



**Northern Illinois District**  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

## President's Commentary Winter 2024

I don't remember the weather, but I do remember the date: December 19, 1986. Place: The Chapel of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. And the chapel speaker was Dr. David Scaer. I do not remember what he said, but I do remember what happened right before chapel that day.

My girlfriend was down to Fort Wayne to visit from college at Concordia University Wisconsin. (The added advantage of her presence was that she would iron my shirts. LOL) The day had come and I was going to "pop the question." I had received some advice from Steve, a fellow seminarian, as we lived in the same dorm. As you ask her hand in marriage, say to her, "*Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt His name together.*" (Psalm 34:3)

Well, I asked if she would marry me, nervously mumbled the passage, and the rest is history. I'm not sure Marie remembers I quoted the passage either.

The fact that we sinners can glorify the Lord and exalt His name is pure grace and gift. Our togetherness as forgiven people in Christ is pure mercy and the work of the Gospel! Your sinful nature and mine prefer "me" to "we". Satan loves division and we can quickly create it. Right? Someone once said, "Hell is the loneliest place." **There is no trust in Hell, but there sure is in Heaven.**

Jesus gives us community ... "*where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*" (Matthew 18:20) He is the Great Reconciler by His precious blood. The older I get the more I appreciate the words of the Creed, "the communion of saints." Christians glorify the Lord and we praise His name together now, and will, for all eternity. That is beautiful and the song of salvation will go on forever!

For this reason, the mother of our Lord Jesus, having been told her role in the promised Messiah's life said, "*My soul glorifies the Lord.*" (Luke 1:46) She saw His life all the way through ... conception, birth, circumcision ... to suffering, death and resurrection! For Jesus was for her... is for you, and the world. What a joy to know.

### **When we get life in the Church right, we glorify the Lord together by:**

- Singing, praying, and receiving the Lord's gifts in public worship together
- Seeking reconciliation by confessing our faults, and giving and receiving forgiveness
- Spending time together
- Working toward trust, not division
- Learning the gift of laughing and crying together
- Confessing the purity, purpose, and power of the Word and generously using it
- Receiving the gifts given in the Sacraments with anticipation
- Getting together with your congregation and sister congregations to build relationships and focus on Jesus' mission
- Reaching out to the disconnected and planting the seed of the Word
- Offering hospitality to each other and guests
- Giving generously, financially investing in the "things that last"
- Keeping the "main thing the main thing" that is Jesus, His Word and Work!

I invite you to read Psalm 34. Its setting is a difficult time in King David's life. Even in times of trouble and testing he invited others - and you - to glorify the Lord, to lift up the Lord's holy and saving name. That is our calling together! Let us listen to the Lord and the voices of hope He raises up! Is your voice a voice of hope in Christ?