

**President Harrison Provides a Lutheran View of Church and State**

Presidential election years can be confusing and contentious for Lutherans and especially for pastors. This year is certainly no exception, so LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison has provided Scripture references, a historical perspective on issues of church and state, an explanation of Luther's "two kingdoms" doctrine and more in his latest Letter to Pastors. **EXCERPTS FROM HARRISON'S LETTER INCLUDE:** Luther recognized, on the basis of Jesus' words in the New Testament, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17), that there are two distinct realms. The state is ruled by reason, and the church is ruled by the



**President Harrison**

Word of God. Both are indeed God's, but He governs them differently. The one is the realm of Law and reason; the other is the Word of God and Gospel. Luther, in the wake of more than a millennium of confusion of church and state, got the New Testament right. Whatever inconsistencies in practice, Luther recognized that passages such as, "If you abide in my word, you are

truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32), meant that the religious mind of mankind is not subject to the coercion of temporal authority. I would urge that all of us carefully work through the Apology of the Augsburg Confession XVI on political power with our Bible classes and congregations. It says, "Christ's kingdom is spiritual." "The Gospel does not introduce laws about the public state, but is the forgiveness of sins and the beginning of a new life in the hearts of believers. The Gospel not only approves outward governments, but also subjects us to them" (Rom. 13:1). (continues on page 2)

**Calendar of Events**

- August 1, 8, 15 & 22  
Genesis Seminar  
Redeemer, EV
- August 13th -  
Fundraising  
Brunch, Trinity,  
Darmstadt, IN
- August 27th -  
LMAC  
Semiannual  
Meeting at LCOC
- September 27-29 -  
Camp Connect  
Concordia, EV
- October 30th - Joint  
Reformation  
Service  
Emmanuel, Tell  
City, IN

***Joint Reformation Service 2016  
Celebrating 499 Years of Lutheran Heritage***

This year's Joint Reformation Service will be held at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Tell City, IN on October 30th at 3:00 PM CST. Rev. Rodger Sassaman, Peace, Owensboro, KY will be the guest preacher.

Join your friends from across the two Evansville Circuits for worship and fellowship as we celebrate 499 years of Lutheran Heritage. Mark you calendars now! As in years past a meal will be provide following the service.

Because of the distance anyone interested in taking a bus from Evansville to Tell City needs to e-mail LMAC at [LMAC.EVV@gmail.com](mailto:LMAC.EVV@gmail.com) by August 1st. If there is enough interest we will obtain a proposal and notify everyone of the cost and schedule.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church is located at 1105 Pestalozzi Street in Tell City, IN.



## ***Clergy Corner***

**Name:** Rev. Dr. Thomas Wenig

**Church:** Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Evansville, IN.

**Length of Time at Present Church:** 15 years (2001 - Present)

**Other Locations Served in Full-Time Capacity::**

Zion, Bethalto, IL

**Why I became an LCMS Pastor:** I didn't want to be a pastor. I originally got my undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering; but by the time I was a senior in college, God had laid it on my heart to be a pastor.

**Family and other personal information I would like to share:** My wife, Joan is a pharmacist at Gateway and the Women's Hospital. My daughter, Nicole, is beginning pharmacy school at Concordia, Wisconsin. My son, Brett, began pre-engineering last fall at IUPUI.



**Pastor Wenig**

### **Legal Issues Facing LCMS Schools**

What are the Title IX implications for LCMS schools that accept state or federal funds? Can schools continue to make employment decisions based on their religious principles? What should schools do when a same-sex couple tries to enroll a child? These are a few of the questions addressed on Worldwide KFYO's "Faith'n'Family" program June 7-8

During the show, host Andy Bates talked with guests Gregory S. Baylor, senior counsel and director of the Center for Religious Schools for Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF); the Rev. Bart Day, executive director of the LCMS Office of National Mission; and Terry Schmidt, director of LCMS School Ministry, about such critical issues facing Lutheran schools today.

"The No. 1 issue far and away ... is the application of nondiscrimination rules that impair your ability to be who you are," Baylor said. "You don't need me to tell you that an institution maintains its character, maintains its fealty to its faith through the people it hires. If it hires people who reject that faith or who reject the moral standards that come with that faith, it quickly becomes something different than what its founders wanted it to be."

"There is enormous pressure being placed on educational institutions — more at the higher-ed level, frankly, but also at the K-12 level — to relinquish these distinctives," he continued.

So, what's a faithful Lutheran school to do in this rapidly changing political landscape?

Baylor's advice is to "stay the course." Don't withdraw from any

### ***Church and State cont.***

This is vital for us to remember, particularly when we object to laws that have allowed 58 million abortions, same-sex marriage and an ever increasing encroachment upon religious freedom. These matters, as vital as they are, are ultimately important only as they intersect and impact the chief purpose of the church, which Jesus put so clearly and simply: "The

Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Above all brothers, preach and teach Christ. By the blessed power of the Gospel, He continues to work the miracles of forgiveness, life and salvation. To read the full letter, visit: [blogs.lcms.org/2016/president-harrison-provides-a-lutheran-view-of-church-and-state](http://blogs.lcms.org/2016/president-harrison-provides-a-lutheran-view-of-church-and-state)

(reprinted with permission of the LCMS)

government funding programs and don't change any religious beliefs.

Baylor also recommended that schools prepare for any possible legal controversies by making sure their policies — such as those on Christian conduct, employment and facility use — are in order and then sharing them with faculty, parents and job applicants.

"Don't be shy about this," he counseled. "Talk about who you are right from the beginning and that there are expectations for students and families."

To help the Synod at-large prepare for any potential legal troubles, the LCMS Office of the President will be mailing a new LCMS-specific version of ADF's "Protecting Your Ministry" resource to every congregation and school in mid-July.

The resource contains a checklist of things ministries can do to protect themselves from legal entanglements related to the changing political views on marriage and sexuality, as well as sample statements and case studies of situations other Christians have already faced.

"We don't need to close our Lutheran schools, we don't need to be afraid, but we need to be very wise and make sure that we're taking precautions," Day continued.

(Reprinted from LCMS Reporter Online.)

### **CONTACTS & SUPPORT**

Have something you would like included in our quarterly LMAC Concord? Please send it to:

Shelby Hoffman:  
[shelbyrh57@gmail.com](mailto:shelbyrh57@gmail.com)

or

Terry Lampton:  
[tklampton@wowway.com](mailto:tklampton@wowway.com)

If you'd like to support the work of LMAC please send your tax exempt donation to:

Lutheran Mission Action Council  
16 East Michigan St., Ste. A  
Evansville, IN 47711

Our website: [lmac-evansville.org](http://lmac-evansville.org)