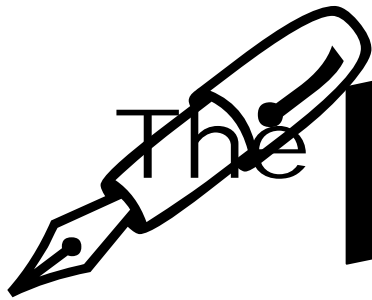


Reformation 2009



The

President's Pen

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Rev. Dr. Larry Stoterau, President
Pacific Southwest District



Dear Partners in Ministry,

As we prepare to celebrate the blessings of the Reformation, I send you greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. With joy and gratitude we rejoice with the chant of the reformers: Faith Alone! Grace Alone! Scripture Alone!

With Paul I say, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." (Phil. 1:3-5) During these challenging times I thank you for your faithful proclamation of God's love to his people and to your community.

Thinking of the Reformation, I am reminded of the goal adopted in 2004 by the Synod in Convention to reach 100M people with the Good News of Jesus by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. While the issue is not numbers but people and it is not how well do we count but how excited do we get about sharing God's love, I did go to the ABLAZE web site to see how we are doing. The first counter indicates the population of the world is 6.8 Billion and we know that almost 1/3 of those live in India and China. The second counter as of this writing indicates nearly 10.5M faith sharing events have been reported. The encouragement for me is the joy of knowing that over 10M people have had the opportunity to join us in heaven because someone shared the love of Jesus with them. I pray for the Holy Spirit to work in each of those who heard.

Larry Stoterau, President

The mission of the Pacific Southwest District is to effectively resource congregations and schools to fulfill the great commission.

1540 Concordia Drive East
Irvine, California 92612-3203
Phone: 949.854.3232
Toll Free 888.773.5267

E-mail: larry.stoterau@psd-lcms.org

H1N1

There is not a day that goes by we do not hear of the growing cases of those afflicted with the H1N1 virus and the encouragement for children and those most susceptible to get vaccinated. I shared with those at the Pastors' Conference some extra precautions we need to consider to avoid contributing to the spread of the virus through our churches.

- Train the altar guild to cleanse their hands with soap and water or sterilizer before preparing the sacrament including the placing of the individual cups in the trays.
- Train all Eucharistic Ministers to wash their hands with soap and water or sterilizer immediately before the distribution.
- Discontinue the sharing of the peace through the flu season if there is an outbreak in your community.
- Consider having individuals remove the cups from the trays rather than the server handling them.

Fan into Flame

Opportunities for congregations to participate in Fan into Flame, the mission funding effort of our District and Synod, will continue into 2010. For many congregations facing the financial challenges of this year, it was determined to postpone this effort until next year. The planting of new churches and the revitalization of existing churches is making it possible for the message of Christ to reach beyond our walls throughout our District.

Theses on Worship

The Council of Presidents has produced a study document entitled, *Theses on Worship*, and it is posted on the Synod Web Site. This document is designed for congregational use as well as Circuit Pastoral Study. Quoting from Scripture and the Confessions the document addresses the theology of our worship as well as the diversity in practice. After much discussion, this document was approved unanimously by the Council of Presidents and I commend it for your use.

Relationships with the ELCA

By now the decisions of the ELCA concerning human sexuality are well known. I have enclosed a summary of previous LCMS convention action concerning our joint work together. I have also shared some of my thoughts on how we relate to our brothers and sisters in Christ and encourage you to reach out in love to those who may visit your worship.

BRTFSSG

The final report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance was presented to President Kieschnick by the deadline of October 15. By the time you receive this letter it should be posted on the LCMS web site and hard copies will be mailed as quickly as possible. I encourage you to read the recommendations and rationale presented by the task force. The work of the BRTFSSG is now complete and the report goes to the synod for action at the convention. Regional Gatherings will be held for all voting delegates to the convention beginning in December.

The Regional Gathering for our delegates will be the end of January and I encourage the delegates to meet with the congregations of their circuit after the gatherings so that they might prepare well for the convention in July. The Convention Floor Committee will present a series of resolutions for consideration at the convention based on the report. Each topic will be discussed and acted on separately.

More Dates

**New Pastor Orientation
October 28 & 29
District Office**

**LEC
Desert Springs Marriott
Resort and Spa
Palm Desert, CA
November 22-24
Proclaim, Prevail, Prosper
Jeremiah 20:9-13**

**Convention Caucus
Newport Beach
Jan. 29 & 30, 2010**

**Pastor/Wife Retreat
Santa Barbara Mission
Jan 31 – Feb 2, 2010**

...and Closing

As you live and serve among God's people, I pray that the Lord will bless you and your family with peace and joy.