



Update

Summer 2015

Harrison responds to SCOTUS marriage ruling

IN A LANDMARK 5-4 RULING June 26, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples have a right to marry in any state in America, even in states where same-sex marriage currently is not recognized.

“Today was a tragedy in the history of Western and world civilization,” LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison said. “Five justices cannot rewrite all of history, much less can they redefine what

God has defined.”

“We will continue to be faithful to the institution of marriage as conceived by our founders,” he noted. “If those who wrote the Fourteenth Amendment could have known that it would be misused for this purpose, they would be absolutely shocked and horrified. Truth does not change. God’s Word does not change.”

As for the LCMS, Harrison explained, “We will continue to be faithful to God’s institution of marriage and natural law, and we will also be compassionate to people who are damaged by this misdirection.”

Harrison also released a letter to the church the day of the ruling. “We respect the divinely given dignity of all people, no matter their sexual preference. We recognize that, under the exacting and demanding laws of God, we are indeed sinners in thought, word and deed, just as are all (Rom. 3:9ff.).

We confess that the ‘blood of Jesus

Christ, God’s Son, cleanses us from all our sins’ (1 John 1:7).”

In his letter, he encouraged LCMS Lutherans to “continue to reach out to those who continue to be harmed by the ethic of radical sexual freedom, detached from God’s blessing of marriage.” Read the letter at <http://bit.ly/1eeB8Qb>.

Harrison also addressed women at the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League convention that same day: “We face many such challenges at this point. We must not become bitter. We are people of joy. There is nothing surprising about this decision. Jesus told us that as the end came near, things would get more difficult. And what we will do is we will honor and care for all people, no matter what their sexual preference may be. We are sinners just like everybody else. My sins condemn me to death just like everybody else, but Jesus Christ has died on the cross for my sins, yours and everybody in this world.”

Interested in learning more?

Go to www.lcms.org/freetobefaitful for more resources.

Close to Home

(from alliancedefendingfreedom.org)

FLORIST BARRONELLE STUTZMAN SUED BY WASHINGTON STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND ACLU: She respectfully declined to create custom floral arrangements and provide full-wedding support for a long-time customer and friend’s same-sex ceremony. The lawsuit threatens to take her home, business, and personal savings.

ATLANTA FIRE CHIEF KELVIN COCHRAN FIRED: Chief Cochran was suspended without pay, ordered to attend sensitivity training and then fired. Why? Because, on his own time, he wrote a Christian book for men, discussing how to be strong leaders, husbands and fathers, in which he briefly stated the Bible’s teaching that sex is reserved for the marriage of one man to one woman.

Are you a young Lutheran?

Would you like help engaging your friends and pros on the topics of life, marriage and religious liberty? Can you be a voice of truth in your high school or on your college campus? Email freetobefaitful@lcms.org for more information.



An Enduring LUTHERAN PRESENCE



The culture, government and Church find themselves increasingly at odds. That's why people around the LCMS are standing up to make a uniquely Lutheran response both in their homes and communities as well as through the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (LCRL), which aims to educate, encourage and equip LCMS members and organizations to take informed action in support of religious freedom, defense of marriage and protecting the sanctity of life. And we want you to be a part of it!

The mission of the center is to advocate the positions of the LCMS by offering information, input, education, advice and resources regarding three primary areas of focus in the public square: marriage, life and religious liberty. To assist in that, we're inviting you to make an investment in this center so that the LCMS can have an enduring, formative presence in Washington, D.C.

Want to know more? Check out what's happened since the last update.

- ▶ The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod received the registration from the State of Missouri for the legal corporation that is the LCRL.
- ▶ The board of directors of the LCRL consists of the following: the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison (Synod president), Bill Hecht (LCMS appointee) and Tim Goeglein (corporation appointee).
- ▶ The board of directors of the LCRL has met once to consider initial operation and priorities.
- ▶ The board will meet in September to discuss further steps in the search for the executive director and other staff positions.
- ▶ The corporation has made application to the IRS for separate 501(c)(3) status.
- ▶ The corporation will carefully maintain allowable lobbying

activity to be within permissible IRS limits.

- ▶ The Synod still needs to raise additional funds to begin operation of the office. Interested in giving? Contact martha.mitkos@lcms.org to learn how.



LCMS Communicators/Erik M. Lunsford

From time to time, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod signs on to amicus briefs for legal cases in which the outcome is likely to affect the church. Learn more about what amicus briefs are and which ones the LCMS has joined at www.lcms.org/board/amicusbriefs.

▶ **Please pray** for your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ serving in all manner of staffing positions in Washington, D.C., as well as for LCMS elected officials.

SENATOR CORY GARDNER, REPUBLICAN, COLORADO
REPRESENTATIVE JOHN SHIMKUS, REPUBLICAN, ILLINOIS
REPRESENTATIVE LARRY BUCSHON, REPUBLICAN, INDIANA
REPRESENTATIVE ERIC PAULSEN, REPUBLICAN, MINNESOTA
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