



## THE REDEEMER MESSENGER

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#### **Joy:Fully Lutheran**

A Message to the Church about the challenges we face

and how to face them

By Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Rev. Matthew Harrison

“Rejoice always.” St. Paul wrote these words to the Thessalonians, who had “received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit” (1 Thess. 1:6). In the face of a world that moves from one tragedy to the next, and in a church body full of saints who happen every one to be sinners too, being “Joy:fully Lutheran” might seem a pipe dream. Not so. In what follows I will make the case for the beautiful nexus of being “Joyfully” and “Fully” Lutheran. The Gospel is a joyful message that takes sin away and produces joyful saints. This blessed Gospel of Christ’s free forgiveness enlivens every teaching, every aspect of being Lutheran. A portion of this “white paper” takes up the demographic challenge of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod...after describing the statistical material, I offer some “answers” along the way. We must focus on being biblical, on knowing the Scriptures and acting in accord with the Word of God. We must focus on being Lutheran, on knowing our own confessing documents and the fabulous strength and joy they afford us.”

“There is no challenge the LCMS faces for which the Word of God does not have the answer!”