

Central Illinois District

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod



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January 29th, 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On the morning of Wednesday, January 28, we learned that the LCMS Central Illinois District President, Rev. Michael Mohr, was arrested by federal law enforcement on charges related to child pornography.

Yesterday, the President of the Synod, Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, issued the attached letter on the matter. We encourage you to read that letter carefully.

At this time, the Central Illinois District office is following the established protocols outlined in the District Handbook. In accordance with those procedures, the First Vice President, Rev. Michael Burdick, is in active communication with Synod leadership and appropriate district leadership as this situation unfolds. Effective yesterday, January 28th, Rev. Burdick is Acting District President.

No additional details are available to share at this time. The Central Illinois District will continue to cooperate fully with law enforcement and work together with Synod. In consultation with the LCMS, we are also working with the affected congregations and parishioners to ensure they receive the necessary pastoral support and care during this difficult time.

If you have been harmed, we encourage you to contact law enforcement. We also encourage you to reach out to Ms. Rebekah Wendling, a mental health professional at 877-276-1740 or email at districtassistance@cidlcms.org. Anyone with further information should contact FBI St. Louis, Special Agent Trevor Welter at 314-589-2500.

In the meantime, we pray God's hand of justice and mercy will prevail for all affected by this situation, for the Church, and for the Lord's continued grace and wisdom.

Further information will be provided as it becomes appropriate and available.

In Christ's service,

Rev. Patrick Gumz
On behalf of the First Vice President
Central IL District of the LCMS



The Reverend Doctor Matthew C. Harrison
President of the Synod

January 28, 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I was shocked and dismayed this morning when I learned that the LCMS Central Illinois District President Michael Mohr was arrested by federal agents. I understand that the charges leading to the arrest relate to the alleged production of child pornography.

No words can express our sorrow and shame.
"From depths of woe I cry to you, O Lord" (Psalm 130:1).

The LCMS will cooperate with any request we receive from law enforcement.

I am praying for all affected by this situation and invite you to join me in these prayers.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod