

# A joint statement from LCMS President Harrison and the Chairman of the LCMS Board of Directors about Concordia University Texas

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November 11, 2022



## From LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison and the Chairman of the LCMS Board of Directors

Nov. 11, 2022

On Tuesday, November 8, Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas (CTX) President Don Christian announced publicly that the CTX Board of Regents had, the day before, “voted to adopt a structure whereby Concordia University Texas will be governed solely by its Board of Regents, rather than the historic governance directed by the [B]ylaws of Synod.” The CTX Board of Regents did so unilaterally and without either the consent The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Bylaws require of a university of the Concordia University System looking to change its bylaws or the consent they require for a university seeking to separate from the Concordia University System. It acted without proper authority and contrary to consistent advice and admonition.

All authority over Synod activities and agencies is a sacred trust granted by the Synod’s congregations to specific officers and boards in the interest of actively maintaining and furthering the congregations’ common confession and constitutional objectives in all aspects of the work of the Synod and its agencies. Our Bylaws make clear: All are to carry out responsibilities “in a manner reflecting the highest degree of integrity and honesty consistent with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.”

This precipitous action by the CTX Board of Regents not only constitutes a grievous breach of the trust of the Synod and its member congregations but also impacts students, faculty, staff, individual regents, some of whom have already resigned, and the many people of goodwill who have historically supported Concordia University Texas as a college and then university of the Synod.

The Synod President and the Chairman of the Synod Board of Directors condemn this unilateral attempt of CTX to separate from and dictate new terms of relationship to the Synod, CTX having rejected the specific means laid out by the congregations to maintain the faithfulness and mission accountability of Synod's schools and disdained laying its concerns before the church, for the church to act together. The President and Board of Directors will continue to address this grievous situation and, even at this late date, have called the CTX Board of Regents back, in the spirit of 1 Cor. 6, to set this matter before those who do have standing in the church, to reach a conclusion consistent with "the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod."

The Lord grant to all who serve his church in positions of authority to do so in the spirit of our Synod's Preamble, following the example of the apostolic church (Acts 15), to submit all things to the Word of God and to the representatives of the churches assembled, and under His will that "the diversities of gifts should be for the common profit" (1 Cor. 12) of the whole Synod. In the midst of the great "institutions" of the temple, our Lord said, "this will be your opportunity to bear witness" (Luke 21). The Lord grant us to do so together, each within his proper calling, with urgency and with faithfulness.