

WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER



January 2012
No. 4

News and Notes from the Office of the President

Helping Pastors Be Better Pastors

*Neither a vacation nor a pastors' conference,
DOXOLOGY retreats help pastors be better pastors.*

By Adriane Dorr

Pastors spend their days caring for others: praying, counseling, writing sermons, picking hymns, visiting the sick and shut-ins, studying Scripture, catechizing, penning newsletter articles and answering phone calls. But when the day is done, the coffee pot is empty and the narthex is dark, who cares for the pastors?

DOXOLOGY, a Recognized Service Organization of the LCMS, took on the profound task of pastoral care for pastors in 2007 in a new and innovative way. Neither a vacation nor a pastors' conference, DOXOLOGY exists to strengthen, encourage and equip pastors, often emotionally and physically exhausted from giving so much of themselves, for intentional, faithful ministry in the Church. In short, DOXOLOGY helps pastors pastor others.

Clergy surveys completed over the last 40 years indicate that pastors

"Research data indicate that the completion of the DOXOLOGY program results in dramatic improvements in many areas for pastors and their people."

struggle to find ways to best serve their congregations and are often at a loss as to how to resolve conflict and concern within their parishes. They "also noted frequent disagreement between pastors and lay leaders regarding their unique responsibilities in the church's life and mission," Dr. Beverly Yahnke, co-founder of DOXOLOGY, says. "They observed that pastors worked diligently but did not always find joy in their service. ... Parishes had the desire to move beyond dissonance or dysfunction but were unclear how to do so." In short, pastors were asking for advanced training and practical ministry tools to keep them from burning out.

Caring for the whole person

The Rev. Dr. Harold Senkbeil, an LCMS parish pastor for more than 30 years and former associate professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., and Yahnke, an LCMS member and clinical psychologist, came up with a solution. Senkbeil noted the necessity of theological care for men in the ministry, while Yahnke pinpointed the practical need to tend to their personal well-being and to better understand the emotional issues underlying the spiritual needs of others. In short, they determined, the Church must find a way to care for the whole person, encouraging men in their identity as pastors while simultaneously realizing the importance of receiving care themselves, even from their own brothers in the pastoral office.

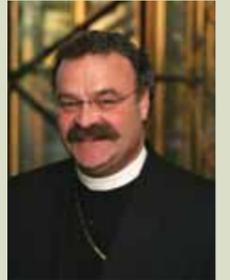
Grounded in Scripture, the innovative program consists of three components: the Gathering, the Encore and the Reunion. The first immerses participants in theology and training on self-care and is only for pastors. Central to the weekend are worship services where, instead of leading, pastors are able simply to receive God's good gifts from the event chaplain.

"DOXOLOGY focuses on helping pastors develop advanced skills for the care of the souls entrusted to them and those in the community who do not yet know the Lord Jesus," explains Senkbeil. "Pastors can only give what they themselves have received. Our DOXOLOGY chaplains provide Christ's gifts to those called to bring those same gifts to others." "Many pastors also make frequent use of these chaplains for personal consultation and pastoral care," says Senkbeil. In addition, the men partake of sessions by theologians that assist them in examining their own theological and spiritual well-being. Throughout the weekend, Senkbeil and Yahnke are on call to provide counsel to the pastors.

Later in the year, the Encore brings together the pastors and one lay leader from each of their congregations. Time is set aside for purposeful conversation, encouraging attendees to discover and discuss ways in which pastor and parish can come to a robust understanding of caring for one another in the Church's life together.

The Reunion, the final of DOXOLOGY's three parts, culminates in a retreat weekend for pastors and

Why the Lutheran Malaria Initiative?



Why the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI)?

- Luther: Jesus took on our flesh; we "take on" our neighbor's flesh by helping the needy.
- "By this we know love, that Christ laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).
- "Whatsoever you have done to the least of these my brethren, you have done also to me" (Matt. 25:40).
- There are more than 18 million Lutherans in Africa. More than 800,000 people around the world die of malaria each year, and most of them are children.
- The U.N. Foundation (not the U.N.!), sought out Lutheran World Relief (Baltimore) as one of some 200 possible organizations, and the LCMS because of:
 - 1) excellence in delivery of services;
 - 2) significant American constituency;
 - 3) our Lutheran partners—doctors, nurses, churches, clinics, Sunday schools "at the last mile" in Africa where people suffer from malaria.
- When we strengthen our African Lutheran partners, they tell others about Jesus!
- Shouldn't we be doing things to help people here in the U.S.? Yes! We do that, too!
- Malaria is preventable and treatable.
- The education, prevention and treatment efforts going on right now in places like Tanzania are working!
- What about DDT? Governments make policy and argue about chemicals. Meanwhile, we have the means to severely reduce malaria deaths now. Let's do it in the name of Jesus!
- "They can't hear the Gospel if they have died of malaria" (Lutheran Bishop Walter Obare of Kenya—most of whose siblings are dead of malaria).

Learn more at www.lcms.org/lmi and join me in giving generously to LMI!

■ Pastor Matthew Harrison, President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



Restoring health. Inspiring hope.®

<http://www.lcms.org/lmi>

The Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) is a partnership of Lutheran World Relief and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to mobilize U.S. Lutherans in the global effort to eliminate malaria deaths in Africa by 2015. LMI is made possible through support from the United Nations Foundation.

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DOXOLOGY

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their wives. Worship, fellowship, refreshment and theological encouragement are offered both for the couple jointly and individually. The added bonus? Pastors seeking the Doctor of Ministry degree from either LCMS seminary can earn graduate credits in counseling or pastoral theology for completion of the DOXOLOGY program.

Real life, up close and personal

Topics discussed at DOXOLOGY retreats are difficult, hitting close to home for many pastors who have experienced similar complex situations in real life, either through members of their parishes or in their own lives. Discussions range from recognizing depression and combating pornography to overcoming compassion fatigue, identifying pastoral ethics, treating

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sexual addictions and preventing suicide. In each case, pastors learn how to recognize the warning signs in members of their own congregations and how to prevent or heal those hurts in their own lives and in the lives of their brother pastors.

Being fed to feed others

Participants are frank about DOXOLOGY's benefits. “The pastor is placed in a congregation by the Lord as a servant of the Lord,” says the Rev. Lucas Woodford, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church and School, Mayer, Minn. “DOXOLOGY refines pastors in the way they think and act as pastors. It facilitates healing for pastoral hearts that have been broken. In short, it frees pastors to embrace the care and



From left, Executive Director Dr. Harold Senkbeil, Rev. John Dickmander and Rev. Andrew Kennell discuss opportunities for spiritual growth.

cure of souls in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

“There are many pressures that I and many other pastors feel in regard to what we supposedly need to be and do to make ourselves and our church a ‘success,’” says the Rev. Paul Dare, pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Saint Cloud, Minn. “These pressures often rob a pastor of his joy in ministry and his identity as a called servant of the Word. DOXOLOGY has helped me and other pastors to have a good conscience before God and to have joy in ministry restored to us by renewing in heart and mind God’s model and desires for pastoral ministry.”

Rev. Tom Schmitt, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Omaha, Neb., noted, “When I signed up for DOXOLOGY, my tank was empty. When I finished DOXOLOGY, not only was my tank filled, but I found my ministry suddenly had more gears to use! DOXOLOGY connects the caregiver first to the care of his great Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, and then to a network of wonderful servant-minded pastors for additional support.”

Women in the church have benefited from the program as well. “DOXOLOGY has provided me with a better understanding of the challenges pastors face as they shepherd souls,” says Deaconess Kim Schave, who attended with her husband, the Rev. Steven Schave. “The access we both had to spiritual counsel as well as a newly-acquired support system made up of other pastors and pastors’ wives has helped us both better deal with some of the challenges unique to our roles.”

Duke Consults with DOXOLOGY on Clergy Wellness Data

DOXOLOGY's rich theological care has piqued the interest of those beyond the LCMS. The program's unique focus on the spiritual care of the pastor created helpful discussion with Duke University researchers who consulted with Senkbeil and Yahnke regarding the program's combined attention to pastoral care and Christian psychology.

The program, which “has gathered data from every pastor enrolled on three occasions over a one-year period,” according to Yahnke, needed proof that pastors who attend DOXOLOGY retreats saw verifiable, impactful changes. “Research was essential to determine exactly what the program provided for pastors and congregations and to what extent there were measurable benefits,” said Yahnke.

Compiling the research involved delving into pastors' emotional, interpersonal, mental and spiritual health. But the subsequent data gave a telling glimpse into how pastors function and what the Church can do to enhance their capabilities. “The earliest findings of the research provide compelling evidence for congregations, districts and foundations alike that DOXOLOGY's advanced training program has a clear and measurable benefit for pastors, laity and pastors' wives as well,” Yahnke says. “Research data indicate that the completion of the DOXOLOGY program results in dramatic improvements in many

areas for pastors and their people.” The groundbreaking study indicates that areas of measurable improvement for pastors who have attended DOXOLOGY retreats include the following:

- Lay leaders become more attuned to the work of the pastoral office, and the congregation better supports the pastor in that work.
- Pastors learn how to set boundaries, balance their time and care for both their parish and family.
- Pastors find renewed joy and contentment in the Office of the Holy Ministry.
- Pastors work more efficiently and effectively.
- Pastors relearn the importance of a rich devotional life that leads them deeper into the mysteries and treasures of God's holy Word.
- Pastors are able to seek counsel and spiritual care in their own struggles from other men in the office.

“Additional research is being processed in the months ahead that will determine pastoral gains in the areas of interpersonal functioning and emotional well-being,” Yahnke notes. “DOXOLOGY assists pastors to be the best pastors that they can be, and now the data have been gathered to prove it.”



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To learn more about DOXOLOGY

Watch and Share Videos

Watch and Share

Learn how DOXOLOGY is caring for pastors around the country.
www.DOXOLOGY.us/MomentonMinistry.aspx

Watch and Share

See LCMS President Matthew C. Harrison talk about the spiritual benefits of DOXOLOGY.
www.DOXOLOGY.us/MomentonMinistry.aspx



Pastors discuss their insights at a DOXOLOGY retreat.

Registration Opens for 2013 'Biggest LCMS Pro-Life Event Ever'

By Adriane Dorr

The "biggest LCMS pro-life event ever" will be held in January 2013 in Washington, D.C., and promises to be "hands-on and nitty gritty," says Maggie Karner, director of Life Ministries for LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

2013 marks the 40th anniversary of the historic Roe v. Wade Case, which legalized abortion in every state of the United States. Since that act in 1973, more than 50 million children have been killed by abortion.

Silence on the issue is not an option, Karner contends. "The LCMS

is a solidly pro-life church body," she says, "but we need to provide more resources for our church members to be able to articulate our pro-life stance in the public square."

One such resource is the conference itself, which will be held in conjunction with the National March for Life and will focus on pro-life advocacy both at the national and local level.

The intent of Res. 6-02A, passed by the Synod in convention in July 2010, was to create a conference that will help provide educational and networking opportunities. The end goal? A more pronounced impact in

the public square and an ability to articulate the LCMS' beliefs on the value of life.

"We have an individual vocation as citizens and Christians to speak for those who can't speak for themselves, but we don't always know how," says Karner. "This conference will serve as a primer for how best to speak about the sanctity of life both as a church and as individuals."

Titled "Lutherans and Pro-Life Advocacy: Good and Acceptable Service," the conference will include the following speakers: LCMS President Matthew C. Harrison; Robert Benne, author of *Good and Bad Ways to Speak about Religion and Politics*; and Mollie Hemingway, journalist and blogger, among others.

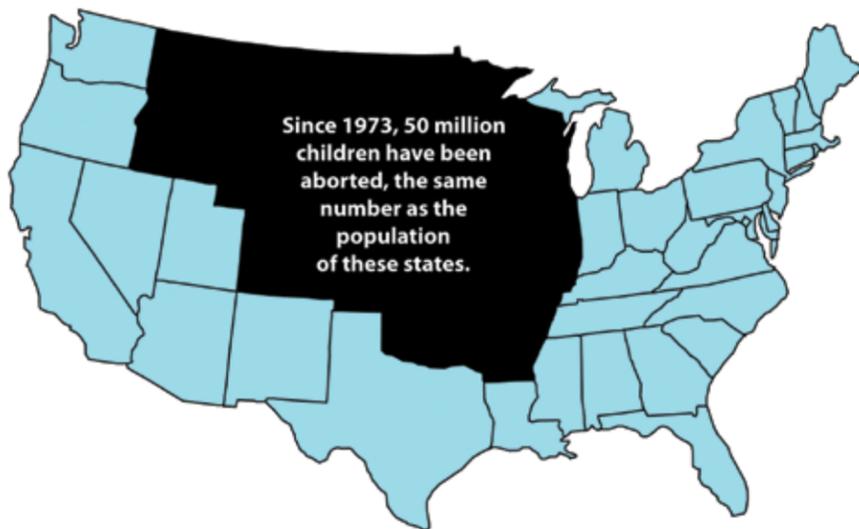
Participants also are encouraged to attend the National March for Life the day prior to the conference. The march, which protests the legalization of abortion and advocates for life, is held annually, and hundreds of thousands from across the country attend.

The 2013 conference attendees will gather for a Divine Service, hosted by Immanuel Lutheran Church



in Alexandria, Va., prior to the march. The group will then proceed together to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., to take part in the day's events. "It's exciting to see the growing ranks at March for Life," said Karner. "People drive from the Midwest to march. We have students from Concordia University Wisconsin who come every year, and Lutherans For Life chapters even rent buses and attend." It is, notes Karner, "a great spiritual opportunity to worship and fellowship, to really know what our Life Together looks like and means." Karner urges individual pastors and lay people interested in attending the upcoming conference to "be ringleaders" in getting people from similar geographic regions to travel together, encouraging groups to form early.

Registration, hotel information and scheduling for the conference and march can be found at www.lcmslifeconference.org.



President Harrison Addresses Historic International Mission Meeting

By the Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver
Director of Church Relations—Assistant to the President

At an historic five-day meeting of the Program and Regional Directors of the LCMS Office of International Mission the week of Nov. 14 in Raleigh, N.C., LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison outlined his vision and principles for LCMS mission work. He began by describing his pre-seminary experience serving as a lay missionary with the Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots (LAMP) among the Cree Indians in Ontario, Canada.

"The first Sunday we attended church, I asked, 'Who's preaching?' 'You are,' came the response. I did the best I could at the time. I gave these Indian people sermons of Law and Gospel for the remainder of the year," said Harrison.

Harrison recalled that his service there was much like that of a "Methodist" lay preacher, because in 20 years of work in Ontario, not a single Lutheran congregation had been established among the Indians.

This experience helped define for Harrison that a primary goal for LCMS mission efforts is that the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus must lead to the formation of Lutheran congregations.

President Harrison then described how Lutheran mission leading to the formation of Lutheran congregations is done through the lens of the Synod emphasis of WITNESS, MERCY, LIFE TOGETHER: "The gift of Lutheranism," said Harrison, "is that salvation comes through Jesus only, as He is delivered through the preaching of the

Word and in the forgiveness bestowed in Absolution, in the waters of Holy Baptism, and in His body and blood in Holy Communion." Where there is not a Lutheran church, the goal of LCMS mission efforts should be to plant a church, he said.

"Because we want to plant churches, it is important that we have pastors there to preach, teach and deliver the sacraments. Thus, seminary education around the world is a very important goal for us," Harrison emphasized.

Director of Seminary education, the Rev. Dr. Timothy Quill echoed Harrison. "Establishing strong residential Lutheran Seminaries has always played a central role in Missouri Synod mission strategy," Quill said. "This will continue to shape how in-

ternational mission is undertaken in the 21st century. Our partner churches place a high value on preparing pastors who are thoroughly trained in sound Lutheran theology and practice. They are looking to the LCMS to send missionaries to teach overseas as well as to receive students for further studies at our seminaries in Fort Wayne and St. Louis."

Strengthening partner churches is another priority for Harrison. "Answers to local problems are local. Our chief responsibility is to share Christ, give them the goods, raise up local indigenous churches and let them go," said Harrison who cited his prior experiences as the executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

In regard to the mercy and human-care work of the LCMS, Harrison

emphasized that it be done in close proximity to the altar and the pulpit. Mercy work done apart from the Gospel becomes humanitarian aid.

Mercy work done in place of the Gospel becomes a social gospel that diminishes Jesus. "It is an art to show mercy so that the Gospel predominates," said Harrison. Mercy and human-care work needs to keep the goal of planting or strengthening Lutheran churches and congregations in mind, he said.

As part of our Life Together and love for one another, President Harrison explained that it is important that we put people in places where they are cared for by clergy and have regular access to Lutheran worship and the Means of Grace. "Unless our missionaries are fed and sustained with the Word and Sacraments, they cannot effectively bear witness to the world," Harrison said.

President Harrison also described several values that mark our Life Together: fidelity, excellence, sustainability, capacity and joy. Fidelity is faithfulness to the Lord Jesus taught by the Holy Scriptures and expounded by the Lutheran Confessions. Harrison urged the group, "Do not be afraid to be Lutheran!" and he emphasized that all LCMS mission and mercy work should be done with the highest excellence, with measurable goals, in a sustainable way so that it does not disappear like a flash in the pan.

A primary goal is to increase both LCMS capacity and the capacity of our partner and sister churches: "We need to increase local capacity, work to assist the local community to make its own decisions, to become churches of witness and mercy." Finally, he said, "all our work is characterized by joy."



Program and area directors gather in an historic meeting to plan their future work.

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Williamson Fills Historic Role

By Adriane Dorr

There are no precedents set for Chaplain (Col.) Rev. Gregory Williamson, no shoes to fill, no heels on which to follow. That's because Williamson's call to be the Synod's Chief Mission Officer makes him the first man in the history of the LCMS ever to hold the position.

Mandated by the Synod in convention in 2010, the role of Chief Mission Officer (CMO) requires Williamson to report directly to the president on a variety of fronts. His responsibilities include overseeing the Office of International Mission, the Office of National Mission, Communications, Fund Development and the Department of Pastoral Education, not to mention serving as the president's liaison to Synod commissions and corporate entities.

Despite braving uncharted waters, Williamson is undeterred. Recently retired from the military as the command chaplain at United States Army Garrison-Yongson Seoul, this pastor in uniform is no stranger to the demand for strong leadership and assertiveness combined with pastoral care in the Church's life together. "Military chaplaincy is a unique ministry environment," Williamson explains. "Although those diverse experiences and education are not perfectly paralleled in the Church, they do provide a background for strategic ministry planning and execution."

Only days before he was to begin his new assignment, Williamson explains the way in which he already sees the Lord at work in the Church's life together.

WMLT: What is your prayer for the Church as you prepare to fill the function of Chief Mission Officer?

GW: My first prayer is one of thanksgiving for the men and women who have been, and many who still are, an important part of my life. I am grateful for all the good folks who mentored, coached and taught me—often with great patience—to trust in God and His people. Their faithfulness continues to inspire me.

I also pray that the Church cultivates a humble confidence that every believer is making life-changing contributions in the world.



Chaplain (Col.) Rev. Gregory Williamson

I pray that every pastor, teacher and deaconess experiences a daily confirmation of how precious they are to our Church, and I pray that the laity realize their vital roles in bringing Christ to families, communities and the world.

WMLT: How do you foresee your military chaplaincy background—with its emphasis on Christ and His Word combined with leadership and administrative skills—being helpful in your new position?

GW: My experience as a Lutheran chaplain provided me an opportunity to introduce other clergy and military professionals to our Lutheran confession of faith via problem-solving in the context of tactical and strategic mission environments. These complex mission environments afforded me opportunities to supervise diverse communities and to learn leadership from extraordinarily gifted men and women.

WMLT: What blessings and challenges do you expect to see in filling a role that has never before existed in the LCMS?

GW: The blessings are, without a doubt, to continue to share ministry with the men and women of the Church and to see from a very different place how good people can accomplish so much for the kingdom of God. I am encouraged by the diversity of abilities and talents among our members, and I can think of no greater blessing than to participate in an unprecedented focus of faithful men and women to make disciples of all nations.

The LCMS has enormous latent capabilities for which the world is in desperate need. President Harrison identified three priorities to address all these needs—WITNESS, MERCY and LIFE TOGETHER. They are profoundly on target in our contemporary world, and we must determine how to seize this moment of opportunity.

For more on Chaplain Williamson, go to <http://bit.ly/uzPNoM>

Hofman Begins New Position

by Adriane Dorr

Mark Hofman understands President Matthew C. Harrison's call to action more keenly than most: "It's time for us, together, to get our financial house in order" (May 2011, *The Lutheran Witness*). As the Synod's new executive director of Fund Development, Hofman works in the world of dollars and cents, major gifts and direct-response appeals, campaigns and special programs.

"The choices we make as stewards ultimately either lift up Christ for the world to see, or they hide Him from the view of others," says Hofman candidly. "The same holds true of the material things God has entrusted to us. Ultimately, a Christian steward is motivated to make good choices by the empty cross and tomb of our Lord Jesus who even forgives us when we make poor choices."

Mindful of this, Hofman sees his role as one that engages the Church in her life together so that she can remain a vibrant and faithful source of witness and mercy. Read now, in his own words, about the Church's understanding of stewardship and the way in which God continues to care for His children.

WMLT: When it comes to raising money, meeting budgets and giving, what is your prayer for the Church?

MH: My first prayer is that the Holy Spirit would help us live out the First Article of the Apostles' Creed. Luther explains that all we truly need comes from the loving hand of God, yet we so often think that it's up to us to scrape together what we need and want.

My second prayer is that all of us would give serious thought to what the word stewardship really means. We've somehow reached a point where it is perceived as only being about money. Stewardship is how we use all of God's gifts, not simply the gift that comes in the form of dollars and cents. Luther tells us that God gives us our clothing, shoes, food, families, vocations, all of it. My responsibility as a manager of those gifts is to use them in ways that thank, praise, serve and obey Him.

WMLT: What blessings have you already seen in this role?

MH: All those who support the Synod's national and international ministries—regardless of how they route that support to the field—are the biggest blessing.

WMLT: What are some of the challenges?

MH: Membership in the LCMS is declining, so there are fewer households who can support the work. Congregation and district resources are strained. Engaging more people and inviting them to join us in supporting ministry efforts is the first order of business. It comes at a time when the national economy has instilled a real sense of fear and uncertainty about the future. That uncertainty and fear also increases the demand for witness and mercy work, so it becomes cyclical. Then, there's the reality that our opportunities to witness will always demand more in resources than our fund-raising efforts can supply. This reality draws us back to the meaning of stewardship, which is the discerning use of limited resources to achieve God's marvelous purpose for His Church.

For more on Mark Hofman, go to <http://bit.ly/t5gZK1>



Mark D. Hofman, Executive Director for Fund Development

INTERNATIONAL MISSION MEETING

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Interim co-executive directors for the LCMS Office of International Mission, Rev. John Fale and Rev. Dr. Dave Birner underscored the importance of this weeklong meeting. "This is an historic meeting," said Birner. "The reason the LCMS was formed was to do together what individual congregations could not do alone."

Fale elaborated: "For the first time in remembered history, Synod's leadership from World Mission and World Relief and Human Care sat down together to coordinate integrated ministry plans to support a common vision that was articulated by the Synod's President. These are competent and committed leaders who are invested in working together to bring God's gifts of eternal life and mercy in Jesus to the world. We are thankful for our Lord's blessings upon these meetings and continue to pray for His guidance and wisdom as we move forward."

The Office of International Mission is a matrix of program areas and world regions. Program areas represented at the meeting in Raleigh included Deaconess Ministry, Disaster Response, Life and Health Ministries, Specialized Pastoral Care, and

Theological Education. These program areas work across the five world regions: Africa, Asia Pacific, South Asia, Eurasia, and Latin America. In some instances, the program directors also will work in cooperation with the Office of National Mission, thereby including the region of North America.

"The meeting in Raleigh was crucial. This was really a breathtaking move toward a holistic and unified strategy for our witness and mercy outreach. To have everyone at the table discussing was so refreshingly healthy for our organization and the future of our mission work," said Maggie Karner, director of Life and Health Ministries.

The program and regional directors of LCMS International (OIM) plan to meet again in January 2012 for strategic planning and budget preparation.

To read the article, "Lutheran Missions Must Lead to Lutheran Congregations" by President Harrison, go to: <http://bit.ly/v1RTDA>

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

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