

To Direct the Kansas District LCMS and the LCMS to end all ties with “Transforming Congregations/Churches Network”

Whereas, the Synod’s website [<http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=943>] states regarding “Recognized Service Organizations” (RSO’s), “To extend its social ministry, the LCMS works with independent Recognized Service Organizations that agree to foster the mission and ministry of the LCMS through their programs and services and ensure their programs are in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the LCMS.” and

Whereas, the “Transforming Congregations Network” (hereafter referred to as “TCN”) is listed on the Synod’s website [<http://www.lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=943>] as a “Missions RSO”; and

Whereas, TCN [<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>] desires “to fulfill its commitment to the Synodical Initiative to revitalize 2000 congregations of the LCMS by 2017”; and

Whereas, a “revitalized church” is defined by the following: “growth through adult baptisms and confirmations; increase in worship attendance by 5 percent or more annually; rise in stewardship and financial commitments; increased number of hours invested in community service; holds regular outreach events; small group growth; participates in starting new congregations”

[<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/TCNBrochurev4.pdf>]; and

Whereas, the Pastor in an initial pastoral survey is asked, “I am willing to change the focus of my ministry from being the lead caretaker of the congregation to the lead missionary to lost people in the community” (Question 7a. in the section “Openness to Pastoral Role Changes”;

[<http://www.njdistrict.org/assets/Ministries/Transforming-Congregations-Network/Pastor-Survey.pdf>]), thus diminishing the called role of the Pastor to preach the Gospel of Christ and deliver the means of grace; and

Whereas, the Pastor in an initial pastoral survey is asked, “If we do not achieve the 5% growth goal in the next 24 months, and 5% growth annually thereafter, I will put my name out for another call” (Question 8d. in the section “Accountability”; [<http://www.njdistrict.org/assets/Ministries/Transforming-Congregations-Network/Pastor-Survey.pdf>]), thus suggesting that the man who is divinely called to the Office is only effective if he meets worldly standards and goals; and

Whereas, the congregation who chooses to be involved with TCN will implement an “Accountable Leader Governance Structure”

[<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/Implementing%20Accountable%20Leader.pdf>]. This structure of governance includes the following: “Article 5a – Congregational Role: ‘Calling or *dismissing* (*emphasis given*) a called Pastor””; thus implementing a “hire and fire” status among the congregation towards a called worker of Christ; and

Whereas, the congregation who chooses to be involved with TCN will implement an “Accountable Leader Governance Structure”

[<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/Implementing%20Accountable%20Leader.pdf>]. This structure of governance includes the following: “Article 7c – Board of Directors Selection: ‘Potential Members must sign a covenant to uphold the highest standards of participation, service, supportiveness, and *tithing* (*emphasis given*) with regard to the Church””; thus implementing a pattern of giving that is coerced and not done “cheerfully” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7); and

Whereas, the congregation who chooses to be involved with TCN will implement an “Accountable Leader Governance Structure”

[<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/Implementing%20Accountable%20Leader.pdf>]. This structure of governance includes the following: “Article 8 - Church Board Role: ‘The Board shall determine the compensation of the Senior Pastor based on achieving mission principles and respecting the boundary principles””; thus implementing a compensation package for the Pastor that is directly tied to worldly results; and

Whereas, the congregation who chooses to be involved with TCN will implement an “Accountable Leader Governance Structure” [<http://portal.tcnbackup.com/Portals/0/Implementing%20Accountable%20Leader.pdf>]. This structure of governance includes the following: “Article 11 – Senior Pastor Role: ‘...With regard to **compensation based on performance** (*emphasis given*), the Pastor shall be accountable to the Board. With regard to **job retention** (*emphasis given*) and approval of major decisions, the Pastor shall be accountable to the Congregation. The Pastor **shall hire, direct, compensate, and fire any and all Church Staff** (*emphasis given*) in compliance with the Guiding Principles established by the Board””; thus placing the Pastor in an awkward position of CEO instead of faithfully ministering by means of Word and Sacrament to the flock entrusted to him; and

Whereas, the leaders of the church in an initial leaders survey are asked, “The leaders of this church hope to initiate a style of worship service that appeals to unchurched people” (Question 3e. in the section “Openness to External Focus”; [<http://www.njdistrict.org/assets/Ministries/Transforming-Congregations-Network/Leaders-Survey.pdf>]); thus suggesting that the congregation’s worship style should be changed even if it exclusively uses the approved hymnals of the Synod; and

Whereas, the Holy Spirit alone is responsible for converting to people to saving faith by His Word and Sacraments, when and where He pleases; and

Whereas, Jesus Himself bids His people “to build on the rock of His Word and not on the changing sand of culture” (Matthew 7:24-27); and

Whereas, Jesus Himself bids His people to be “salt and light to the world” (Matthew 5:13-16); and

Whereas, the Kansas District Board of Directors voted on July 30, 2011 to enter into “Partnership Agreement with Transforming Churches Network” (Resolution 11C-04-2) at a cost of \$50,000 per year for 3 years with subsequent consulting services picked up by the individual congregations in their continuing process (KS District BOD meeting minutes – May 7, 2011; Resolution 11B-04-01); therefore be it

Resolved, that TCN is harmful to our Synod’s emphasis of “Witness,” “Mercy,” and “Life Together”; and be it further

Resolved, that the practices and principles used by TCN are in contradiction to Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions; and be it further

Resolved, that the KS District in convention direct the District President, the Missions and Stewardship Assistant to the District President, and the Board of Directors to immediately end all district funding and support of TCN in the KS District; and be it further

Resolved, that all congregations of the KS District be strongly encouraged to end their ties to and support of TCN; and be it finally

Resolved, that the KS District in convention submit an overture to the 2013 synodical convention to strip TCN of its RSO status in the LCMS.

Overture passed for submission to the 2012 Kansas District by Circuit 13 Forum January 29th, 2012.



Circuit Counselor, Pastor Philip Hoppe

Circuit Secretary, Kenneth Stewart