

My biggest disappointment about the church's current conversation on restructuring

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27).

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been in conversation for several years about the reshaping of its structure, its constitution, and its bylaws. Many, many hours by our brothers and sisters in Christ have been invested to see where improved stewardship could be brought to bear on the polity of our beloved Missouri Synod.

Regional gatherings of all the delegates to the 2010 synodical convention were conducted during the winter months of 2009 and 2010. Each of those who attended—leaders and participants—is to be commended for a yeoman's effort. Gathering the delegates was a good thing. Getting minds engaged on the restructuring suggestions early on was necessary.

I must confess to you that I am disappointed about what has not happened. It was my sincere desire that a deeper conversation would have ensued, one that got beyond the reshuffling of the furniture. (Remember, reshuffling the furniture is necessary if one cannot

even walk through the living room! If the Word is being "choked" [Mark 4:19] by structure, it needs to be changed!)

The conversation, though, has not delved into the more serious and necessary aspects. What is the Church? What does it mean to be Church, not only in this post-church age but for all time? It seems to me

that if we don't get to this deeper level of collegial study and discussion, how the furniture is shuffled won't matter!

Our Lord makes Church very simple: "My sheep hear My voice." He speaks; His sheep hear His voice and follow Him. We should not limit His sheep to those already within the Church. "And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to My voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16). The Shepherd gathers and keeps gathering sheep by His voice; the more sheep the better is Jesus' take. Only His final coming will end the gathering.

I spoke to the delegates at the Rocky Mountain District convention a year ago (June 2009) about two

churches—a confessional fellowship versus an institutional fellowship (church):

(The) Missouri (Synod) used to be viewed first, foremost, and primarily as a confessional fellowship. A confessional fellowship is a group of churches where each congregation has been called into existence by the living voice of Jesus through the Holy Scriptures. The Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, and enlightens" these Christians as He applies the very wounds of Christ through the means of grace—the Word and the Sacraments. The Word binds congregations together in a confessional fellowship; nothing else does. This, then, is the foundational and the core binding of a congregation.

And further:

The One who causes this centripetal movement to the center, bringing all His children home from wherever they are scattered, bringing individual sheep and whole flocks into *koinonia* at pulpit, font, and rail—Church Fellowship—is also the One who causes a centrifugal scattering, dispersing His own out into the world. He scatters His churches—pastors and laity—into a world that He has declared justified through His saving work, a world justification. "In Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19).

And the psalmist scribes the Lord's words in Psalm 117, "Praise the LORD, all heathen!" For God to use "heathen" there—as Luther translates it (Luther's Works: American Edition 14:9)—means that God has become the heathen's God, and that He expects and foresees their conversion by His Word through His Church.

The other church, the institutional fellowship, looks like this:

Over time—and I have never seen this written anywhere—it is my conjecture that the longer a church body remains in existence, the more the church acts, speaks, and conducts business as an institutional but not as a confessional church. No longer are circuit meetings and conventions dominated by the Word as applied to each other and beyond.

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CONVERSATION; COMMUNICATION

DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT CURRENT CONVERSATION

(Continued from Page A.)

Pure teaching is no longer loved and desired and considered as essential for the life of the church and her mission. Church officials are tempted to persuade apart from or without the Word. Individual churches see the bigger church not by what we gladly and boldly confess together but by the common products offered and received.

These churches then act with a silo mentality, operating as retail outlets with a loose and lifeless connection to a corporation. Competition is bred among the franchises for the greatest production. Corporate headquarters laud those who are successful according to certain standards of production. Each is out for its own needs, and those needs take precedence over the needs of the church down the street. Success is viewed as moving up the corporate ladder. The enemy is the other, as it is all about me, myself, and I. And the lost fall off the radar screen. This may seem like an extreme portrayal, but does it not have some truth in it?

Does any of this ring true to you? I wonder if there is still time to get to the heart of the matter. Restructuring will happen, but it may not happen the way we would expect. Financial collapse of the LCMS structure may well be the Lord's way of restructuring.

Could it be that what God has in mind is for His Church to get back to the basics of what Church really is: His Voice proclaimed through His preachers from pulpit, font, and rail, and through the lips of His laity out in their daily grind of life under the cross?

Perhaps this is not the time for restructuring but instead for rethinking, deep thinking, theological thinking, pondering His mind (Phil. 2:5-11) as it applies to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Consider these topics for a start: repentance, faith, Word of God, the Confessions, and the absolute joy of participating in the Triune God's mission of bringing the lost into His fold.



*Rev. Randall Golter
District President*



New look for district Web site

Have you checked out the redesigned district Web site? After a few delays, it was launched in early May. Many, many thanks to Laura Raben and her father, Vern Raben, for their tireless efforts and long hours of work to create the Web site's new look and user-friendly navigation.

The new design also makes it easy to sign up for the district's online newsletters, including the color version of *Peaks and Valleys*. Over the next few months, more pages and content will be added to the site.

Last summer and fall, the district's communications team conducted surveys to discover how best to serve the members of the district. The vast majority suggested that electronic communication was most desired and recommended that improvements be made to the district's Web site. It is the team's hope that the redesigned Web site not only fulfills those recommendations but also will evolve to be an even greater communication tool for the Rocky Mountain District.

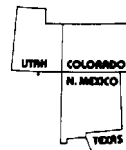
You can access the Web site at www.rm.lcms.org or www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org.

Send news to Jan Hoener

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Highlands Ranch, CO 80130
E-mail: janhoener@comcast.net

August issue deadline: June 15
September issue deadline: July 15

*When possible, send photos digitally,
in JPEG format, 300 dpi.*



Mile High Project

The Mile High Project is an initiative of the LCMS Rocky Mountain District. This two-phase program began with the calling and training of a young pastor, Paul Roggow, to intern at churches in the Denver metro and Front Range areas of Colorado. Pastor Roggow and his family have been serving three to four months at each location during this internship phase.

Near the end of this phase, they plan to settle in a Denver metro area in order to build momentum and to connect with local partners for the launch of a new church. The official launch of that church will, God willing, also help to start other churches and serve as a training ground for church planters from across the country.

Pastor Roggow and his wife, Jackie, arrived in Denver in 2008. He attended Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and also has a degree in vocal music and psychology. Jackie holds an MBA. They are the parents of 3-year-old twin sons, Micah and Evan, and 6-month-old daughter, Abi Joy.

During his first year, his missionary year, the Roggows became acquainted with several churches to learn more about Denver and how best to serve the people. It is no surprise that the population of the state of Colorado is one of the fastest growing in the country. Colorado is filled with wonderful people and great communities. The question is how to best share the Gospel and where to eventually locate a church to best serve the people.

One area of interest as a possible site for a future church is the northeastern part of Denver. The closest LCMS churches are St. John's in the Washington Park area and Mount Calvary on 40th Avenue.

But before building a church and inviting people in, Pastor Roggow determined to first build relationships with the many people in the area, folks who are educated and kind, yet are unchurched and have demonstrated no desire to be part of a church. The best way to share God's message of salvation, love, new life, hope, and forgiveness is to become one with them. That's what the Mile High Project is all about—real people living real lives and making a real difference.

“We're each in missions together in our own backyards”

Our Lord's primary way of sharing the Gospel with us was to become one of us and one with us. When the apostle Paul went to Corinth, he became a tent maker—a specific strategy. In so doing, he did not need the

Pastor Roggow (shown here with his wife, Jackie, and their children, Micah, Evan, and Abi Joy) calls his children “front line missionaries,” as many people start a conversation with Pastor and Jackie when stopping to talk about the children.



financial support of those whom he evangelized and taught. Pastor Roggow understood that the ministry to which he has been called would be best served in the same manner. His goal is to attract people not just to a worship service, but to invite people into his life—to attract people into relationships, not just a building.

The LCMS congregations of St. John's, Denver; Peace, Arvada; and Bethlehem, Lakewood, have helped with some of the family's financial support, but it became obvious that Pastor Roggow needed to find employment to support his family. Through a friend, he was introduced to the manager of the Thornton Urban Mattress store, who offered the Roggows the opportunity to manage that store on a trial basis. Shortly thereafter, he was given an opportunity to purchase that same store.

In December of 2009, after much prayerful consideration, they went ahead with the purchase. By the end of February, just two months later, he and his family had been so blessed that their debt had been settled. By 2011, Pastor Roggow would like to open a new store, perhaps a coffee shop or ice cream store, and bring his ministry to the LoDo (lower downtown) area of Denver.

Pastor Roggow, Jackie, and their children are energetic in their ministry and in building relationships that will lead to the establishment of a congregation. When they eventually do gather as a congregation, their desire is that their offerings not be used to support the pastor or the building, but rather be used in the community so others can be blessed with those offerings. Those who want to become pastors, Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Family Services—these are just a few of the community programs the offerings can help support.

In April, the Roggows hosted a meeting to begin an LCMS Missional Community. They discussed commu-

(Continued on Page D.)

MISSION FOCUS

MILE HIGH PROJECT

(Continued from Page C.)



As a bi-vocational missionary, the Roggows purchase of the Urban Mattress store has provided them the means to support the family while still building relationships for Christ with those in the community.

nity service projects and invited others to join them. They also planned a neighborhood Cinco de Mayo celebration. When they are ready for public worship, they may team up with an existing church and use that building.

Pastor Roggow said, "The dream of creating not only a reproducing church plant but a church plant training ground may seem a little much for a young pastor and his family. It is impossible for us, but not for God. With God not only is all of this possible, it is quite possibly only the beginning. Dream big with us as we approach the Lord with confidence, knowing He wants to make a difference in reaching the unchurched."

As St. Paul says, "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen" (Eph. 3:20).

How can you help advance this Mile High Project mission? Add your name to a mailing list to learn of service project opportunities. Financial donations will be used to develop a Sunday school program, community events, and community projects (gifts specially earmarked for the "Mile High Project" can be directed to the LCMS Rocky Mountain District office). Look for opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers around you. Above all, please keep this mission effort in your prayers.

Visit the district Web site, www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org, during June to view a special video on the Mile High Project. Contact Pastor Roggow at 303-501-9096 or paulroggow@gmail.com.

The Commission

When most of your ministry is focused on those who do not know/care about the Gospel, being able to serve among the saints is welcome refreshment!

Some time ago, I served among the saints, sharing a reflection on The Great Commission. "What is the command given in the Commission?" started our time together.

"Go" came the quick and certain response. While this certainly starts the Commission, this is the context/location of putting the Commission into practice. As part of my exploration, I was able to show these seasoned saints that the Commission is fulfilled "as you go" in daily life.

So, I asked the question again, "What is the command of the Commission?"

"Teach" came the next response. Another good choice, but not the command. This led to a lively discussion of "teaching" the commands of the Master in such a way that leads to obedience. With so much teaching focused on the transfer of knowledge, teaching for "putting into practice" was something new.

The "command" of the Commission is "making disciples." This surprised many among this godly, well-educated crowd. The command requires our work of "making learners of the nations," work that is done in the everyday places where we "go," living our lives in keeping with the "teaching that leads to obedience" of all the Master has taught.



And we are right in saying that this begins, continues, and is sustained by our having been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

What I witnessed next still brings great joy. In our question and answer time following my presentation, I observed the Word working—alive and active—nurturing, generating, creating, causing Life. This group of godly saints was wrestling with the practical application of the Commission. I was privileged to watch them move beyond "what does this mean?" to "what does this mean for us today?"

How may we be of service to you in our common ministry together?

Craig W. Henningfield
Church Without Walls, missionary/coach
303-725-6760



Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute receives \$100,000 grant

The Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute (LHMI) in El Paso, Texas, recently received a \$100,000 grant from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. The grant will allow LHMI to expand its Mission Partnership Program throughout the United States.

“We are honored that the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation has entered into partnership with us to reach Spanish-speaking people with the message of Christ,” said Rev. Richard Schlak, executive director for LHMI. “We look forward to the expansion of our mission partnerships, our student body, our mission plants, and the glory of His Church.”

“We are delighted to assist the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute through this grant,” said Tim



Robert Markel presented the check to Rev. Richard Schlak, executive director for the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute.

Schwan, vice-president of the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation. “We trust that this support will strengthen the Institute’s outreach to those it serves.”

The first check for year one of two years was delivered to the Institute on March 8. Participating in the presentation were Marvin Allensworth, managing partner for the Texas Regional Field Office for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, and Robert Markel, partner for the Texas Regional Field Office.

The grant is part of the foundation’s Lutheran Grant Program. This program is designed to help Lutheran institutions and organizations take advantage of unique growth and service opportunities. It also supports the interests and needs of the Lutheran community. In 2009, the program distributed approximately \$2.3 million through 61 separate grants.

Eligible grant applicants include Lutheran congrega-

tions, regional divisions of the three largest church bodies, small church bodies, high schools, colleges, universities, seminaries, camps, campus ministries, social ministry organizations, and other independent Lutheran organizations or institutions.

To learn more about the foundation and its Charitable Gifting Program, visit www.thrivent.com/foundations/tflfoundation/lutherancommunitygrants/charitablegifting/index.html.

Igniting Church and Culture for Christ campaign goals

Through Igniting Church and Culture for Christ, you have the opportunity to engage in the work Jesus gave to the Church before he ascended into heaven. This special fundraising appeal conducted throughout the Rocky Mountain District in 2010 has established the following goals for this endeavor.

International Mission Work—\$765,000

- Mission: Southern Africa—\$170,000
- Biblical Orthodox Lutheran Mission—\$170,000
- LCMS World Mission, unrestricted—\$425,000

National Mission Work—\$765,000

- New ministries—\$465,000
- Healthier ministries—\$100,000
- Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute—\$200,000

Exciting things are happening right here in the Rocky Mountain District! Each congregation and individual in the district will have the marvelous opportunity to share the precious Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ, through Igniting Church and Culture for Christ.

Another exciting component of the Igniting Church and Culture for Christ campaign is that 15 percent of the funds raised by congregations will be returned to them for mission outreach in their local communities. Our prayer is that congregations will be inspired and encouraged to reach out in new ways to the unsaved in their midst.

Rocky Mountain District Office
14334 E. Evans Ave.
Aurora, CO 80014
303-695-8001
www.ignitingchurchandcultureforchrist.org

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Puppeteers ready to take their ministry on the road



This barbershop quartet joins other puppets (and puppeteers) having fun sharing the Gospel.

On the Saturday before Easter, the Risen Savior Volunteer Puppeteers (RSVP) presented “He’s Alive” to their congregation. The presentation was adapted from the *Bible Skit Book* by Tom Boal.

More than 400 adults and children attended this Easter family worship service.

RSVP is a group of 18 youth and adults, fifth grade and older. Risen Savior’s puppet ministry began over three years ago and has led the congregation in worship on Christmas, Easter, and other times throughout the year.



The Risen Savior Volunteer Puppeteers attended the One Way Street Puppet Ministry Festival at the end of April, competing with the song “Christ Arose.”

or tmiller@rslc.org. You also can check out the group’s video by visiting www.rslc.org.

Andersen installed as pastor at Faith, Johnstown

On Sunday, March 21, members and friends of Faith Lutheran Church in Johnstown, Colo., gathered to celebrate the ordination and installation of Pastor Eric Niel Andersen. Liturgist was Rev. Richard Pierson, who served the congregation as vacancy pastor for the past 16 months.

Rev. Steven Lange, pastor at Living Word Lutheran Church, Orland Park, Ill., (Pastor Andersen’s home congregation) gave the sermon titled “Prophets and Losses—The Lord’s Balance Sheet,” based on Amos 7:14-15. The ordination and installation was conducted by Rev. Albert Schroeder. Laying-on-of-hands included Rev. Keith Besel, Rev. Brian Bestian, Rev. Glen Schlecht, Rev. John Israel, and Rev. Mark Neirman.



Pastors participating in the ordination and installation service were (back row) Rev. Besel, Rev. Bestian, Rev. Schroeder, Rev. Schlecht, Rev. Israel, and Rev. Neirman. In the front row are Rev. Pierson, Rev. Andersen, and Rev. Lange.

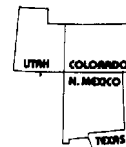
Pastor Andersen graduated with a master of divinity degree from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 2008 and continued in its Ph.D. program studying Old Testament. Pastor Andersen and his wife, Tiffinie, have two children, Joshua and Ruth.

Redeemer readers rock!



Redeemer Lutheran School in Salt Lake City, Utah, took sixth place overall in the recent Accelerated Reading competition among Lutheran schools across the country. Its second-grade class (top photo, above) and its fourth-grade class (lower photo, above) each placed second in their class divisions. In addition, Redeemer’s third-graders took fifth place, and its seventh-graders took eighth place. Well done, Redeemer readers!





Rocky Mountain District calendar

June

11-13 Rocky Mountain District LWML Convention, Grand Junction, Colo.

July

8-17 LCMS National Convention, Houston, Texas

August

9-10 RMD Board of Directors meeting

September

14-16 Rocky Mountain District Older Adult Gathering

October

6-8 Professional Church Workers Conference, Breckenridge, Colo.

November

1-2 RMD Board of Directors meeting

Calls in the district

CALLS EXTENDED

- Mount Calvary, Estes Park, Colo., to Rev. Wayne Riddering, Hope, Westcliffe, Colo.
- Zion, Farmington, N.M., to candidate Sarah Andrews, Concordia University Nebraska, as DCE.

CALLS ACCEPTED

- Brian Horning, Grace, Sandy, Utah, to Peace, Hewitt (Waco), Texas, as director of Family Life Ministry.
- Daniel Cattau, candidate, Concordia University Wisconsin, to Colorado Lutheran High School Association, Parker, Colo.

CALLS DECLINED

- Rev. Charles Ransdell, Our Father, Centennial, Colo., to Our Redeemer, Evansville, Ind.

CHANGE OF STATUS

- LuAnn Larrabee, Trinity, Franktown, Colo., to non-candidate status.
- Kathy Keogh, candidate status to emeritus.
- Krista Hwang, candidate status to non-candidate status.
- David Meineke, Beautiful Savior, Broomfield, Colo., to candidate status.
- Mary Bergman, Christ the King, Los Lunas, N.M., to emeritus.
- Britt Villarreal, candidate status to non-candidate status.
- Russell Brockmeier, candidate status to non-candidate status.

• John Elmshouser, Epiphany, Castle Rock, Colo., to candidate status.

- Rev. Richard Holz, candidate status to emeritus.

RESIGNED FROM ROSTER

- Darcy Schipporeit, non-candidate status.

Dr. Paul Maier to speak at upcoming Older Adult Gathering in Estes Park

The district's annual Older Adult Gathering will meet under the theme "Cultural Challenges for Christians" from Sept. 14-16 at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colo.



Dr. Paul Maier

SOAR, the district Older Adult Ministry Committee, is happy to announce that Dr. Paul Maier, professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University, will be the keynote speaker. His three-part presentation will examine Islam and Christianity.

Rocky Mountain District President Randall Golter also will be a presenter and will talk about special challenges in our

district and Synod. In addition, he will deliver the sermon at the closing worship.

John Stonestreet, executive director of Summit Ministries, will speak on the topic "Christianity and Culture." This should prove helpful for Christians to both understand the changes in our society and how they can better reach out in a more meaningful way with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In order to help reduce the registration fees, the SOAR Committee will grant a \$10 per person subsidy, made possible in part by a matching grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. The fee covers the program, two nights' lodging, and six all-you-can-eat meals.

For more information on costs and registration, call Rae Lee Kleidon at 303-457-3298 or Sharon Hodge at 303-404-9841.

Submitted by Dr. Norbert Kleidon

MORE DISTRICT NEWS

Nichols makes Paralympic history



Alana Nichols made Paralympic history by winning gold in both the summer (2008) and winter (2010) games.

Alpine skier Alana Nichols is a member of the U.S. Adaptive Ski Team and a member of Zion Lutheran Church of Farmington, N.M. She competed in the sit-ski category in the recent Vancouver Paralympics Games, winning four medals—two gold, a silver, and a bronze—more than any other U.S. athlete. She also became the first woman Paralympian to win gold in both the summer and winter games.

Growing up, Alana was very active and competitive until she broke her back in a snowboarding accident at age 17. However, her accident didn't keep her out of competition for long. She began playing wheelchair basketball at the University of Arizona just two years later. Alana then qualified for the U.S. Paralympics Women's Wheelchair Basketball National Team in 2005 and competed in the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing,

helping her team bring home gold.

In 2002, Santa Fe Ski Resort offered Alana a grant that would allow her to learn adaptive skiing. She took on mono-skiing and excelled quickly. After the 2008 Paralympic Games, Alana began competing with the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) in Winter Park, Colo.

Alana is a 2008 graduate of the University of Alabama with a master's degree in kinesiology. She is especially interested in working with people with spinal cord injuries and introducing them to sports. Already she is planning to compete at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi, Russia.



Randy Richardson


Alana won four medals—more than any other U.S. athlete—in the recent winter games in Vancouver.

Congratulations, Alana! What a wonderful inspiration you are to all of us!

Text provided by Joan Vilven (Alana's grandmother) and usparalympics.org.

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