

## The Ohio District-LCMS, exists to foster the fulfillment of the Great Commission in ways that are faithful to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions

The past year has certainly been a difficult one for most Americans, and especially for those living within the geographical boundaries we call the Ohio District—LCMS. Unemployment is quickly approaching 10%, and just about anyone with savings has seen the value of their nest egg shrink dramatically. For the 168 congregations located in Ohio, West Virginia and Northern Kentucky, there may be a “silver lining” as the current economic crisis gives us more reasons to reach out to those in need.

During the past three years, the Ohio District Board of Directors has been focused on those same people, too. Guiding your district staff toward helping you and your congregation to be more of a presence in your community has been our most important goal. That’s why we developed and communicated to President Cripe, three broad expectations on your behalf.

First, **encourage healthy congregations**. A healthy congregation is Christ-centered, focused on Biblical stewardship, developing servant leaders, and whose members are living Christ-like lives. It is one where worship feeds the soul through Word and Sacrament, and which glorifies God.

Second, **support healthy professional church workers (PCW)**. A healthy PCW is one who has developed good relationships with other church workers, and is provided counsel and support when conflict arises in their congregation. The district has a responsibility to provide them with opportunities to grow in their relationship with Jesus, and offer mentorship to those new to our district family.

Finally, **cultivate healthy relationships**. All of us, working together, will accomplish more for God’s glory than the sum total of all of us working independently. We need each other for strength, comfort and encouragement. Between the Missouri Synod, the Ohio District, and each individual congregation is a goldmine of experience and resources. We need to share these with each other for the common purpose of expanding God’s kingdom here on earth. And in such a way that never makes any one of us feel inferior to another.

The work that went into identifying these expectations began almost six years ago, and has consumed countless hours of discussion about how the District can best meet the needs of every Ohio District congregation.

In fact, the board felt so strongly about them, that we launched *Connecting with Congregations*, an opportunity for board and staff members to share with your congregation where we’re going as a district, and to thank you for your ongoing support. Several of these meetings have already taken place, and our plan is to reach every congregation in the district within the next two years.

It has been our expressed pleasure to work along side President Cripe and his staff during his first term of office. They have made great strides toward meeting the expectations mentioned above, and deserve our sincerest thanks for their efforts and accomplishments.

### 2006-09 Board of Directors

Rev. Larry Wesolik	Northeast Region
Mrs. Barbara Bray	Northeast Region
Mr. Howard Chavalia	Northeast Region
Mr. Gary Likowski	Northeast Region
Rev. Gerry Mohr	Northwest Region
Mr. Roger Behnfeldt	Northwest Region
Mr. Karl Kane	Northwest Region
Mr. Joe Strieter	Northwest Region
Rev. Dennis Dobbins	South Region
Mr. Larry Beal	South Region
Ms. Sandy Danneman	South Region
Mr. Jim Frye	South Region
Ms. Christine Spohn	Min. Rel./Commissioned
Mr. Kenneth Boerger	Min. Rel./Commissioned
Rev. Richard Kurth	Secretary
Rev. Dr. David Zachrich	3rd Vice President
Rev. Peter Marcis	2nd Vice President
Rev. Dr. John Davidson	1st Vice President
Rev. Terry Cripe	District President

On behalf of every one of us on the board, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to serve your Ohio District these past three years. We have certainly been blessed through the experience!

Gary Likowski

