



Missouri District

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Sept. 28, 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the church!

One of the key tenets of Lutheran theology is that individual Christians are citizens of two kingdoms, the “right-hand kingdom” of the church and the “left-hand kingdom” of the state. God works through both kingdoms, though in very different ways, to preserve and protect life (left-hand kingdom institutions and laws) and to bestow the gift of eternal life in Christ (right-hand kingdom means of grace). Christians are called to live and serve within *both* kingdoms. In the Table of Duties in the Small Catechism, Martin Luther reminds Christians of their obligations to the state by quoting from the Scriptures (Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:5–7; 1 Tim. 2:1–3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13–14).

Christians should not retreat from civic involvement. Instead, we should see that part of our calling from God as citizens is to engage in the public square. We can fulfill this calling by educating ourselves on issues and participating in elections at the national, state, and local levels.

At the same time, we are mindful of Paul’s encouragement in 1 Tim. 2:1–3 to pray for all those in authority. We should be active in the “left-hand kingdom” of civil government, while producing the fruit of the Spirit as we do so (Gal. 5:22–23). We are not afraid to be involved, but we strive to avoid adding to the divisive rhetoric that is so common in our current political climate. **As another election approaches, I want to take this opportunity to provide you with some resources as you exercise your calling as a citizen and encourage members of your congregation to do the same.**

The church’s confession of God’s design for the family is closely connected to the sanctity of human life and our responsibility to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. The Synod and its congregations have consistently spoken about the sanctity of human life: “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb” (Ps. 139:13 ESV). We are also reminded to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves (Prov. 31:8–9).

This summer, the 2026 LCMS Synod convention adopted Resolution 1–11, “To Confess God’s Design for the Family.” The resolution affirms the responsibility of parents to raise and nurture their children according to God’s Word and states the Synod’s religious objection to government interference in that responsibility. It specifically identifies laws allowing minors to obtain abortions or medical procedures without parental approval as examples of such interference. The resolution urges our congregations and schools to “boldly ... confess and witness to the truth in the public square.”

I also want to address Amendment 3, a proposed amendment to the Missouri constitution that will appear on the November 2026 ballot. Because the 2026 Amendment 3 is substantially different from the Amendment 3 approved by Missouri voters in 2024, it is important to understand what the current amendment would change.

A “yes” vote would repeal Article I, Section 36, of the Missouri Constitution. It would allow legislation to regulate abortion providers and facilities, require informed and voluntary consent including parental or judicial consent for minors, allow abortion to be restricted to medical emergencies, rape, or incest under 12 weeks’ gestation, and fetal anomalies, and prohibit gender transition procedures for minors, with specified exceptions.

A “no” vote would leave Article I, Section 36 in place. This would leave abortion access from conception through fetal viability and would allow gender transition procedures for minors.

Please use the enclosed bulletin insert to learn more about Amendment 3 and prayerfully consider its implications in light of Scripture. Pastors and church leaders are encouraged to help their members become informed about the amendment and the Biblical convictions that inform our concern for human life, children, and families. Questions specific to Amendment 3 may be directed to Missouri District Life Coordinator Rev. Dr. Jason Wagner at pastorwagner@email.com.

Pray for our elections, for those who serve in positions of authority, and for Christians to faithfully exercise their calling as citizens. Our hope is that members of Missouri District congregations, and all Missouri voters, will be informed and exercise their rights as citizens to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, and as we do so, to speak the truth in love. We also pray that the church would demonstrate Christ’s love and mercy to our neighbors in need, especially in caring for children and their mothers both before and after birth.

Our ultimate hope does not rest in an election, a law or a government, but in Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us and gives us eternal life. May God bless and guide your congregation and its leaders as you fulfill your vocations as citizens and speak up for life.

In Christ’s service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. Lee Hagan".

Rev. Dr. R. Lee Hagan
President
LCMS Missouri District