ◆ *What is the role of the congregation in ordination, and what is the role of the "home congregation" in ordination?*
- ◆ *What should be required of a candidate to be ordained?*
- ◆ *How do ordination and installation compare?*
- ◆ *Who is an ordained pastor accountable to?*
- ◆ *What is the purpose of the colloquy?*
- ◆ *Who should go through a colloquy?*
- ◆ *Who sits on the colloquy committee ("colloquium")?*
- ◆ *What is the call?*
- ◆ *Is someone still a pastor or bishop when after he/she no longer serves a call?*
- ◆ *What questions do you have concerning "contract calls" and "certified" calls?*
- ◆ *What would be helpful to a congregation in the call process?*
- ◆ *What would be helpful for a candidate in the call process?*

Rev. Kip Tyler, senior pastor of Lutheran Church of the Master-Omaha, NE, and the LCMC ministry committee will compile the responses and present their final report to the LCMC Board of Trustees this summer.

In addition to the ministry issues discussion, Leadership Conference participants were lead in lively morning and evening worship by Pastor Mark Vander Tuig, senior pastor of Lutheran Church of the Cross-Altoona, IA, and his music team.

A great time was had by all! Participants frequently expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the opportunities the conference provided to share in Christian fellowship. The conference was a wonderful way to meet new members and reacquaint ourselves with old friends. On Monday afternoon, members of the various LCMC districts met and everyone enjoyed "the mutual conversation and consolation of the saints" during the conference free times.

LCMC is an association of congregations united in Christ and his gospel, formed in September 2000 as an alternative for pastors, seminarians, and congregations concerned about the theological and confessional drift in America. LCMC has taken its stand on God's Word and the confessions of faith shared by Lutherans around the world since the 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation inspired by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the gospel by Dr. Martin Luther.



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## BY THE WORD

### NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, Issue 1

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"For it is by grace you have been saved through faith-- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast." ...  
Ephesians 2:8-9

## Rev. Gene Appel to Keynote in Fargo:



Co-author of *How to Change Your Church without Killing It* to Speak

LCMC convention planners have invited Rev. Gene Appel to address the association at its annual gathering in Fargo this October. Gene is Associate Pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, and is actively involved with daily leadership responsibilities. He is also one of the primary teaching pastors for weekend and midweek services.

Gene moved to the Chicago area from Las Vegas in the summer of 2003. He served as senior pastor of Central Christian Church from 1985-2003, and was instrumental in transitioning the 400-person church to a more contemporary model. The church now has more than 7,000 attendees with a focus on reaching and discipling unchurched people. Additionally, Central has planted two churches, which now have combined attendance of more than 5,000. Gene and his wife Barbara have three children – Jeremy, Alayna, and Jenna – and now reside in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

Following in the footsteps of his late father, a pastor and Christian leader, Gene sensed God's call to ministry at a very early age. He received a B.A. degree in

Preaching Ministry from Lincoln Christian College in Lincoln, Illinois, and completed additional graduate work at Lincoln Christian Seminary and Pacific Christian College.

Recognized by many as a gifted leader with a passion for following Christ, Gene has advised church leaders from around the world on how to bring more relevant forms of ministry to their churches. He authored *Dream Intruders* and *Healing Hidden Hearts* and is co-author of the book, *How to Change Your Church without Killing It*, which will be a focus of his address to the convention.

## Convention Attendees to Hear Keynote by Dedicated Missionary

We have suppressed details about the second keynote speaker in this internet version of our newsletter out of concern for his safety.

While this good person has chosen to fearlessly spread the Gospel in his home country, the LCMC board of trustees has no wish to place him in any greater danger.

We apologize for any inconvenience. You may contact the LCMC national office if you wish more complete details.



## 2nd Annual LCMC Youth Rally in Iowa

by Rev. Mark Vander Tuig, LCC - Altoona, IA

Over 130 youth and advisors gathered at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Altoona, Iowa for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual LCMC National Youth Rally under the theme: "Pressing On", based on the verses from Philippians 3: 12-14. The event began Sunday evening with opening worship, followed by the speaker for the evening, Matt Eller of NFL fame. Following some large group games (lead by Mark Gibbs of St. Micheal's in Ottawa Lake, Michigan) and small group Bible study (involving all the adult advisors), came an outstanding concert by "Swen and Dean"—who returned from last year's gathering. Sunday evening, like each evening, closed with a campfire, conversation and prayer.

Sunday represented the flow of the rally—worship, a speaker, small group Bible studies, large group games and prayer. Highlighting each segment of the event was great music and worship provided by a high school worship band and choir—3N1 is the name of the group from Trinity Lutheran in Columbus, Nebraska, directed Cindy White. It is made of 20 voices, keyboards, bass guitar, lead guitar, drums and congas! These young people were a tremendous witness for each of our congregations and did a great job leading us faithfully in worship!



We had outstanding speakers for this event who shared their faith, their struggles and their joy in a way that made sense to the participants. Besides Matt Eller, we heard Dean Swenson, Jen Jacobson, and Dan Scharnhorst challenge us to "press on to the prize given us in Christ Jesus".

On Monday night we heard – and that is an understatement – two bands, "Staple" and "Kids in the Way". Last year's participants wanted bands for this year that were more into the heavy metal Christian rock—and we they were! These groups shared their music with us (and the surrounding area) and their witness to Jesus Christ. They have a powerful witness and a deep commitment to Christ.

Tuesday afternoon we offered 9 different breakout sessions on a variety of topics ranging from Sexuality to Suicide. Each participant could take in 3 workshops and attendance demonstrated the relevance of the workshops—everyone came! One of the workshops was a chance for 9 youth and one adult to head over to Grand View College and under the supervision of Professor Steve Winzenburg, write, direct, film, edit and finish a video to show at the LCMC National convention in Fargo this fall. The tape is on the way!



One of the most fun and interesting parts of the rally were the sessions with an improv comedy group called "Happy Fun Time". This group of five made us laugh, engaged us in improvisational comedy and helped us to see the truth of the Scripture in a brand new way. They were amazing in their

telling of modern day parables, and to expert in helping to laugh at ourselves. One famous line from their presentations was, "Ah-haa, I get that!"

It was inspiring and encouraging to gather people from Arizona, Utah, Michigan (a whole bunch!), Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska and Iowa. Our next National Youth Rally is scheduled for Sandy, Utah, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church July 10-13, 2005!



## *The Burning Bush: A Youth Retreat on Baptism and God's Call*

*by John and Lenae Rasmussen, "The Burning Bush" Retreat Leaders*

On June 11-13, 2004 the Augsburg Lutheran Churches held its first annual youth retreat in the high desert mountain wilderness of West Texas halfway between Odessa and El Paso. As the theme indicates, the purpose of the retreat was to help youth understand Baptism as the foundation of their lives as Christians.

In Baptism, which is not water only, but water used together with God's Word and by His command, God forgives sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe what he has promised. In short, as Moses was called by name and given his life's purpose at the burning bush, so in Baptism, each one of us has been called by name as a child of God, born again, drowned and resurrected for Christ sake, and called and ordained as a member of the priesthood of all believers by water and the Word.

This life-affirming and grace-filled message was the current running through a retreat experience filled with spectacular scenery, hair-raising mountain treks, wildlife ranging from rattlesnakes to mule deer to long-horned sheep to wild boars, delicious food, great music and wonderful fellowship.



It is impossible to thank our hosts and wilderness guides, Dubb and Norma Duff — members of Lutheran

Church of the Risen Lord in Odessa, TX — enough for their hospitality and graciousness in opening their hearts and their 6,000 acre ranch with all its accommodations to us without any cost whatsoever. Thank you to Lester for his delicious cooking, hard work, and Christ-like heart. Thank you to Duane and his boys for their music. Thank you to Pastor Chris Conner for coordinating and facilitating the arrangements, and for being a true Pastor and servant of the Word. And not least, thank you to all the youth and adults who participated, learned, and became a true Christian community in the mountains of West Texas. God's creation, His Word, and his people could not have come together in a better way.





# NORTHWEST DISTRICT IS BORN- PRAISE GOD!

- by Paul Braafladt, District President

The day was Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. The place was Immanuel Lutheran Church at Moses Lake in central Washington. The weather was calm and in the 60's. The spirits were high as people arrived for this birth. They came the three states of Washington, Idaho and Montana and from all directions. Some left their homes early that morning. Some had to drive to Moses Lake the night before. But no matter how far they had come one could sense purpose and excitement in the air not least because more people came than were expected. The numbers look like this.

41 people attended the sessions held at Immanuel Lutheran Church, a non-LCMC church as of the present. Of that number 27 were delegates or members of 6 Northwest LCMC congregations. Those that came as visitors and observers were from 7 ELCA congregations.

## VOTES TAKEN

A clarification is needed. In this convention all visitors had voice. That was purposeful and important. It was important enough that, when the moment finally arrived to vote on the revised version of the constitution and bylaws, two votes were taken. The first tally included everyone in the room. We called it a “**vote of support**”. The second vote was by LCMC members and delegates, the **official vote**. And here's the point: **Both votes were unanimous!**

## OFFICERS ELECTED

What a stirring, encouraging way to launch a new LCMC District! Those elected to lead as members of the new Northwest District Council were as follows:

*Paul Braafladt* - *President*  
*Robin Lake* - *Vice President*  
*Carolyn MacPhee* - *Secretary*  
*Mel MacPhee* - *Treasurer*  
*David Herwick* - *Member at Large*

## FALL CONVENTION PLANS

Now that this birth has occurred, plans are already underway for a 2005 Spring convention. In contrast to this constituting convention, “**the convention of perspiration**”, our spring gathering will be a “**convention of celebration**”. By that time we hope to receive numerous applications for membership in the Northwest District from Northwest LCMC congregations, chapters and individuals wanting to be Associate Members.

One final note. When it comes to member congregations, chapters and associate members we are thinking big. Our newly approved constitution defines our district turf as “the Northwestern region of North America”. That's big! But those mountains, hills and valleys come from the creative hand of a big God whose unbridled grace through Jesus Christ is clearly at work among us. Praise be to God for a congregation-centered Church!

# **Great Lakes District Holds Spring Assembly**

*by Rev. Mark Gibbs, St. Michael - Ottawa Lake, MI*

The Great Lakes District of LCMC held its Spring assembly on Saturday, April 17th at Zion Lutheran Church, Ottawa Lake, Michigan. About fifty people from seven Ohio and Michigan LCMC congregations were in attendance.

## ***ROUND TABLES ON CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES***

After beginning with a worship service of preaching and Holy Communion, the group shared a wonderful meal prepared by the people of Zion Lutheran. During the meal, people were asked to divide into groups around particular congregational ministries. People who served as officers of congregations gathered at one table, people interested in youth and family ministries at another, etc. Lively discussion ensued with much information and many ideas being exchanged.

After the meal, the group retired to the sanctuary for a general meeting that included two topics. First it was discussed as to whether the district should have a constitution. Currently, GLD operates by a Statement of Purpose (see [www.GLD-LCMC.org](http://www.GLD-LCMC.org)). After discussion, it was decided to solicit input from member congregations' councils concerning this subject and to discuss it again at our next meeting.

## ***COOPERATIVE MISSION PROJECTS***

The second issue discussed was possible mission projects that the GLD congregations could work on together. After brainstorming various projects, it was decided that our first group project would be to help as many of our GLD youth as possible attend the LCMC National Youth Rally out in Iowa this summer. Faith Lutheran in Detroit (a GLD member) ministers to several inner-city youth who needed of financial support to enable them to go to the rally. It was unanimously agreed by the assembly that we work together to provide the necessary financial support for any GLD youth who have need. I am pleased to report that as of the writing of this update, 40 youth and adults from the GLD district, including 12 from Faith Lutheran-Detroit, will be traveling together by bus the Iowa rally!

## ***NEW MEMBER CONGREGATION WELCOMED***

One congregation in attendance at the GLD gathering was Grace Lutheran Church of West Carrollton, Ohio. This congregation subsequently voted to join the GLD district. We welcome Grace Lutheran to the GLD.

The next Great Lakes District assembly will be held on Saturday, November 13th, 2004 at St. Michael Lutheran Church in Ottawa Lake, Michigan.

**Do you have something to share?** -- If you, your congregation or a ministry group you belong to is involved in something new and exciting, we'd love to hear about it. Or, if you would like your congregation to be profiled in our series on LCMC churches, let us know. Contact Deb Lingen, editor, at [ddalingen@netscape.net](mailto:ddalingen@netscape.net), or 402-597-3362. We'd like to tell your story!

## *From Dale's Desk: A Message from the Chairman*

"I'm still going to be Lut'eran!"

Dear Friends,

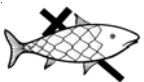
"I'm still going to be Lut'eran!" These words were spoken by John Carlson, the only member of Atonement (where I serve as Sr. Pastor) to speak prior to our second vote to discontinue membership in the ELCA. They are simple, yet profound words. Many of you reading these words have struggled these last years with what it means to be Lutheran. Mich Anderson, another member of Atonement, told me weeks prior to our second vote that he realized that it will be important for Atonement to continue to define and clarify our Lutheran identity. He is right. Perhaps for too long we have turned that job over to someone or something outside of our congregations. Could this be true?

I am not a reformation scholar, but I do know a few things. I do know that for most, if not all of his life, Luther resisted a church named after him. I do know that Luther's concern was that the church be a church of the Word. In fact, the church "is the assembly of believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel." (Article VII, The Augsburg Confession). I do know that to be Lutheran means that you stand on and work with some foundational and confessional principles – grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone, Word alone. These principles, at the core of who we are, are to shape our proclamation and mission to "make disciples of all nations."

So, what will it mean to be Lutheran a hundred years from now? As mainline denominations deteriorate and move away from God's Word and denominations as a whole loose significance, what will we as Lutherans in LCMC bring to the worldwide evangelical movement. Will we simply debate our theology, or use it to call a world to faith in Jesus Christ? Will we just be a last true vestige of Lutheranism until we all die off, or will we be an association of congregations who with urgency and passion seek to reach a lost world with the Good News of a Savior – Jesus Christ?

It will be crucial that our congregations define who they are, to continue to define and clarify what it means to be Lutheran. Not because "we are going to be Lut'eran until Jesus comes," but because our identity, which is truly evangelical, must drive us to do the kingdom mission our good Lord has put before us.

I pray that you will come to our LCMC gathering in Fargo October 3-5. Our gathering, in many ways, has been shaped to inspire and encourage our congregations to passionately pursue this kingdom mission. From Gene Appel sharing an evangelical call to do whatever it takes to reach a lost world to Rev. XXXXX's powerful story of doing just that, it will be an awesome three days together. Don't just send your allotted delegates. Open it to your congregation. Encourage many to come. Maybe there is even a struggling pastor or leader in a neighboring congregation that would benefit by attending. Our work is too important to let this moment pass. See you in Fargo!



*God is Good,  
Dale Wolf*

### Augsburg District to Host Summer Gathering . . . All Are Invited



The Augsburg Lutheran Churches District invite everyone to attend their 4th annual gathering, "STAND AND CONFESS: Sure and Certain Hope." The group will meet at The Old Sanctuary in Brookings, SD July 25 -28. Featured speakers are Dr. Mark Mattes, on the topic of "Justification by Faith Alone: Our Sure and Certain Hope," and Mr. Lou Hesse, on "A Clear Eye from the Pigsty." Rev. Dick Smith will lead a Bible study based on Romans 8: 18-39. For more information call 605-692-4859 or check out the website at [www.augsburgchurches.org](http://www.augsburgchurches.org).

# LCMC Represented at Land Dedication Ceremony in Omaha

**In Town for Board Meeting and Leadership Conference, Trustees Pay Visit to Church of the Master**

*by Jan Larson, Communications Coordinator, LCM - Omaha*

A high wind and muddy conditions didn't stop the dedication April 25 of the newly acquired land for the west site of Lutheran Church of the Master. Close to 100 people, including the director of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ and its board of trustees witnessed the service of land dedication. Senior Pastor Kip Tyler and Pastors George Megard and Eddie Greschell conducted the 30-minute rite. The gathering stood in a grassy ravine just east of the 28-acre site. They faced several mammoth earth movers posted for duty at the gravelly entrance to the hilltop land.

"Look around and see what is happening here," said Bill Sullivan, executive director of LCMC, Canton, Mich. "It is very exciting to see and it will be fun to come back and see the progress. You are doing what Christ asked you to do." It is great, Sullivan went on, to be part of an association that takes the Great Commission seriously. This is exactly the kind of thing that LCMC is all about. He asked God to help LCM, one of nearly 100 churches in LCMC, take on its new responsibility and adventure with faith and the help of the Lord's grace. "God is going to bless (this land)," Sullivan said. He is going to grow your faith in amazing ways in this place ... on the prairie, he said.

Pastor Dale Wolf, Atonement Lutheran Church in Fargo, N.D., took off his coat in the breezy coolness, saying he was plenty warm. "It is a thrill to be a part of this and of LCMC," Wolf said. He and Sullivan were in Nebraska to participate in a meeting of the LCMC Board of Trustees in Omaha and at an LCMC leadership conference in Nebraska City, where people from across the country met over the weekend. "This church has played a huge role in LCMC," Wolf said, referring to the now dual-site LCM. From here will come awesome things, he said; he would keep LCM in his prayers.



Above, Pastor Bill Sullivan, Canton, Mich., LCMC executive director, center with paper, gestures to the new mission land. Others from left are Lutheran Church of the Master pastors Eddie Greschell, left, Kip Tyler and George Megard who led worshipers in the dedication. At far right is LCM member Denny Scheer.

## PSALM 102:18

It was a prayer and a Bible verse revealed on this site - Psalm 102:18 - that sealed the rightness of this land purchase for Tyler, he said. He explained how he came, Bible in hand, to this site more than a year ago to settle this expanding decision with God. "Is this what we are supposed to do?" Tyler asked God. That's when the verse - "Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord." - leaped out at him, he said. "I never really noticed this before. . . And it has become one of my greatest thrills," Tyler said, "that I might have an impact on a future generation when I am dust and when no one remembers who I am any more - on people not yet born. This is incredible, absolutely incredible."

Tyler said he looked forward to another ceremony - the groundbreaking - about a year from now, in the spring of 2005. But today, he said, was part of the beginning of the process to plan what the Lord wants on this site. In many ways, Tyler said, he didn't really care what a building or buildings might look like on the new site as long as the blueprints of the Lord were followed.

Taking the cue from Isaiah 55, Tyler said it is his prayer for LCM that like the rain and snow that comes down from the heavens to water, nourish and yield seeds for the sower, so would the word that comes from the Lord's mouth be spoken here. "We are a people of the word," Tyler said. The spreading of the Gospel will continue at both LCM sites.



Above, Pastor Dale Wolf, Fargo, took off his coat to show how a person from the north was quite comfortable in this weather.

***We will be profiling dual-site congregations in a future newsletter. Please contact Barry Anderson at 13979 Eveleth Court, Apple Valley MN 55124, (952)-432-9542, or gbafam@frontiernet.net if you would like to include information about your congregation or share information about this type of ministry.***

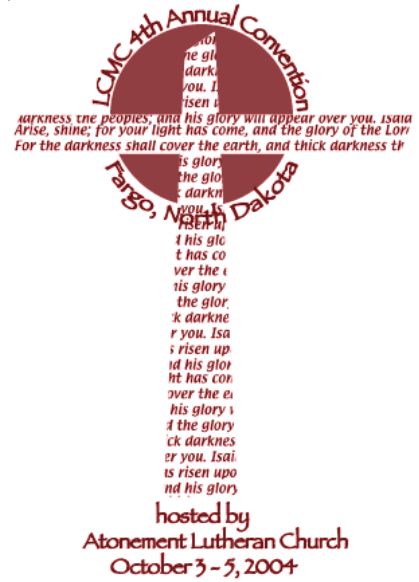
# "ARISE, SHINE!"

Oct 3 - 5, 2004

LCMC National Gathering

Atonement Lutheran Church

Fargo, North Dakota



Watch for information on [www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net) Registration packets will be mailed to all members.