

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD



International Center
1333 S. Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
(314) 965-9000
Board of Directors

June 25, 2004

Dear Congregational President,

Greetings in the name of Jesus, the Lord of the Church.

As the 62nd Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod approaches, the Board of Directors wants to share with your congregation a program that is being sent to each congregation of Synod. Its purpose is to inform the members of your congregation regarding the critical financial crisis facing the Synod and its District offices.

With this letter is the video, "**Sow What? Planting Seeds of Hope,**" and a survey that will help the Board of Directors formulate an improved funding model to meet the needs of the Synod in today's world. We will be sharing with the Synod the results of our analysis of this survey as well as any funding models that are being considered. The ultimate purpose is to insure the future of our Synod while also supporting the growing work of local congregations and Districts.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod exists because congregations have gathered together around a common faith to do together what no single congregation could do alone including training teachers and pastors, sending missionaries into the world, and creating worship and educational materials. *As a member of Synod, your congregation has a deep interest in the future of the Synod and the ministries it provides.*

The information contained in this video program and the requested information is vital to decisions that will be made, not only at the synodical level, but also at the congregational and District levels. This is truly about whether The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as so many have known and loved it, will continue to exist.

As the president of your congregation, we ask you to show this program in your congregation. It would be most fitting if that could be done on Sunday, July 11, 2004, the first day of the synodical convention that will be held in St. Louis.

"Sow What? Planting Seeds of Hope" will help us all understand two things: 1. What it means to be a synod and, 2. Why it no longer is working as it should.

We hope and pray that you will encourage your pastor and other church leaders in your congregation watch this program and take part in the survey.

We also pray that God will bless our efforts to inform the congregations of Synod of the serious nature of this problem and that our decisions in the future will be accordance with His will.

In His service and yours,

Dr. Robert T. Kuhn
Chairman of the LCMS Board of Directors

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DRAFT SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR "SOW WHAT?"

Your Synod's Board of Directors wants to hear from you. We need to understand how congregation members view the relationship between their congregation and Synod. Please complete the following survey and return it to your class or group leader, or go online at [www.lcms.org/bodsurvey] and enter your responses electronically. Completion of the online survey can be done after July 1, 2004.

On a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the appropriate number:

	Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Don't Know/ Not Sure 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
1. It is important to me that my congregation is a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.	5	4	3	2	1
2. The "Sow What?" video is an effective way to begin to inform members of important financial issues facing our Synod.	5	4	3	2	1
3. It is important that congregations continue to work together as a Synod.	5	4	3	2	1
4. It is important to me that my congregation proclaim the Gospel effectively in my community.	5	4	3	2	1
5. National synodical ministries provide valuable assistance to our congregation.	5	4	3	2	1
6. District synodical ministries provide valuable assistance to our congregation.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Our congregation adequately supports our synodical District and its work.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Our congregation adequately supports our national Synod and its work.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I believe our congregation is adequately represented in District convention decisions.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I believe our congregation is adequately represented in synodical convention decisions.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I am well-informed of our District's work on our congregation's behalf.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I am well-informed of our national Synod's work on our congregation's behalf.	5	4	3	2	1

13. *The Lutheran Witness* is a valuable source of information for keeping me informed about our Synod's work. 5 4 3 2 1
14. *Reporter* is a valuable source of information for keeping me informed about our Synod's work. 5 4 3 2 1
15. The LCMS Web site (www.lcms.org) is a valuable source of information for keeping me informed about our Synod's work. 5 4 3 2 1
16. At least one staff member from our District office has visited our congregation in the past year. 5 4 3 2 1
17. At least one staff member from the national synodical office has visited our congregation in the past year. 5 4 3 2 1
18. If your congregation's income increased by 10% in the next budget year, how do you think your congregation would use the extra funds?
19. Please provide any other feedback that you feel the Board of Directors of our Synod needs to have.

ABOUT YOU

20. Are you a: (CIRCLE one) a. Ordained Minister, b. Commissioned Minister
c. Non-rostered professional church worker d. Lay leader of congregation. e. Member
21. Your age: _____ yrs.
22. Your gender: a. Female b. Male
23. State in which your congregation is located: _____
24. Approximate size of your congregation (confirmed members): (CIRCLE one) a. Under 100
b. 100-199 c. 200-499 d. 500-999 e. 1,000 or more