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[KAIROS] EDITOR'S NOTE: David Drum is a fine pastor who I have had the privilege to meet personally. We have had numerous discussions over the past few years and tend to agree on a whole lot of things. However, last week David wasn't so keen on my satirical characterization of LCMC, so I suggested to David that he write up something better to describe his experience of LCMC. Thank you David, for your graciousness, your friendship and most importantly, for your love for the Lord!

Christopher  
Editor, Kairos\_News

Hershman

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### **Why I'm Excited About LCMC**

The Rev. David Drum  
Community of Hope Lutheran Church,  
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Christopher Hershman invited me to write this article for his Kairos News Service on Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), and I gladly agreed. 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 foundations, but sadly no longer are so common. Where there is theological discussion and debate (and anyone who has participated on the list serve 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 stream-lined 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 Word Alone, 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 good epistle, I'll end by cataloging a whole bunch of items I won't take the 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.