

President Buss Addresses Situation in the CID

These last few days have been filled with deep sadness and grief upon the news that a leader of the LCMS from the Central Illinois District, Rev. Michael Mohr, has been arrested for the alleged production of child pornography. The Central Illinois District is one of the 35 districts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, each served and led by a District President. The state of Illinois is home to three LCMS districts: Northern, Central, and Southern. We, of course, are the Northern Illinois District.

The charges surrounding this sinful and evil alleged conduct are very serious and are being viewed with gravity by church leaders, including LCMS President Matthew Harrison. The LCMS has pledged full cooperation with authorities in regard to these matters. Of course, under our system of justice, Michael Mohr is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Mohr, if found guilty, will face consequences according to relevant criminal statutes. To be clear, the LCMS has a process for conduct unbecoming an ordained minister, and this process will be followed.

We especially have the deepest concern for the victims and families involved. As we pray for them and their families, we ask for strength, help, healing, justice, and the peace of Jesus. *“By His (Jesus) wounds, we are healed”* (I Peter 2:24). We pray that this situation causes no long-term physical, emotional, or spiritual harm to them. We also pray that the Lord would protect the Witness of the Church in the community and the nation. This situation is a wake-up call for all! We are called to bring Hope in the Crucified and Risen Christ, not sin or harm.

Pastors are present to speak the Word of God, administer the Holy Sacraments, and provide for the spiritual wellbeing of congregations, schools, and those gathered. Pastors are also present to be a light for Christ in our communities. The Bible is clear on the expectations that God and the Church have for Spiritual Leaders, especially Pastors (see I Timothy 3: 1-7; Titus 1:5-9, I Peter 5:1-9). Pastors and all church leaders are present to help, not harm, so these accusations are terribly upsetting.

We heed the word of God not to let the devil get a foothold in our lives, homes, congregations and schools, and in our communities. We are called on by the Lord to *“watch our life and doctrine closely”* (I Timothy 4:16). As Christians, we are people of daily repentance and great joy in our Savior. It is so comforting that we can rejoice in the *“Communion of Saints and the Forgiveness of Sins.”*

We continue to pray, repent often, work faithfully, and look to Jesus.



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LCMS Northern Illinois District