

***For Immediate Release***

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**Mitkos joins Missouri Synod as  
Lutheran Malaria Initiative campaign director**

ST. LOUIS, MO—June 15, 2011—Martha J. Mitkos has joined [The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod](http://www.lcms.org) (LCMS) as campaign director for the [Lutheran Malaria Initiative](http://www.lcms.org) (LMI), an unprecedented campaign to mobilize U.S. Lutherans in the global effort to eliminate malaria deaths in Africa by 2015. LMI goals are to increase awareness of malaria and its daily impact on the lives of people in Africa, and raise \$45 million to help fight the disease.



As LMI campaign director, Mitkos will manage all aspects of the Synod’s portion of the \$45 million fundraising campaign and serve as a liaison to Lutheran World Relief, a Baltimore, Md.-based pan-Lutheran ministry providing international relief efforts that is partnering with the LCMS in the initiative.

“Martha’s passion for the mission of LMI and her experience are two great strengths she brings to her new position,” said [Dr. Matthew C. Harrison](http://www.lcms.org), president of the LCMS. “I have every confidence that Martha will lead the LMI campaign to fruition, generating the support of millions of Americans for our brothers and sisters in Africa who are needlessly suffering and dying from this devastating but preventable disease. It is our sacred task to love our neighbor, speaking the Gospel and caring for the needy. LMI is helping us help millions in Africa, and also many Lutheran Christians.”

Mitkos most recently served as director of development for the Saint Louis University School of Medicine (March 2009 to April 2011). She also served as philanthropic advisor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (May 2005 to March 2009) and Allied Health Educational Consultant/Hillsboro Health Care Initiative Program Coordinator for the Lincoln Land Community College/Hillsboro Area Hospital (September 2004 to September 2005).

Mitkos earned a bachelor's degree in recreational leadership and administration from Greenville College in Greenville, Ill. She has also earned graduate credits in health promotion from the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa.

At the 2010 Synod Convention last July, more than 97 percent of voting delegates moved to encourage the LCMS through its agencies, congregations, schools, universities and seminaries to support LMI.

“I am truly blessed to be serving our Lord as campaign director of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative,” Mitkos said. “It was with great resound that the 2010 Convention of the LCMS resolved to serve the people of Africa by striving to eliminate the suffering of His people from malaria. Every 45 seconds a child dies from malaria and through witness, mercy and life together we can bring hope and healing to God's people.”

***About The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod***

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), is a mission-oriented, Bible-based, confessional Christian denomination headquartered in St. Louis, Mo. Founded in 1847, the LCMS has more than 2.3 million baptized members in some 6,200 congregations and more than 9,000 pastors. Two seminaries and 10 colleges and universities operate under the auspices of the LCMS, and its congregations operate the largest Protestant parochial school system in America. The church broadcasts the saving message of Jesus Christ over KFYO Radio, and it has relationships and active mission work in 89 countries around the world. In the last five years, the LCMS has awarded more than \$35 million through more than 900 domestic and international grants for emergency response and disaster relief. Today, the LCMS is in full doctrinal fellowship with 33 other confessional Lutheran church bodies worldwide and is a founding partner of [Lutheran Services in America](#), a social ministry organization serving one in every 50 Americans. For more information, visit [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org).