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## For the Life of the World

**PUBLISHER**  
Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr.  
President

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Jayne E. Sheaffer

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**COPY EDITORS**  
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Kimberly P. Hosier

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture verses are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

## FEATURES

### 4 Speaking Up

By Peter J. Scaer

Now, more than ever, we must speak. As responsible citizens, we must defend our fellow Christians who want only to live according to God's will. True love means that we stand with those who suffer for Christ's sake. Jesus said to His disciples, "You will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved" (Matt. 10:22).

### 7 Things That Matter to You

By James A. Baneck

Whether you're a delegate at the convention or not; whether you have a leadership role at the convention or are working behind the scenes; whether you're laity or clergy, watching the convention's live stream or going about your daily vocation; whether you're young or old, male or female—if you're a member of the LCMS, the Synod convention does matter to you!

### 10 Connecting With Your Seminary

By Ronald M. Garwood

The work and mission of this Seminary is of importance to every member of the Synod. You are encouraged to remember that CTSFW is your seminary and you should be familiar with its work and mission. We encourage you to pray for the faculty, staff and students of the Seminary so that faithful, loving pastors and deaconesses are prepared for service to the congregations of the Synod.

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# THINGS THAT MATTER TO YOU

By James A. Baneck

Whether you're a delegate at the convention or not; whether you have a leadership role at the convention or are working behind the scenes; whether you're laity or clergy, watching the convention's live stream or going about your daily vocation; whether you're young or old, male or female—if you're a member of the LCMS, the Synod convention does matter to you!



LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

**H**ave you ever had the electricity go out in your home or the water heater break down? When you are suddenly without these things, you realize how much they really matter. When these things are working well, hot water naturally comes out of the faucet and the lights come on at the flip of a switch.

*LCMS President Dr. Matthew Harrison leads the 2013 Convention through discussion and voting.*

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**The LCMS is one body of Lutherans. There are over 2.3 million of us. We have over 6,100 congregations, 9,000 pastors, 2,255 preschool-high schools, 221,300 students, 21,256 teachers, 10 universities and two seminaries. There is also the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML), Lutheran Laymen’s League (LLL), 300 Recognized Service Organizations (RSO), Concordia Publishing House (CPH), Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), partner churches and more. Which of these include you?**

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This is much like The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). So much is going well, so much is going on—it just keeps humming along and doing what it’s supposed to be doing so that we barely pay attention to how much it really matters in our daily lives.

As a body of believers, we work and serve together in the kingdom of God. “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ ... For the body does not consist of one member but of many ... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (1 Cor. 12:12, 14, 27).

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Though we are many, we are Synod.

Synod is not something that happens to us, rather Synod is *who we are* as we have chosen to live and serve together in the body of Christ. Since our first meeting in Chicago in 1847, and every convention thereafter, all of us together have contributed to make the LCMS what we are today. As it continues to run and hum along, we pray for a Synod that matters!

At times, Synod needs tweaking and fixing. At these times, we realize how important our Synod is and how difficult our life as Lutherans can become when all is not working well. Then we are called to repent, search the Scriptures, return to the Confessions and continue living and serving together as His baptized children.

Whether you’re a delegate at the convention or not; whether you have a leadership role at the convention or are working behind the scenes; whether you’re laity or clergy, watching the convention’s live stream or going about your daily vocation; whether you’re young or old, male or female—if you’re a member of the LCMS, the Synod convention does matter to you!

Is your congregation trying to plant a new church? Does your congregation need revitalizing? Is your congregation in the inner city or near an ethnic group

to whom you want to reach out with the Gospel? Do you want to know how to share your faith with family and friends? The **National Witness** floor committee will be addressing these issues at convention this summer because these are *things that matter to you!*

Are you interested in supporting a foreign mission or want to visit one? Do you have family in the military and want a LCMS chaplain to care for them? Do you have a connection to one of our international schools or know a teacher or a student who goes there? The **International Witness** floor committee will be addressing these issues in Milwaukee this summer because these are *things that matter to you!*

You are a baptized child of God through whom He serves His people. You know people who are hurting or who are in prison. You want to get more involved in defending life. You want a church body that is there in times of disaster. You want to be a part of a church that puts its faith into action when there’s a fire, storms or devastating floods. The **Mercy** floor committee is seeking to address these issues because these are *things that matter to you!*

We don’t always get along with each other, do we? We want harmony





**1.** LCMS leadership and delegates at the 2013 Convention. **2.** Dr. Baneck leads committee discussion. **3.** Rev. Clarence Rogers gets advice on websites from Rev. Bill Johnson, CTSFW director of Educational Technology. (Photos courtesy LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford)



in our church body. We want to come to some agreement on matters of worship. We want our children to know the Catechism and we want them to stay in the Church after they're confirmed. We want young women and men to get involved in the LWML and LLL. The **Life Together** floor committee will address these issues because these are *things that matter to you!*

As Lutherans, we want a biblical, confessional church. We search the Bible to get answers to real-life issues. How do men and women serve in the Church? How certain is creation over evolution? What happens when we die? Can women serve in combat? The **Theology and Church Relations** floor committee will address these issues because these are *things that matter to you!*

We all want a good pastor. We want a pastor who feeds us God's Word in all of life's situations, who is there for us in times of need and who prays for us. What should our pastors be taught at our seminaries? What happens if we don't have enough pastors? Must a man be called and ordained in order to preach and give us the Sacraments? Do you want your pastor to continue to learn and grow in his skills? What do we do with church workers in burnout?

The **Seminaries, Routes to Ministry, Preaching and Church Worker Continuing Education** and **Worker Wellness** floor committees will bring these issues to the floor because these are *things that matter to you!*

Does your congregation have a school? Do you wish it did? How can we make our schools even better? How Lutheran do we want our teachers to be who teach our children and grandchildren? How Lutheran do we want our Lutheran universities to be as they put out Lutheran church workers? The **University Education** and **Parochial Schools** floor committees will address these issues because these are *things that matter to you!*

We live in a very difficult time in history. How do we make sense of it all? Christians are being persecuted more than ever. The world's definition of marriage has changed. Homosexuality and abortion are being celebrated. The family is deteriorating. How do we strengthen our families? How do we teach God's Word to our children at home? The **Church and Culture** and **Family, Youth & Young Adults** floor committees will tackle these issues July 9-14 this summer in convention because these are *things that matter to you!*

While we may not all be involved in the inner workings of our Synod, we want it to be operating well. This is our beloved Church! We care about our Church's financial health. We want our leaders to use our offerings wisely. We want a church structure that works on all levels. We know all these things affect every congregation, pastor and member. The **Finance, Stewardship: Funding the Mission** and **Structure and Administration** floor committees will address these issues because these are *things that matter to you!*

It's amazing how much our Synod life together really does affect us all. We are Synod together, and we can hardly take our beloved Synod for granted. As we go into convention this summer—from the various topics mentioned above—you can see that our convention is all about *things that matter to you!* 🏠

*The Rev. Dr. James A. Baneck (NDLCMSPres@mdconetwork.com), CTSFW 1987, serves as president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's North Dakota District.*

