

# 2013 Convention Resolution Update





## Dear Ones,

One year and one month ago, we were gathered in the air-conditioned halls of the St. Louis Convention Center as the Synod-in-convention, working together to determine the Synod's priorities and goals, her challenges and opportunities in the coming years.

Since then, I've witnessed great progress on many fronts: from recruiting missionaries to supporting the work of LCMS campus ministries, from celebrating the upcoming anniversary of the Reformation to the Koinonia Project.

But it's important for you to know and learn about this progress too. That's why we've created this convention resolution update. In it, you'll find summaries of the resolutions, updates on the work that's been done to fulfill resolutions adopted, observations from those who have been helping to move the work toward completion and additional information hyperlinks to stories with more information you may find helpful.

While we take seriously all the work called for by the convention delegates, we have not included all of the resolutions in this document. Some called for prayer; others for thanks. Some commended work, and others

acknowledged the importance of the Synod's work in the areas of Witness, Mercy, Life Together. We are grateful for that recognition. In this document, however, we've chosen to focus on those resolutions that required some heavy lifting.

For general questions regarding any resolution or convention matter, please call the Office of the President at 1-800-248-1930 ext. 1407 or 314-996-1407. You can also email any questions you may have to Barb Below, assistant to the president, at [barb.below@lcms.org](mailto:barb.below@lcms.org) or 1-800-248-1930 ext. 1413 or 314-996-1413. She will be happy to assist you.

One year and one month ago, we reminded each other that we are "Baptized for This Moment." And indeed we are. It's my prayer that you'll see — within these pages — how our Lord has in fact baptized us for this moment, how He is at work through our Synod in service to the Gospel, one another and to our neighbor. May God grant it for Jesus' sake.

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

PRESIDENT, THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

## Resolution Number: 1-01A

### *To Highlight and Strengthen the Global Seminary Initiative (GSI)*

**Resolution Summary:** The LCMS is to send qualified instructors to the seminaries of International Lutheran Council (ILC) partner churches and make it possible for teachers and church leaders of partner churches to study at the Synod's two seminaries.

**Progress Report:** GSI provides scholarships for Lutherans around the world to attend both LCMS seminaries, to attend regional Lutheran seminaries and to receive continuing education. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, used GSI funds to provide 13 scholarships in 2013–2014, while Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, provided 12. A total of 25 students were helped in 2013–2014 with an average cost of \$16,000 per student. Scholarships were also provided to 30 students in Ethiopia (\$5,000 per student) and 15 in Togo (\$10,000 per student). GSI

trained 20 students in Tanzania (\$5,500 per student) and provided funds for 12 students in Russia plus a seminar in Madagascar for approximately 50 people (\$240 per person). The original goal of providing theological education for 100 people worldwide was met and exceeded by serving 150 total.

**Quote:** “The LCMS receives more requests for theological education than anything else from our partners. Lutheran leaders worldwide see faithful, confessional, theological education as a key to maintaining Lutheran identity in their church bodies and to provide good and faithful leaders for the future of their churches. The theological education in the LCMS has achieved a quality unmatched anywhere else, and our partners seek what we have. We in the LCMS are unworthy servants who should give thanks to God every day and be willing to share it as we are able.” — Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver III, director, LCMS Church Relations

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## Resolution Number: 1-03A

### *To Complete and Engage in a Synodwide Study of the “Theological Statement of Mission for the 21st Century”*

**Resolution Summary:** The Office of National Mission and the Office of International Mission, along with their respective boards, are to develop a “Theological Statement of Mission for the 21st Century” by the end of 2014. This will be followed by a three-year study of the document (along with other Commission on Theology and Church Relations [CTCR] resources) by the entire Synod, moving all members of the Synod to better understand their involvement in God's mission.

**Progress Report:** The statement has been approved by the Board for International Mission, and the Board for National Mission is currently making suggestions for a final revision. The CTCR has reviewed the

document and found no doctrinal error in the statement. The statement was published in the March 2014 issue of *The Journal of Lutheran Mission* for review by the entire Synod. CTCR staff are making a final review and revision of the document. It will be completed by the end of 2014, and plans for synodwide study of the document are in place for 2015.

**Quote:** “The statement is helpful perspective on the priorities for mission in the LCMS going forward at the present time.” — Rev. Larry Vogel, associate executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations

**Additional Information:** A Theological Statement for Mission in the 21st Century; Serving the Church as a 21st-Century Missionary

**Editor's Note:** In the updates featuring “additional information,” please click on the names of the stories included to read more information.



## Resolution Number: 1-04A

### *To Encourage Church Multiplication as Means of Making New Disciples*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution encourages congregations and members to pray for and engage in the critical work of church planting. Furthermore, congregations are encouraged to explore and utilize resources available from the LCMS Office of National Mission (ONM).

**Progress Report:** The Board for National Mission has written policy specific to church planting. These policies direct the ONM (1) to partner with districts and congregations in the development of witness and mercy opportunities that will lead to the establishment of Word and Sacrament ministry and (2) to support the development of strong missional leaders. Under the direction of the Rev. Steve Schave, the LCMS is

currently developing resources to help districts, circuits and congregations plant churches.

**Quote:** “What is great is that these will be practical resources — not a program — that will help to plant new churches in communities with the pattern of witness, mercy, life together.” — Rev. Steve Schave, director, LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission

**Additional Information:** Urban, inner-city ministry: a ripe mission field

## Resolution Number: 1-05A

### *To Encourage the Congregations and People of the LCMS for the Joy of Evangelization and the Making of New Disciples*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution, while encouraging all members to be involved in evangelism at some level, also directs the Office of National Mission (ONM) to work aggressively to increase awareness of its services and resources in the same area.

**Progress Report:** In June 2014, a new full-time director of Witness and Outreach Ministry, the Rev. Mark Wood, joined the ONM with the task of expanding Synod resources in the area of witness and outreach.

**Quote:** “I’m excited about the potential that we have as Lutheran Christians to bring the rich, deep and real hope of Jesus Christ to those who are perishing. My goal and desire is to identify, develop and promote

the resources that we need to be more effective in our individual activities to share the Good News of Jesus (witnessing) as well as our collective efforts to bring people into the Word and Sacrament ministry of the Church (outreach). In this challenging and exciting time for God’s people, I’m eager to help Lutherans discover, or rediscover, the joy of the great privilege that we have to be participants in Christ’s mission to gather those who are lost into His Church.” — Rev. Mark Wood, director, LCMS Witness and Outreach Ministry

**Additional Information:** Book explains how to share Christ with family, friends; Wood, Zill join national mission team



## Resolution Number: 1-06A

### *To Amend Bylaw 6.1.3 (h) and 6.2.1 (d) Auxiliaries and Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) to Respect Church Relations Protocol Documents*

**Resolution Summary:** Amend the bylaws to state that the auxiliaries (Lutheran Women’s Missionary League and Lutheran Laymen’s League/Lutheran Hour Ministries) and RSOs respect protocol documents that exist with partner churches and that biannual meetings occur between the auxiliaries, the LCMS Office of Church Relations and the LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM).

**Progress Report:** Bylaw amendments have been made as adopted. The protocol documents have been made available to the RSOs and auxiliaries as requested. The auxiliaries have been invited to regularly attend meetings of the Board for International Mission (BIM), where they are able to have enhanced partnership with the work of the OIM and enhanced coordination through dialogue with

BIM board members, OIM representatives and the director of Church Relations regarding mission efforts and church relations matters.

**Quote:** “Attending the Board for International Mission and Board for National Mission meetings was a privilege for me, a privilege not taken lightly by the LWML or me. The meeting allowed me to build relationships with key LCMS mission leaders and to hear firsthand reports of how God is working in LCMS missions. It also allowed me the pleasure of sharing how our Lord continues to bless the LWML through missions, mites and ministry. I look forward to building on those relationships as we serve our Lord together.” — Kay Kreklau, president, Lutheran Women’s Missionary League

**Additional Information:** BNM welcomes new members as its work continues



Rev. Jeffrey Ries, pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Tacoma, Wash., steps up to the microphone during Monday’s business. Ries was a delegate representing the Northwest District.



## Resolution Number: 1-07B

### *To Support the Wittenberg Project for the Quincentennial Celebration of the Lutheran Reformation*

**Resolution Summary:** All congregations and individuals are to support the Wittenberg Project with prayer and financial resources.

**Progress Report:** The LCMS went public with project fundraising in May, beginning with the launch of the Reformation 500 Club for congregations and schools. The first 500 congregations and schools that join with a gift of \$500 or more will have their donation doubled by a special matching grant. Nearly \$2.9 million has been gifted or pledged to the project through June 30, 2014, more than half of the projected cost. The dedication of the Old Latin School will be held May 3, 2015, in conjunction with the International Lutheran Council theological conference. In the future, the Old Latin School will serve as a place where universities, seminaries and partners can hold conferences,

continuing education events and retreats while in the homeland of Martin Luther.

**Quote:** “One of the most exciting things I have done in the church outside of the parish is to become involved in the Wittenberg Project. How exciting to witness and experience the renovation of a school building where Luther actually taught ... and just steps away from where he preached many of his sermons at St. Mary’s City Church! This is a project unlike any other. It is melding the old with the new so that we might continue to learn what is timeless: the Gospel of Christ.” — Rev. Michael Kumm, chairman, LCMS Board of Directors

**Additional Information:** Wittenberg Project website; ‘Reformation 500 Club’ supports Wittenberg Project; Wittenberg Project to open doors for evangelism; Wittenberg project’s history, board members; Approvals move Wittenberg project ‘several steps forward’; Delegates support Wittenberg project; Wittenberg project enters new phase

## Resolution Number: 1-08

### *To Work Together in Mission*

**Resolution Summary:** By the 2016 convention, the Synod is to develop a mission best-practices policy for districts and congregations to use for engagement in mission projects.

**Progress Report:** The 10 mission best practices have been developed while seeking input from districts and mission organizations. The practices have been shared with the Council of Presidents, the Board for International Mission and other interested parties. The Office of International Mission is currently working to implement the practices and provide opportunities for short-term trips from districts and congregations and other resources to assist in a successful mission experience.

**Quote:** “There are a lot of well-meaning congregations and individuals that want to engage internationally,

and they certainly have the means and opportunity to do so. Our church partners around the world want engagement with the LCMS done in good order. We are motivated by theology, but it is important to be pragmatic in responding to the request of church leaders who receive people with open arms with consequences that aren’t always to the good of the Gospel. This is about good theology and good order. It is an educational tool for our church about the big picture of world missions and not just an individual going in and out of a mission field. It is important to provide this to our universities, districts and congregations to help them to do things that are good not only for our church but also for our partners around the world.” — Rev. Dan McMiller, director of Recruitment, Office of International Mission

**Additional Information:** New missionary-recruitment team begins work



## Wittenberg Project to Open Doors for Evangelism

by Jeni Miller

As the 500th anniversary of the Reformation approaches in 2017, those involved with The Wittenberg Project are moving steadily toward completion of this venue for Lutheran education and platform for Gospel proclamation in Wittenberg, Germany — the birthplace of the Reformation.

The project is being developed by the International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (ILSW, a German nonprofit corporation owned by the LCMS), Concordia Publishing House and the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELK, an LCMS partner church in Germany). Its purpose is to renovate Wittenberg's Old Latin School, which celebrates its 450th birthday this year, for use as a ministry center.

The Rev. David Mahsman, LCMS missionary in Germany and managing director of the ILSW, believes that The Wittenberg Project will open doors for evangelism and the education of unchurched people in Wittenberg, as well as provide a distinctly Lutheran gathering place for those in the church.

"The goal of The Wittenberg Project is to honor our Lutheran heritage as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation by nurturing and strengthening the faith of Christians and introducing the Christian faith to non-Christians," according to the project's business plan. "Through development of a Christian education and outreach center in the very birthplace of the Reformation, we will attract students and visitors, promote confessional-Lutheran theology, and open doors to Gospel outreach and works of mercy."

"What can be more exciting and worthwhile than helping to deepen the faith of Christians and introducing the faith to non-Christians — and doing it in the very place used by God to restore the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ to the church and to the world 500 years ago?" Mahsman asked.

### Why now?

With 2017 fast approaching, ILSW leaders say the timing couldn't be better, and the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity couldn't be rarer for involvement in a project of this size and scope.

And then there's the location.

"This Old Latin School is situated right next door to St. Mary's [Church], where Luther preached more than 2,000 sermons, and close to the Castle Church, where he nailed the 95 Theses," said Bob Claus, an advisory member of the ILSW. "Between 2015 and 2017, hundreds of thousands of visitors will come through Wittenberg, and a logical place for them to start their exploration will be the renovated Old Latin School."



Members of the International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg Supervisory Board and LCMS missionaries from throughout Europe visit the Old Latin School construction site Jan. 29, 2014. When work is completed next year, the 450-year-old building will provide dormitory housing, a chapel and lecture hall, classroom space and a bookstore. (LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford)

With collaboration and fellowship opportunities with LCMS partner churches on the rise, ILSW leaders say The Wittenberg Project also provides a way for the LCMS to work with the SELK and other partner churches around the world to make Gospel proclamation and catechesis a priority.

Recently the Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver, director of LCMS Church Relations, discovered an article in a large German newspaper detailing why 95 percent of German people have stopped attending church. The reason? Because the state church stopped preaching the Gospel.

"This is an opportunity to be a Gospel beacon during the big celebration in Germany celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017," said the Rev. David Bueltmann, president emeritus of the LCMS Central Illinois District and ILSW advisory member. "Germany has actually been celebrating the Luther Decade since 2007. It is interesting that the Germans are very proud of Martin Luther for many reasons, but that does not include his theology. He did much for the German people, among them are education and the German language, but we want to help them understand the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. What better way to introduce the Good News than to be a part of the celebration so they can hear the rest of the story about Martin Luther."

"Lutherans in the U.S. should care that a record low number of people regularly hear the Gospel in Wittenberg," said LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison. "We ought to care that there is not a conservative Lutheran option for Christians in Wittenberg — and we are planting a congregation there. We ought to care that the true faith was rediscovered by Luther in Wittenberg, our catechism was written there, Luther preached several thousand sermons there, and now for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we will be there confessing the very same faith — not watered down, not post-modernized, not deconstructed — that Luther himself believed and confessed: Christ the God-man, for all."



### Ready to renovate

“The Wittenberg Project is renovating the Old Latin School for the purpose of providing a place for confessional Lutheran education in the heart of the home of the Reformation,” explained the Rev. Michael Kumm, chairman of the ILSW Supervisory Board. “The building will provide sleeping rooms and lecture/meeting space for college and university students, seminary students and pastors and laymen from around the world to come and study our Lutheran heritage and confession. We are working with the Concordia University System to set up a curriculum for ‘J-terms’ and other opportunities for students to come to Wittenberg to study.”

Demolition started in fall 2013 in preparation for reconstruction of the historic building that will house project programs.

The ILSW board met in Wittenberg in January 2014 with interested mission partners and donors and the project engineers, architect and archeologists who have worked on the project, to make decisions on the renovation and enter into a management agreement with the director of a neighboring entity, Colleg Wittenberg.

“We are progressing on all fronts,” Mahsman said. “We are at work on the building, which will be our ministry center, and we are working on the program and on attracting students to Wittenberg, as well as on ideas for Gospel outreach in a very difficult mission field. Many walls, floors and ceilings have been torn out, the roof has been removed, and work has begun on the ‘shell’ construction, that is, the ‘skeleton’ of the building. Just as the fund drive begins in earnest, so will the renovation of our 450-year-old building.”

Following renovation, the estimated completion and opening of the center is anticipated in May 2015. The project’s timeline allows the building to be established and open in advance of the arrival of the many visitors the city anticipates in connection with the 2017 Reformation anniversary.

### LCMS members invited

“I’ve watched a number of capital projects and campaigns incubate in my career,” said Mark Hofman, executive director of LCMS Mission Advancement. “This is a good one. The underlying business plan for the Old Latin School creates sustainable opportunities to reach people with the Gospel that are aligned with the mission, vision and values of the LCMS.”

The campaign to support the Old Latin School renovation will “go public” on May 1, according to Hofman. LCMS congregations, schools and households will be invited to participate in the project through charitable gifts and offerings. “We will also be announcing opportunities to have gifts matched, as well as to associate gifts of various amounts with components of the renovation itself through a naming-rights plan. And because of the generous support of pace-setting donors thus far, we are well on our way to funding the project entirely with gifts designated for The Wittenberg Project.”



Scaffolding has been erected and preparations for renovating Wittenberg, Germany’s “Old Latin School” for use as a Lutheran ministry center has begun. The public phase of a fundraising campaign for The Wittenberg Project is set to begin in May 2014. (LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford)

“This is a great project because it will be supported by the generous gifts of God’s people,” Bueltmann said. “It is not being funded by Synod’s annual operating budget or with regular offerings to missions, but by people who see the need for such an outreach center in this key area where the Reformation started.”

“God opened a remarkable door,” Harrison said. “We had to walk through. On the eve of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we have the best real estate in the world to proclaim the Christ of the Scriptures and the truth of the Lutheran Confessions. We are so busy with inquiries from potential partner church bodies around the world, and with mission opportunities, that we can’t keep up. Every Lutheran pastor and leader in the world has a heart for Wittenberg. We have a place — self supporting — to gather and inspire Lutherans from around the world, as well as our own young people, the pastors and people of the LCMS and anyone who wants to grow in the faith and be energized for the mission of sharing Christ and expanding the Lutheran church.”

For more information on The Wittenberg Project, visit [thewittenbergproject.org](http://thewittenbergproject.org).

*Deaconess Jeni Miller is a freelance writer and member of The Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Atlanta.*



LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison tours the Old Latin School renovation with Rev. Dr. Jobst Schöne, bishop emeritus of the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELK) of Germany, on Jan. 29, 2014, in Wittenberg, Germany. (LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford)





## Resolution Number: 1-10A

### *To Develop Spanish and Multilingual Capabilities in the Synod*

**Resolution Summary:** To strengthen the multilingual capabilities of the Synod by increasing the study of foreign languages (particularly Spanish) in the curriculum of church work preparation programs of the Concordia University System (CUS).

**Progress Report:** Several CUS institutions include foreign language requirements as a component of the general education portion of their curriculum, while other institutions are moving toward the addition of a foreign language requirement. Students engaged in church work preparation programs must fulfill these requirements as a component of their general education, and thus they are not included in the requirements of the specific program. In many

instances, students take courses in Spanish. A variety of other languages are offered throughout the system.

**Quote:** “These candidates will be highly qualified to teach in early childhood centers of the LCMS congregations who serve children whose first language is not English. These candidates can support congregations who serve Hispanic families in early childhood centers.” — Dr. Alan Meyer, former Concordia University Chicago interim president, regarding students in Early Childhood Education programs receiving ESL endorsements

**Additional Information:** Getting ‘chartered’ gives voice to Hispanic mission; CPH releases new Spanish-language study Bible

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## Resolution Number: 1-11

### *To Recruit and Place More Career Missionaries*

**Resolution Summary:** The Synod in convention approved the goal of doubling the number of career missionaries — carrying out witness, mercy and life together — serving to the very ends of the earth.

**Progress Report:** The Office of International Mission (OIM) created a four-person recruitment team to adequately address the mandate of the resolution. The Rev. Dan McMiller has also been added to the staff to head up recruiting efforts. The OIM will be adding David Fiala to the team in August 2014, and he will be concentrating his recruiting efforts on laypersons who may desire to serve in long- or short-term capacities. Thus far, the number of career missionaries has grown by 25 percent since the 2013 convention.

**Quote:** “God has richly blessed our mission field with excellent missionaries. It is our prayer that the Lord of the harvest would continue to raise up faithful workers to answer His call.” — Rev. Dan McMiller, director of Recruitment, Office of International Mission

**Additional Information:** New missionary-recruitment team begins work; Synod prepares new missionaries for service; LCMS equips, ‘sends’ new missionaries



## New Missionary-recruitment Team Begins Work

by Melanie Ave

On Thursday, March 13, the Rev. Dan McMiller grabbed the oversized pair of scissors and snapped the red ribbon in half, officially marking the beginning of a new missionary-recruitment team at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis.

The dozen or so LCMS employees in attendance clapped and cheered.

“And now we’ll let Dan cut the cake with the scissors,” joked the Rev. Dr. Edward Grimenstein, LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM) associate executive director.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony unveiled a new office space for the four-member recruitment team headed by McMiller. He serves as the director of recruitment for the OIM, which is the Synod’s ministry overseeing mission work in countries outside the United States.

Other members of the recruitment team include Erin Alter, manager, missionary applications for the OIM, and Maureen Williams, administrative assistant. A job posting will go up soon for the yet-to-be-named fourth member, who will focus on attracting laity and other church workers to the mission field. McMiller primarily focuses on clergy recruitment.

The event highlighted the need for more missionaries to help spread the message of Christ worldwide.

The LCMS has about 120 missionaries around the world. Recruiting more is a priority.

Delegates to the 2013 LCMS convention instructed the Synod to recruit and place more career missionaries, voting to make it a priority to “double the number of career missionaries engaged in church planting, mercy work and theological education during the next triennium.”

Grimenstein said that in the next year, the LCMS would like to place 25 clergy and 75 other church workers and laity in the mission field.

Missionary roles include theological educators, communication specialists, teachers, medical workers, mission developers, business managers, project managers, volunteer coordinators and church planters, among many others.



On Feb. 13, the Rev. Dan McMiller, director of recruitment for the LCMS Office of International Mission, cuts the ribbon on office space at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis for a newly created four-member missionary-recruitment team. The team will focus on recruiting clergy, other church workers and laity to the mission field overseas. (LCMS Communications/Amanda Booth)

Missionaries typically work alongside LCMS church partners and emerging church partners, who request the Synod’s help in fulfilling their needs.

The opportunities, Grimenstein said, are immense.

In East Africa, there are an estimated 15 million Lutherans.

“They could literally say, in the next few months, we need 50 people now,” Grimenstein said. “We need to be ready. That’s why we need a recruitment team.”

The missionary-recruitment team is currently seeking to place 20 short-term missionaries who can teach English as a Foreign Language at schools and churches overseas for two to three years or longer. Applications are requested by April 1 for candidates, who must be college graduates and members of LCMS congregations.

“We need people to go in our stead to answer the call, not only for our Lord, but the plea for help from our partner churches around the world,” McMiller said. “We have unbelievable opportunities to help our partners establish solid Lutheran congregations and seminaries and outreach at a time of great hunger and need for the Gospel in different parts of the world.

“We can’t turn our backs on them.”

While the need for missionaries is great, so is the need for LCMS members and congregations to support missionaries and the Synod’s work of caring for missionaries.

Missionaries need regular supporters who help fund their work, pray for them and remain in contact.

“It’s not just a paycheck,” said McMiller, who served for 14 years in Latin and Central America as a



missionary. “It’s a relationship; knowing the church is holding you up in prayer and supporting you with their sacrificial gifts. That motivates you as you are out facing difficult times as a missionary.”

Congregations can “adopt” missionaries through the “Together in Mission” program and families can support missionaries through the “Mission Senders” program. Individuals can give to specific missionaries and the LCMS Global Mission Fund.

Only 520 of the Synod’s congregations provide regular support to missionaries through Together in Mission.

“We have about 6,000 congregations,” McMiller said. “A lot of our congregations are not informed about the need and opportunity to adopt missionaries.”

“If every congregation gave \$5,000, we’d have \$30 million to support missionaries and missions,” Grimenstein added.

He emphasized that the church needs missionaries.

“Every day people are dying,” Grimenstein said. “Every day people are dying not having faith in Christ. That’s why we need to do it. We’re helping the global mission, the one mission of Christ in all this.”

To see a list of missionary service opportunities, visit [here](#).

For more information about missionary service, contact McMiller at [daniel.mcmiller@lcms.org](mailto:daniel.mcmiller@lcms.org).

For more information about how a congregation can support LCMS missionaries through the Together in Mission program, contact [debra.feenstra@lcms.org](mailto:debra.feenstra@lcms.org).

Support the LCMS Global Mission Fund by clicking [here](#).

*Melanie Ave is a staff writer with LCMS Communications.*



From left, members of the newly created LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM) missionary-recruitment team are the Rev. Dan McMiller, director of recruitment; Erin Alter, manager, missionary applications; and Maureen Williams, administrative assistant. The OIM is seeking a fourth team member who will focus on recruiting laity and other church workers as missionaries. (LCMS Communications/Amanda Booth)



## Resolution Number: 1-12

### *To Recognize and Give Thanks for Military and Institutional Chaplains*

**Resolution Summary:** The Synod in convention referred to both the Offices of International and National Mission the task of recognizing chaplains for the care they take of others' bodies, souls and minds.

**Progress Report:** The LCMS is continuing to show appreciation, especially for military chaplains, through the appointment of a president's task force to review the call process of returning military chaplains (Res. 3-10A).

**Quote:** "It is always comforting for chaplains and their families to have the support of the LCMS. Serving as a military or institutional chaplain brings unique circumstances to this calling. Having the support of the LCMS is quite a morale booster when these unique

callings take their toll on the church worker and his family." — Rev. Dr. Edward O. Grimenstein, associate executive director, Office of International Mission, and retired chaplain (Captain), U.S. Army

## Resolution Number: 1-13A

### *To Designate District Coordinators for Prison and Jail Ministry*

**Resolution Summary:** Res. 1-13A was referred to the Office of National Mission (ONM). The resolution asks for the appointment of a prison and jail ministry coordinator in each of the 35 districts who will provide training and guidance to congregations involved in this work.

**Progress Report:** The LCMS Southern Illinois District (SID) has graciously offered to assist the ONM by working with district presidents to identify a coordinator in each district, create a network among district coordinators and provide mentoring and consultation to coordinators in establishing prison and jail ministry. The SID also is planning a prison and jail ministry conference in 2016. The ONM is providing

resources that will enable the SID to accomplish these tasks. The SID has a long and faithful history of intentional prison and jail ministry across the district. This grassroots approach will ensure that prison and jail ministry throughout the Synod will not be a flash-in-the-pan ministry outreach.



## Resolution Number: 1-15A

### *To Encourage Further Support for Campus Ministry*

Resolution Summary: The Synod was encouraged to commend all those involved in campus ministry, to thank those organizations involved directly in campus ministry and to recognize the efforts of the Office of National Mission (ONM) through LCMS U to further expand the development of campus ministry across the Synod.

**Progress Report:** One of the most positive outcomes of the convention was the sincere interest of delegates to see increased support for campus ministry. This has culminated with the ONM's recent addition of the Rev. Marcus Zill as the director of Campus Ministry and LCMS U, which represents the first full-time dedicated staff position to directly support campus ministry since 2002.

In addition to having annual conferences for college students and developing various resources for campus ministries, congregations, college students and parents, there will be a new weekly college-age radio broadcast as well as worldview boot camps held across the Synod in the next year, preparing high schoolers for the world they will experience in college.

**Quote:** "Our universities are great incubators of ideas, both good and bad. It is time for us to step up our efforts in the academic square not only for our own youth, but also for the sake of reaching the atheists and agnostics alike." — Rev. Marcus Zill, director, LCMS Campus Ministry and LCMS U

**Additional Information:** Wood, Zill join national mission team; 'LCMS U' launches to boost campus ministry synodwide

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## Further support of Campus Ministry



**The Rev. Marcus T. Zill**, originally joined the Synod staff in August 2012 as the part-time coordinator of LCMS Campus Ministry. In May, he accepted the call to serve as the full-time director of LCMS Campus Ministry and LCMS U, the Synod's campus-ministry initiative. Zill will oversee

LCMS U, which has some 175 chapters at universities and colleges around the U.S. He is based in Albuquerque, N.M.

Zill brings to the position 15 years of experience as pastor of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church and Campus Center in Laramie, Wyo., where he also served as campus pastor at the University of Wyoming. In addition, Zill is one of the founders of Higher Things, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization that works with youth.

"While giving the best support possible to all those engaged in campus ministry, I am excited to help our church also lead the way in pioneering the development of campus ministry in urban campus settings and at our nation's community colleges," Zill said. "These are new frontiers in campus ministry and the opportunities are endless."

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— The Rev. Marcus T. Zill

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## Resolution Number: 2-03A

*To Give Thanks to God and Encourage Support for the Ministries of Lutheran Services in America (LSA) and Lutheran World Relief (LWR)*

**Resolution Summary:** The Synod in convention offered thanks and praise for the works of mercy extended through these two organizations, commended them for their faithful stewardship of resources and encouraged congregations and individuals to support their work.

**Progress Report:** The LCMS staff liaison to LSA and LWR conveyed the convention resolution results to the boards and presidents of these organizations. The LCMS has a renewed Memorandum of Relationship with LWR, pledging financial support for core operations as well as project grants. The LCMS continues its financial support of LSA for core operations as LSA offers executive training

and professional networking for LCMS Recognized Service Organizations.

**Quote:** “It is a blessing to have partner Lutheran organizations that are fully committed to working with us to provide tangible expressions of God’s mercy and care for those in need throughout the world. The Church’s work of mercy is often an entrée into the midst of suffering, providing opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ so there is care for body and soul. Our Lutheran mercy partners enable us to seize those moments.” — Rev. John Fale, associate executive director, LCMS Mercy Operations

**Additional Information:** LSA conference to focus on needs, gifts of disabled

## Resolution Number: 2-05B

*To Allow Extension of Calls to Specialized Pastoral Ministers (SPM)*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention amended Bylaw 3.8.2 to allow the Board for National Mission (BNM) to serve as a calling agency for institutional and agency chaplains and other non-foreign specialized ministers after consultation with the appropriate district president(s).

**Progress Report:** During the past year, LCMS Specialized Pastoral Ministry staff worked with the BNM to clarify the requirements and processes for a call and to identify the candidate materials needed by the board to consider prior to extending calls. Calls will be extended this fiscal year.

**Quote:** “The BNM is taking this responsibility extended to them by the Synod in convention very seriously. Members were very interested in learning the qualifications needed to serve as an endorsed chaplain, pastoral counselor or supervisor in SPM contexts and have expressed a deep appreciation for those who provide Lutheran care of souls to people who are in the midst of very frightening times of life and do not know that Jesus is the only Savior whom God has given to the world. We couldn’t entrust this process to more faithful and dedicated hands.” — Rev. John Fale, associate executive director, LCMS Mercy Operations

**Additional Information:** National Mission board clarifies purpose, OKs SPM call process



President Matthew C. Harrison draws the 65th Regular Convention of the LCMS to a close.



## Resolution Number: 2-06

*To Encourage a Strong Finish of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) and Give Thanks for the Effect LMI Has Made in the Global Fight to End Malaria-Related Deaths in Africa*

**Resolution Summary:** The Synod in convention desired to continue to make a profound difference with regard to eradicating malaria and the deaths caused by it, specifically through April 25, 2014, which is World Malaria Day.

**Progress Report:** New resources were developed under the banner of “Orange Out Malaria!” in preparation for World Malaria Day 2014. In April, LCMS households were invited to participate in LMI via a final, “finish strong” direct-mail appeal. Through June 30, 2014, the LCMS recorded \$3,605,000 in direct gifts and pledges for LMI program work, with an additional \$681,000 supplied by LCMS congregations and schools. LMI-related programming will continue until all of the available restricted funds raised have been depleted. A final LCMS/LMI fundraising report and

call for thanksgiving will be distributed on or around September 30, 2014, per a final memorandum of understanding with Lutheran World Relief.

**Quote:** “Malaria is the biggest killer disease in Liberia; children are its highest victims. I would like to thank the people of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and especially its children, who are bringing their pennies, dimes and dollars to help end the suffering of the people in Africa. You bring them the message of hope and of God’s mercy and love.” — Rev. Amos Bolay, bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia

**Additional Information:** LMI begins work in sixth African country, more starts planned; Join LMI’s ‘Orange Out Malaria!’

## Resolution Number: 2-07A

*To Emphasize Biblical Teaching of Sexuality, Marriage and Family*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution encourages congregations and members to proclaim Christ’s forgiveness to those struggling with sexual sin while also tasking the Office of National Mission (ONM), in coordination with the God’s Gift of Sexuality Task Force, to disseminate materials dealing with human sexuality, assisting individuals and families struggling with these issues.

**Progress Report:** The work of the task force is narrowly focused on providing resources and support for individuals struggling with same-sex attraction and their families. A new website will be launched in the coming months that will share videos, FAQs, devotions, Bible studies and articles. The ONM is currently considering ways to expand this work so that additional resources and support can be made available.

**Quote:** “This task force is currently focusing on the issue of ministry to individuals and families affected by same-sex desire and attraction, but our long-term goal is also to focus on other issues as well (e.g., cohabitation, pornography, divorce, transgender issues). In addition, the task force also hopes to provide a list of speakers who are willing to give presentations on the issue of same-sex desire and behavior and other sexual issues.” — Rev. Tom Eckstein, chairman, God’s Gift of Sexuality Task Force

**Additional Information:** Princeton prof to LCMS: Support biblical marriage; May, Harrison call for support of Indiana marriage bill; October 2013 issue of The Lutheran Witness





## LMI Begins Work in Sixth African Country, More Starts Planned

by Paula Schlueter Ross

Although it's winding down its fundraising campaign this spring — in conjunction with “World Malaria Day” on April 25, “Lutheran Malaria Initiative Sunday” on April 27 and “Orange Out Malaria! Week” April 22-25 — the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) is far from over.

Endorsed by LCMS convention delegates in 2010, LMI is really just hitting its prime, according to Martha J. Mitkos, the Synod's campaign director for the initiative, a cooperative project of the LCMS and Lutheran World Relief, Baltimore.

A new LMI program just began in Liberia — the sixth LMI country, along with Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria — and plans call for the initiative to be introduced in Ethiopia this year, with an eye toward starting LMI programs in Niger and Madagascar after that.

“There are a couple more countries that we have on the back burner, but it all depends on how much funding we receive,” Mitkos told *Reporter*. “So as we continue to receive funds, we will add additional countries.”

Even though the active campaign phase is ending, gifts to LMI will be accepted — and the work will continue — for the next three to five years, according to Mitkos.

That's a good thing, she says, because LMI and other worldwide efforts to end malaria deaths are making a difference.

Just three years ago, a child was dying every 30 seconds from malaria. “And now, this past year, the World Health Organization released the newest numbers that say it's every 66.5 seconds,” Mitkos says. “That's globally, but 90 percent of the deaths are happening in sub-Saharan Africa” where the efforts of LMI, she adds, are contributing to that improving scenario.

“The work that we do is so important because it comes in close proximity with the Gospel,” she said. “So ultimately our goal is to help these children live so that they have the opportunity to be baptized and hear the Gospel of Christ and what He has done for us.”



Liberians celebrate the official launch of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) in their West African country earlier this year. LMI is working through congregations and schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Liberia to train pastors, teachers and volunteers who already have relationships in so-called “last-mile,” or remote, communities. (Lutheran Malaria Initiative)

The Synod's LMI programs are conducted in conjunction with African-Lutheran church bodies.

In Liberia, West Africa, for example, LMI is working through congregations and schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Liberia to train pastors, teachers and volunteers who already have relationships in so-called “last-mile,” or remote, communities.

Sharing information that way — through those established relationships with respected church leaders — “helps us become more successful in the work that we're doing,” acknowledges Mitkos, because it's not an outsider coming in and saying, “You have to do this.” Instead, “it's someone that you care about and that cares about you saying: ‘You need to do this in order for you to protect your family.’”

Mitkos and Jacob Fiene, manager of LCMS Health Ministries, traveled to Liberia early this year to meet with church leaders. Fiene helped lead a workshop Jan. 10-11 in Monrovia for 23 volunteers and eight LMI Liberia staff members who will reach out to families in 17 communities. Their tasks will include meeting with community leaders to explain the LMI program and surveying each household to find out if: they own (and use) mosquito nets, family members have had (or are currently sick with) malaria, they have access to medical treatment, and they know how to prevent malaria.

The volunteers also will receive basic training from Liberia's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare so that they can test family members for malaria and provide treatment, if warranted.

“The primary things that we try to focus on are education [about preventing malaria] and access to resources,” such as mosquito nets and additional



funding, notes Mitkos. The LMI program includes training on how to apply for grants from other funding sources, such as the Geneva, Switzerland-based Global Fund, the world's largest financier of anti-AIDS, TB and malaria programs.

LMI funding to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Liberia is expected to be about \$150,000 over three years. But with a successful LMI track record behind it, the church body should be able to solicit funds from other sources to continue its anti-malaria programs. The Liberian program also includes a local consultant, Dr. Mosoka Fallah, a leader in the anti-malaria movement.

To date, LMI has raised about \$7.9 million in its fight to end malaria deaths worldwide, and Mitkos said she believes that day eventually will come. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is providing significant funding toward developing a vaccine to prevent malaria, she noted, but the earliest that might be available is 2018.

“So everything that we’re doing right now that continues to build trust in these communities creates the likelihood that they’ll be more likely to take the vaccine when it’s available,” Mitkos said.

Financial contributions to LMI “are definitely still needed,” she told *Reporter*, and will enable the program to enter more countries where malaria — a preventable disease — still claims lives every hour of every day.

Mitkos encouraged LCMS congregations to observe Orange Out Malaria! Week April 22-25 and LMI Sunday on April 27 (or an alternate date) by praying for those who have the disease and helping to raise awareness about — and funds for — LMI.

Free resources for both observances may be downloaded [here](#).

“Every 66.5 seconds a child is dying from something that’s been eradicated [in the United States] since 1951,” said Mitkos. “We are called by Christ to show love and mercy for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and to reach out with His hand of mercy as well as the Gospel.”

The Lutheran Malaria Initiative, she added, “is truly an opportunity for us to do that in an established setting where these are people that have pastors who will continue to nurture them and help them grow in their faith.”



Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) volunteer Veronica Ballah helps draft a mission statement during a Jan. 10-11 workshop in Monrovia. The workshop, led by the Synod's Jacob Fiene, involved 23 volunteers and eight LMI Liberia staff members who will reach out to families in 17 communities. (Lutheran Malaria Initiative)



## Resolution Number: L2-11

### *To Express Concern to Boy Scouts of America (Omnibus A)*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution requested that the LCMS consider organizing and operating an alternative youth organization for its young men and women if the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) in its May 2013 meeting adopted a resolution changing its membership standard.

**Progress Report:** On Oct. 7, 2013, the Office of the President released a letter and several accompanying documents regarding scouting in general and the BSA specifically. Those documents included a newly signed Memorandum of Understanding between the LCMS and the BSA. Later, documents were added highlighting the history of the LCMS and scouting and suggesting other organizations that LCMS

congregations and individuals may wish to consider. In May 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the American Heritage Girls.

**Quote:** “The Office of National Mission is not staffed or equipped to develop a scouting program for the LCMS. Rather, we will continue to evaluate scouting options and offer guidance to congregations and individuals as they make their decision concerning participation.” — Rev. Bart Day, executive director, LCMS Office of National Mission

**Additional Information:** All of these documents discussed above — and more — can be found here under “Youth Organizations.”

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## Resolution Number: 2-12A

### *To Speak Regarding Employment of Women in Military Combat*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “That the LCMS support those who have a religious and moral objection to women serving in ground combat positions” and “That the CTCR study this issue and produce a statement that can be considered and acted upon by the Synod in its next convention.”

**Progress Report:** The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) has delegated to a subcommittee the responsibility to begin the required study. The committee has engaged a drafter, and he is at work on the study, preparing an initial draft for committee consideration.

**Additional Information:** “The CTCR realizes that this is a sensitive and complex issue that is of deep

concern to many of our members, especially those serving in the military and their families. We are giving this assignment high priority, while also committing ourselves to preparing a response that provides thoughtful, careful, and faithful biblical guidance.” — the Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations



## Resolution Number: 3-01A

### *To Expand the Koinonia Project*

**Resolution Summary:** Generally, it encourages synodwide support for the Koinonia Project and asks circuit visitors to foster fraternal theological discussions in their circuit winkles. It also encourages participation by the Council of Presidents, the CTCR, theological faculties, church workers and laity at all levels of the Synod.

**Progress Report:** The Koinonia Project has developed a number of discussion groups around the Synod at various levels. The Council of Presidents has been divided into three discussion groups, examining aspects of Communion practice, plus the role of clergy and laity in the mission of God. The Office of the President has not yet developed a website in part because the materials are not yet ready to put up on the website. This remains a priority.

**Quote:** “There were guys struggling with various issues and ministry of grace, encouragement and wisdom shared across the table. Geographical, racial and district boundaries evaporated as we saw each other as brothers in need of the grace of Jesus. All were intensely involved with the conversation.” — Rev. Victor Nelson, regarding discussions at the Wyoming-Atlantic district conference held May 2014

**Additional Information:** Koinonia Project and Concept Paper; COP applies ‘Koinonia Project’ to church issues; Delegates vote to expand Koinonia Project

## Resolution Number: 3-03A

### *To Support, Commend and Increase Witness, Mercy, Life Together Ministry of Lutheran Schools*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution asks the entire Synod unequivocally and passionately to support and increase the education ministry of Lutheran schools. This support and passion should be manifest in both excellent curricular materials and in the proclamation of the Gospel, which should be evident in a clear Lutheran ethos in LCMS schools.

**Progress Report:** An exceptional Lutheran school embraces an identity that is rooted in Holy Scripture and is committed to faith formation, academic excellence and Christian service. Newly established National Lutheran Schools Accreditation standards clearly articulate expectations for exceptional Lutheran schools. LCMS School Ministry has also been

producing resources for National Lutheran Schools Week that focus on *Witness, Mercy, Life Together*. Through continued interaction and support of district education executives, the Office of National Mission is working to champion Lutheran education across the church.

**Quote:** “Lutheran schools exist to impact profoundly the lives of the students they serve. A well-rounded, exceptional Christian education in Lutheran schools focuses on what students need for a life of service in the world and in the Church.” — Terry Schmidt, director, LCMS School Ministry

**Additional Information:** Raising Up Leaders in Our Schools; Eight schools gain NLSA ‘exemplary’ status



## COP applies ‘Koinonia Project’ to church issues

During the four days of the LCMS Council of Presidents (COP) retreat Feb. 18-21 in Phoenix, the council spent the bulk of its time applying the concept and principles of the “Koinonia Project” to difficult issues in the church.

The Koinonia Project is an initiative by the Office of the President of the Synod designed to foster theological discussion under the Word of God to bring greater unity to the Synod’s “Life Together” on contentious topics. It grew out of the Synod’s 2007 convention-mandated Task Force on Synodical Harmony appointed by the COP and the LCMS Board of Directors. The Koinonia Project enfolded the suggestions recommended by that task force into this present effort.

With all members of the COP participating in one of three randomly selected groups, each group spent significant time identifying and beginning to work through an issue faced by the Synod (varying points of view being present within the membership of the groups). Discussions by these groups will continue each time the council meets until its April 2015 meeting.

The participation of the Council of Presidents in the Koinonia Project is in keeping with Resolution 3-01A, which was adopted at the 2013 Synod convention.

Synod First Vice-President Rev. Dr. Herbert C. Mueller Jr. led the retreat, explaining how it was designed to work. He recalled how the “Koinonia” concept has taken root within the Synod, underscoring that it is the living Lord Jesus who brings about true fellowship among Christians.

The council conducted its business meeting on Friday morning of the retreat, receiving a report from its Clergy Call and Roster Committee that included:

- revisions of two COP documents — “Guidelines for Dealing with Bankruptcy Involving the Ordained Ministers of the LCMS” and “Guidelines for Dealing with Bankruptcy Involving the Commissioned Ministers of the LCMS.” The revised documents are titled “Guidelines for Dealing with Credit & Financial Difficulties Involving Ministers of Religion — Ordained of the LCMS 2014” and “Guidelines for Dealing with Credit & Financial Difficulties Involving Ministers of Religion — Commissioned of the LCMS 2014,” respectively. The revised documents will be presented again for proposed approval at the COP’s April meeting. After they are approved, district presidents will see that the documents are distributed to rostered workers, along with a cover letter.
- information that the Concordia Plan Services section of the Supplement to the Diplomas of Vocation of the call

documents for rostered workers will be modified, effective July 1, to reflect the removal of the 3 percent offset payment requirement to rostered church workers who are currently participating on the Regular Basis of the Concordia Retirement Plan. A letter explaining the change is being mailed in late March to all employers with Rostered Workers on the Regular Basis. A separate letter is being sent in early April to the individual rostered workers.

- complimenting the January *Reporter* “Pressure Points” column about the misuse of the Internet for pornography while requesting its author to expand on the topic to include information about the role of district presidents in assisting LCMS church workers and congregations in addressing the issue. The April “Pressure Points” that provides such information is here.
- progress being made on guidelines to assist congregations with policies for prevention of sexual abuse.
- progress being made on a comprehensive review of the Council of Presidents Policy Manual, with the Clergy Call and Roster Committee to serve as the final reviewer of the revised manual on behalf of the council.
- a brief update on the ongoing appeals status of a ruling by a Wisconsin judge that challenges the IRS provision of a clergy housing allowance.

The COP also approved first-call placements of 15 ordained and 32 commissioned ministers, reinstated the Synod roster memberships of one ordained and eight commissioned ministers, provided 11 assignments to seminary vicars and approved 12 requests for extensions of non-candidate status. One retired pastor, upon approval of the Colloquy Committee for Pastoral Ministry, was accepted into the Synod as an emeritus member.

The council received a report from Synod President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison regarding his recent visits to Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar and Germany. He also spoke of the Synod’s financial report, seminary matters and progress being made to open an office in Washington, D.C.

In keeping with the Bylaw requirement that the Council of Presidents and Board of Directors determine the boundaries of the five regions of the Synod 24 months prior to the next convention, LCMS Secretary Rev. Dr. Raymond Hartwig presented a proposal to the council to retain the same delineation of regions as was used in preparation for the 2013 convention. This proposal was adopted — as also adopted by the LCMS Board of Directors during its Feb. 14 meeting.

With 33 districts reporting, 311 congregations are currently calling sole pastors, 34 are calling senior pastors and 73 are calling associate or assistant pastors — totaling 418. Six new congregations have been started since the last report and eight congregations were closed.



## Resolution Number: 3-04

### *To Authorize a Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools*

**Resolution Summary:** Through this resolution, the Office of National Mission (ONM) is authorized to convene a blue-ribbon committee on Lutheran schools. This task force will make a comprehensive analysis of schools, offering collaborative and creative options for the future of Lutheran education.

**Progress Report:** The ONM plans to take up this task in the coming four months. To date, consideration has been given to specific issues and topics the committee will address as well as who might serve to give the broadest perspective of the future of Lutheran education in the Synod. The goal is to address the critical issues confronting the future of Lutheran

education with the best subject matter experts available inside and outside of the LCMS.

**Quote:** “The blue-ribbon committee on Lutheran schools will establish a road map for congregations to operate effective, missional and sustainable schools that are distinctively Lutheran. I look forward to this work being undertaken in the near future.” — Terry Schmidt, director, LCMS School Ministry

## Resolution Number: 3-07A

### *To Further Promote Mission Awareness, Support, Collaboration and Coordination for Rural and Small Town, Urban and Inner-City, and Suburban Ministry*

**Resolution Summary:** This resolution directs the Board for National Mission (BNM) to develop policy in support of this work, as well as tasking the Office of National Mission (ONM) to increase significantly the development and coordination of awareness, support and collaboration specific to these areas of ministry.

**Progress Report:** The BNM has created policy to reflect the mission efforts needed in these unique demographic, cultural and missiological areas. At the same time, the ONM has been working to expand the resources, programs and support available through Rural & Small Town Mission, Urban & Inner-City Mission and, most recently, Campus Ministry. The delivery of these resources is through the districts

of the Synod that are specifically engaged in these ministry areas. Currently, the ONM is visiting with 10 revitalization pilot districts to create intentional, collaborative opportunities around these ministry areas.

**Quote:** “The Central Illinois District recently sent representatives to the International Center to participate with the ONM in its revitalization pilot program. We noted that, in a renewed effort, the LCMS and the ONM in particular are providing materials and assistance that reflect our great mission and theological heritage in a concerted endeavor to get to the task at hand and to perform that task faithfully.” — Rev. Mark A. Miller, president, LCMS Central Illinois District

**Additional Information:** Missing Mayberry; Strengthening Ministry in Rural America; Urban & Inner-City Mission; Campus Ministry; Rural & Small Town Mission



Delegates worship prior to the start of the day's convention business.



## Urban & Inner-City Mission launches new website

LCMS Urban & Inner-City Mission (UICM) now has a website, [lcms.org/citymission](http://lcms.org/citymission), with information about what the ministry does, what's going on in the cities and how churches, schools and members can help.

UICM is working to boost revitalization efforts in city ministries that reach out across cultures with the Gospel.

With the website, LCMS members now have a place to go to get the latest happenings in urban mission, in order to better support and encourage LCMS urban missionaries.

The Rev. Steven Schave, director of UICM with the Office of National Mission, pointed out that

UICM “provides resources for churches that wish to transform the chaos, death and decay that often plague the cities in which they are located into communities characterized instead by peace, life and renewal.

“The works of mercy carried out by LCMS urban missionaries are anchored by Word-and-Sacrament ministry to bring about life, light and hope through the forgiveness of sins,” he said.

UICM also has a new Facebook page — [facebook.com/lcmcitymission](https://facebook.com/lcmcitymission) — where followers can connect with others who are interested or involved in urban and inner-city mission and keep tabs on the progress of several UICM projects and missions.

## Resolution Number: 3-08A

### *To Reaffirm Faithful Church Revitalization as a Priority of the Office of National Mission*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention reaffirmed that one of the Office of National Mission's (ONM) priorities is church revitalization. The ONM was also charged to increase its ongoing focus on revitalization, while offering continued evaluation of resources available for it.

**Progress Report:** The ONM has realigned all programmatic ministry areas to focus on revitalizing the congregations, schools and workers of the Synod. Revitalization is being assessed on the continuum of worship, teaching, workers, stewardship, service and witness. In July, the ONM began the process of meeting with individual districts that are serving as pilot districts in the work of revitalization. These meetings are providing time for the Synod to hear about the specific work of districts in revitalization and how the

ONM might partner collaboratively to support those efforts.

**Quote:** "I am excited to see how the South Wisconsin District can partner with those who serve on the Synod level to address what everyone agrees is a major challenge for the LCMS: revitalization of the local congregation. While revitalization can only really take place on the local level, the district and the Synod can provide resources to assist the local congregation as it strives to confess Christ Jesus as Savior in an increasingly hostile culture. This is our time to work together, our time to be distinctly Lutheran, our time to plant churches, our time to honor our vocations, our time to embrace our communities. We can best do that together." — Rev. John Wille, president, LCMS South Wisconsin District

**Additional Information:** Strong Faith, Fervent Love: A Vision for Revitalization



Andrea Pitkus, lay member of the Commission on the Theology and Church Relations, speaks to the convention.



## Our Aha! Moment

Christians live outside themselves: they live in Christ by faith and in their neighbor by love.” That was one of Dr. Luther’s most brilliant aha! moments. It coincides with his observation that the nature of sin is “to be curved in on yourself.”

The effect of Christ’s Gospel is that it begins unbending you. It begins lifting up your eyes to behold with joy the certain promises of God in Christ, to know them as true for you, to begin to be filled with the hope that flows from them. And at the same time, it opens your eyes to see and meet the needs of your neighbor with a fiery love, a divine compassion.

Luther encapsulated this aha! in the words of the post-Communion prayer in our Divine Service. “We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another.”

Every time you gather with your fellow saints at the altar, your Jesus comes to you in His body and blood to strengthen your faith by His promises and to set your heart on fire with divine love. That’s another way of saying: He comes to give you a share in His own divine life, for He is perfect trust in the Father and perfect love for the neighbor.

The LCMS’ national ministries exist to serve our rural, inner-city and suburban congregations, our schools, our pastors, our youth and youth workers, our teachers and deaconesses and many others. In fact, on the following pages, you’ll learn more about *all* the work your Synod does domestically, and it’s a lot! From disaster response to worship to issues of life and health, the LCMS is bearing witness to Christ, showing mercy to those in need and rejoicing in a robust life together.

As we move forward, we know we have still more work to do, and that work will intentionally have a renewed focus on revitalizing everything we do nationally. We’ll work toward that revitalization at every level — Synod, district and congregation. And we’ll do it all under the umbrella of “Strong Faith, Fervent Love.” In “holding open the door of the Kingdom,” we will let the light of the age to come spill out of each unbent life through strong faith and fervent love so that congregations are renewed and new outposts of the future are planted and flourish.

Because His life is given to us as our own, the church of Christ remains an enigma in this world. It’s a colony from the future, an outpost of the age that will triumph when our Lord appears in glory, when love will have vanquished all hatred and thanksgiving will have replaced all grumbling.

It’s true that we only experience that in a fragmentary, partial way, because of the sin that clings to us right up to the grave. But despite our weak grasp of the new life, the Holy Spirit still causes the bright light of the coming age to shine through God’s people, like a door to a room filled with light, opening to spill out into the darkness outside, inviting those lost and alone in the darkness to come in with us to the feast of joy that has no end.

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“AS WE MOVE FORWARD WE KNOW WE HAVE STILL MORE WORK TO DO, AND THAT WORK WILL INTENTIONALLY HAVE A RENEWED FOCUS ON REVITALIZING EVERYTHING WE DO NATIONALLY.”

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## Resolution Number: 3-09

### *To Continue to Support and Promote Black Ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

**Resolution Summary:** Resolution Summary: This resolution set many tasks before the Office of National Mission (ONM): appoint a director of Black Ministry, affirm the work throughout the Synod, commend a formal account of the history of Black Ministry be undertaken, support the Rosa J. Young film project and thank God for pioneers of Black Ministry past and present, as well as expand the work of Black Ministry throughout the Synod.

**Progress Report:** The work throughout the Synod has been undertaken by the Rev. Roosevelt Gray Jr., the new director of Black Ministry. District visitation has been a top priority, sharing with congregations and leaders in those districts the mission and vision for Black Ministry.

The 2014 Black Ministry Family Convocation held in Kansas City, Mo., had an attendance of 462 participants and was a huge success. The director of Black Ministry

shared the mission and vision of Black Ministry, best-practice outreach and Lutheran Hour Ministries' Mission U workshops were held, and the Synod's other ministry resources were available.

The Rosa J. Young film project is quickly progressing. A new website and movie trailer are complete, with the movie preparing to start production in September 2014.

**Quote:** "Thank God for our LCMS Office of National Mission and the ministries supported through this office for the Synod, especially Black Ministry, which serves nearly 300 congregations in our Synod and reaches out to over 44 million blacks in America of every ethnic group — African-Americans, African immigrants, Hispanic blacks from the islands and Central and South America — through witness, mercy and life together." — Rev. Roosevelt Gray Jr., director, LCMS Black Ministry

**Additional Information:** Rosa J. Young film trailer; Gray begins work as director of Black Ministry

## Resolution Number: 3-10A

### *To Appoint a Task Force to Study the Call Process for Returning Missionary and Military Chaplains and Other Rostered Church Workers without a Call*

**Resolution Summary:** District presidents and congregations will be encouraged to consider calling church workers on both candidate and non-candidate status. Also, that the president of the Synod will appoint a task force to study the need for a placement process for returning military chaplains and missionaries and the candidate and non-candidate status of all church workers.

**Progress Report:** The president appointed a nine-member task force to study these issues. The task force is chaired by the Rev. Terry Cripe, LCMS Ohio District president, and includes representatives of the seminaries, the Council of Presidents, the Concordia

University System and military chaplains. The task force will continue its work and submit a final report and recommendations by July 2015.

**Quote:** "The task force is currently receiving information from the district presidents so that we have an accurate accounting of the number of professional church workers on candidate and non-candidate status and the reasons for their status. When we have that information tallied, we will begin discussing ways to help congregations evaluate those whose gifts and talents may be appropriate for them to consider." — Rev. Terry Cripe, LCMS Ohio District president

**Additional Information:** Helping Church Workers in Crisis; Adopted: resolutions to study call process, encourage daily family devotions



The Rev. Dr. Tilahun Menedo, president of Concordia College Alabama, preaches at the convention.



## Resolution Number: 3-11A

### *To Support Church Workers*

**Resolution Summary:** The Office of National Mission (ONM) was charged with providing guidelines and resources for districts and congregations in support of church workers. Those guidelines are to focus on praying for worker well-being, providing salaries that meet or exceed district guidelines, the establishment of “worker wellness committees” in each congregation, and funding for continuing education of workers, as well as formal and informal ways to better appreciate those who give their lives in service to the Church.

**Progress Report:** The ONM is working with four key partners in support of worker wellness: Concordia Plan Services, DOXOLOGY, Grace Place and Shepherd’s Canyon Retreat. By providing funding and opportunities for collaborative dialogue around worker wellness, these entities are collectively helping to provide those guidelines. The desire is for those guidelines to be shared with districts in the next 12 months.

**Quote:** “It’s gratifying to see the Lord blessing the partnership with these LCMS ministries, resulting in the development and provision of resources for the well-being of workers and their families, all for the glory of God and the strengthening of His Kingdom among us.” — Rev. David A. Muench, director of Ministerial Care, Concordia Plan Services

**Additional Information:** Coalition forms to set ‘action plans’ for church-worker wellness; Worker-wellness groups hold first joint meeting; Emotional and Spiritual Healing for Hurting Church Workers

## Resolution Number: 3-13A

### *To Update the Synod’s Catechetical Materials*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “that the Synod in convention direct the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, in concurrence with the President of Synod, to propose such needed revisions to the content of the 1991 *An Explanation of the Small Catechism*.”

**Progress Report:** The initial work on the revision has been assigned to a Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) subcommittee. In conjunction with Concordia Publishing House, a survey of LCMS pastors sought feedback regarding topics that should be addressed. The subcommittee has, in consultation with the president, appointed a working group (drafting committee) to prepare an initial revision. That group, which has started work, includes

scholars from both seminaries, a pastor, an educator and CTCR staff.

**Quote:** “It is virtually impossible to overstate the significance and value of Luther’s Small Catechism for the nurturing and formation of the faith, life and worship of young people and adults in the LCMS. We are very excited about the long-term implications of this project and about the helpful input we’ve already received from pastors, church workers and others regarding possible ways that the *Explanation* to the catechism might be enhanced for use in today’s cultural and ecclesial context.” — Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations

**Additional Information:** Survey begins process of updating ‘Explanation’



## Harrison Encourages Church Workers in Videos

In two new videos, Synod President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison encourages church workers — ordained clergy in one and all other church workers in the other.

To view the 6-minute video encouraging clergy, visit [lcms.org/video/forpastors](http://lcms.org/video/forpastors). And visit [lcms.org/video/forchurchworkers](http://lcms.org/video/forchurchworkers) for the 7-minute video encouraging other workers, in which he also asks congregation members to encourage their workers.

“That task is an extraordinarily difficult one,” Harrison acknowledges, pointing out the regular weekly and other opportunities (such as Lent and for funerals) when pastors preach, on top of other duties. “It’s not easy business being a preacher.

“But I want to encourage you,” he continues. “The Word of God is living and mighty and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing unto the marrow. And the Word of the Lord does not return void. So, don’t lose heart, brothers. The Gospel does its business, even through you and through me.”

He suggests reading Martin Luther’s *Invocavit* sermons that he preached in Lent of 1522, as an exercise of how “he drives things home personally” to his congregation by talking directly to them. Harrison adds that he has been reading those sermons lately.

“I would just recommend [to] all of you brothers, as an exercise, [to] take a look at the *Invocavit* sermons, particularly during Lent, and then note all the pronouns that Luther uses and where he uses them.”

As an example, he points to the first of those sermons, found in volume 51 of *Luther’s Works*, starting on Page 70.

“He says ‘I’ — talks about himself as a person who is a believer and also who is concerned about the congregation — is responsible as a preacher,” Harrison says of Luther.

“Look at all the places he uses the word ‘you’ when he delivers the people the Law: ‘you are sinners, you have fallen short.’ And then, also, he does so with the Gospel. He talks directly to people in front of him, people he knows, people he talks directly to, people he talks to face-to-face and he looks in the eye.”

“The Lord bless your preaching,” Harrison says as the video ends. “It’s challenging business. There are many



In two new videos, Synod President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison encourages church workers — ordained clergy in one and all other church workers in the other.

different ways, of course, to preach. But take a look at Luther and I think we’ll all be blessed.”

In the other video that focuses on “all the other church workers — the DCEs, the teachers, all the people working in our schools, our secretaries, everybody who makes the church work in addition to the pastor,” Harrison asks viewers to “repent of taking advantage of and taking for granted all of our church workers.

“You know, they put in unbelievable hours, they don’t get paid very well compared to the going rates in most places, and they deserve our great thanks and our love.”

He asks congregation members: “Would you do something this Lent? Would you please look at the church workers in your congregation and reach out to them? Reach out to them, thank them for their service, would you please? That’s vital. Say something positive about them.

“Would you pray for them? Would you pray for them daily?” he asks. “Would you give them something, would you take care of them, would you give them the keys to your cabin, would you give them a little time away, would you be an advocate for them for an increase in salary, would you be generous to them? Would you join me in thinking about how these church workers can be honored in your midst?”

Quoting Martin Luther and St. Paul on the need to care for one another as members of one body, Harrison adds, “We’re a body, a fellowship, and in Christ we love and care for one another. Please, love and care for — speak well of, speak to and be an advocate for — our DCEs, teachers and all the other church workers who are such a great blessing to us.”



## Resolution Number: 3-15

### *To Encourage Study of Lutheran Confessions to Celebrate Reformation*

**Resolution Summary:** With the upcoming 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, the convention rightly identified the next few years as an opportune time for the study of the Lutheran Confessions contained in the 1580 Book of Concord. The resolution calls for the Office of the President, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations and Concordia Publishing House to work together to make available appropriate resources for this study and to encourage the entire Synod to make use of them.

**Progress Report:** Initial meetings have taken place to brainstorm and identify various available resources, opportunities to create new resources, and mechanisms and technology to encourage easy access to their use for the entire Synod. Current plans include having a variety (in length, depth of study and cost) of appropriate

resources available for use in congregational Bible studies or for individual study.

**Quote:** “No compilation of books or statements has so adequately, so accurately, so comfortingly reflected and exhibited the Biblical Gospel as our Lutheran Confessions. *Soli Deo Gloria: to God alone the glory.*” — Rev. Dr. Robert D. Preus in *Getting into the Theology of Concord*



## Resolution Number: 4-04

### *To Affirm Growing Mutual Relationships Among International Lutheran Church Bodies*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved that the LCMS should plan a 2015 international conference and that participants at this conference should “discuss possibilities for collaborative efforts among confessional Lutherans around the world toward the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.”

**Progress Report:** The Commission on Theology and Church Relations and the President’s Office held an International Conference for Confessional Leadership in the 21st Century in 2012, bringing confessional Lutherans together from around the world. A second conference will be held in Wittenberg, Germany, May 5-8, 2015. The theme is “Celebrating the Reformation: Remembrance, Repentance, Rejoicing.” A schedule

has been set, and some 100 speakers and participants are being invited.

**Quote:** “With the continued decay of Western society and values, world Lutheranism continues to seek a clear voice of the Christian Gospel that upholds the Lutheran Confessions as found in the Missouri Synod. Opportunities abound that call for us to be careful stewards so we are able to have a maximum effect. The International Lutheran Council continues to reach out to churches in their region and to develop a strategic plan for the next 10 years. The LCMS is privileged to have a significant role as these events unfold.” — Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver III, director, LCMS Church Relations

**Additional Information:** CTCR to host international theological conference; {insert second conference link}

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## Resolution Number: 4-05

### *To Encourage Further Discussion with Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)*

**Resolution Summary:** The president of the Synod is to seek opportunities to continue conversation with WELS and ELS.

**Progress Report:** There have been two informal meetings with WELS and ELS since 2012, with one of those meetings taking place in December 2013. Per the resolution, the LCMS has sought additional conversations with both WELS and ELS and is planning another informal meeting scheduled for December 2014. Both WELS and ELS passed similar convention resolutions in their synod conventions, seeking additional conversations with the LCMS.

**Quote:** “Of the Lutheran church bodies in America, there are none that have the history and shared

theological convictions of the LCMS, ELS and WELS. It is truly sad that differences arose between our churches in the 1960s, but we rejoice in the opportunities for our church bodies to engage in conversation and to become reacquainted with one another after nearly 50 years of silence and separation.” — Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver III, director, LCMS Church Relations

**Additional Information:** WELS resolves to continue discussions with LCMS



## Resolution Number: 4-06A

### *To Address Questions Regarding Service of Licensed Lay Deacons*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “that the President of the Synod establish a task force ... to develop a plan anchored in the Word, in consultation with licensed lay deacons and those who supervise and are served by them, to resolve questions about the service of licensed lay deacons serving congregations.”

**Progress Report:** The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) is represented on this task force via its associate executive director and one of its members, the Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler. The task force has met twice, gathered information on the extent and types of service by lay deacons in the Synod, scheduled visits with districts that have the greatest level of utilization of deacons, and is outlining the process that will culminate in a plan to be shared with Synod members by the summer of 2015.

**Quote:** “The task force is aware that the need to address this matter comes from such vital concerns as fidelity to our confessional commitments, a need to address the needs of some of our congregations that are isolated or impoverished, and the commission of our Lord to share the Gospel with all nations.” — Rev. Larry Vogel, associate executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations

## Resolution Number: 4-08A

### *To Provide Responsible Pastoral Care with Regard to the Practices Surrounding Holy Baptism*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “that the Commission on Theology and Church Relations provide a study of the theology on Holy Baptism that sets forth the scriptural and confessional teaching on this great sacrament of Christian rebirth and offer positive guidance to pastors and congregations regarding proper baptismal practices.”

**Progress Report:** The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) assigned this to a subcommittee. The subcommittee has engaged a drafter who provided a tentative outline that met with the subcommittee’s approval. A 40- to 60-page report is anticipated, hopefully before the end of the triennium.

**Quote:** “The CTCR has produced over 100 major reports on key theological topics in the 50-plus years of its existence, but — surprisingly — it has not (until now) been asked to produce a report on Baptism. We’re thrilled by the Synod’s request to do so (at long last!) and are confident that this report, when completed, will be of tremendous use and value to pastors, church workers and congregations as they delve more deeply into the teachings of God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions regarding this precious gift of God’s grace in Christ.” — Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations





## Resolution Number: 4-11A

### *To Commend Faithful Service and to Study Proper Roles of Men and Women in the Church*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “that the 2013 LCMS convention ask the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, in consultation with the seminary faculties, to provide materials for congregations to study the roles of men and women in the home, church, and society.”

**Progress Report:** The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) assigned this to a subcommittee that continues to work on various matters pertinent to man and woman in the home, church and society. The subcommittee has determined that one appropriate course of action in light of this resolution and previous convention requests is to provide topical materials to be included in an overall update to its 1981 report “Human Sexuality.” One step toward that goal was the adoption of a brief report on sexual dysphoria

(addressing the phenomena of transgendered and transsexual persons).

**Quote:** “In its 2009 report ‘The Creator’s Tapestry,’ the CTCR acknowledged that ‘this document does not address many issues that can and should be discussed regarding a Christian understanding of the relationship of man and woman.’ The CTCR continues to tackle these sorts of issues and to work toward preparing helpful, biblically based resources to address them.” — Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations

**Additional Information:** {include link to sexual dysphoria document when it’s posted}

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## Resolution Number: 4-13

### *To Encourage Confession and Absolution for Pastors*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “that the Commission on Theology and Church Relations provide a document that sets forth our church’s teaching on confession and absolution and offers positive guidance to pastors and congregations in their exercise of the Office of the Keys.”

**Progress Report:** The plenary Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) assigned this to one of its subcommittees. The subcommittee has engaged a drafter who provided a tentative outline and has teleconferenced with the subcommittee on two occasions. Work is proceeding.

**Quote:** “In 2007, the Synod in convention resolved ‘that both laity and pastors be encouraged to make greater use of individual confession and absolution’ (Res. 2-07A). 2013 Res. 4-13 builds on that prior

word of encouragement by asking the CTCR to provide a document that offers ‘positive guidance’ to pastors and congregations as they use this great gift of God.” — Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations



## Resolution Number: 4-15

### *To Reaffirm Synod's Position on Creation*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention resolved “that the Commission on Theology and Church Relations be encouraged to continue and complete its current study on the relationship between science and theology, taking into account the concerns noted above about the detrimental effects of Darwinian views on marriage, family, and society.”

**Progress Report:** A Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) subcommittee is working on this assignment and has begun sharing the recommended draft with the plenary commission. The report is nearing finalization at the present time. Note: In addition to the work of the CTCR and in response to a question submitted by the president of the Synod, in June 2014, the Commission on Constitutional

Matters (CCM) issued an opinion that open and repeated advocacy of theological positions contrary to Synod's stated positions (including the Synod's position on theistic evolution) is ultimately a “challenge to and a violation of the very confessional basis of Synod expressed in Articles II and VI 1 of the Synod's Constitution.”

**Quote:** “It's hard to think of a topic that is more relevant and challenging for college-bound Christian young people today than the relationship between science and theology. This has the potential to be one of the more significant reports that the CTCR has produced in recent years, and I believe it will be welcomed, widely used and deeply appreciated by members of the LCMS (young and old) and even beyond LCMS circles.” — Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, executive director, Commission on Theology and Church Relations

## Resolution Number: 5-01A

### *To Encourage Continued Faithful Witness by the Concordia University System*

**Resolution Summary:** Concordia University System (CUS) institutions are to develop strategy to aid students in dealing with unbiblical challenges facing them in today's culture. The Synod president is to convene a task force to strengthen the CUS institutions' connection to the Synod; study the issues of confessional Lutheran identity in all CUS institutions; and review the makeup of the Board of Regents, Bylaw 3.6.6.5 (k) and governance structures.

**Progress Report:** In March 2014, President Harrison convened a CUS think tank of some 40 people who discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the CUS. From this discussion, a 13-member task force was established and will meet for the first time in August

2014. Their first report and recommendations will be submitted to the president by the end of 2015, with a final report given to the 2016 LCMS convention.

**Quote:** “The 5-01A task force will engage the challenges that our increasingly disoriented and secularized culture present to Christian higher education. It will collaborate with the Synod's universities in developing an articulate, substantive and winsome response that, under God's grace, will form new generations of young men and women who not only know, but confess and live out the classic scriptural and Lutheran faith in worship, work and play.” — Rev. Dr. Dean Wenthe, president, Concordia University System

**Additional Information:** Wenthe named president of Concordia University System; Concordia University System names Philp as director



## Resolution Number: 5-02A

### *To Support and Encourage Participation in Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support Initiative*

**Resolution Summary:** The LCMS should continue to improve, expand and support the Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS) Initiative. In addition, districts and congregations receiving new seminary graduates should continue their support for the program and encourage new pastors to participate.

**Progress Report:** PALS added four new courses this past year. More are planned for the year ahead. Social media has been utilized to build community and share ideas. While participation rates have been on the rise, there is always room for improvement. The annual Facilitator Training Conference focused specifically on the recruitment and retention of new pastors (and their wives) to the program. In the past two years, the number of PALS gatherings held

increased by 37 percent and the percentage of eligible pastors participating continues to inch upward.

PALS continues to work with districts to make the transition from seminary to parish a smooth one and applauds the success the Nebraska District has had with its “Antioch Project,” which works closely with the PALS groups in their district, incoming pastors and their wives and congregations receiving seminary graduates.

**Quote:** “PALS is a great tool for helping pastors transition into the ministry and develop relationships and skills that will benefit them for a lifetime.” — 2014 participating pastor

**Additional Information:** Convention calls for ‘continued faithful witness’ by Concordia colleges, universities; supports PALS; PALS can make pastors’ sem-to-parish transitions smoother

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## Resolution Number: 5-03E and 5-04B

### *To Provide a Procedure for Establishing Policies Governing the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program*

### *To Continue and Strengthen the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) Program*

**Resolution Summary:** The first resolution provided a change in Bylaw 3.4.3.8 in the appointment of the Chief Mission Officer (CMO) and one representative from each seminary to work in consultation with the Council of Presidents to provide leadership, coordination and oversight for the SMP program. The second affirmed the program as well as the roll of the seminaries and district presidents in the process and also asked the SMP committee to consider the concerns enumerated in the 2013 SMP task force report.

**Progress Report:** Since the appointment of the Rev. Bart Day as interim CMO in June 2014, there has been no opportunity for follow up on SMP.

**Quote:** “Providing leadership, coordination and oversight for the SMP program is an important part of the work of the CMO. In the coming months, I plan to communicate with the Council of Presidents and the seminary representatives to set a clear path on how best to provide coordination and oversight of SMP. We will also make sure that the concerns of the task force are addressed and reported to the 2016 convention.” — Rev. Bart Day, executive director, LCMS Office of National Mission

**Additional Information:** Convention continues, strengthens SMP distance-education program



## Resolution Number: 5-08B

### *To Establish a Standard for Continuing Education of Pastors*

**Resolution Summary:** The Synod in convention directed that the seminaries, among other things, “work collaboratively with the Council of Presidents to develop a list of qualified continuing education resources and activities.”

**Progress Report:** The Synod president asked the executive director of Pastoral Education to bring together the district presidents involved with Res. 5-08B to also discuss Res. 5-02A (“To Support and Encourage Participation in Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support Initiative”). The meetings were convened with several district presidents and key individuals from both seminaries to discuss and design a seamless process for continuing education that will be utilized by pastors following seminary graduation.

Discussions thus far have identified Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS) to be the delivery

vehicle for “expected” continuing education for pastors during the first three years of ministry, providing specific emphases for each year. During the second year, results of a 360-degree evaluation — such as the Pastoral Care and Support project and input provided by discussions with circuit visitors and leaders in the pastor’s congregation — could inform future continuing education choices.

**Quote:** “God has gifted each of us richly and uniquely. Through the Synod’s continuing education opportunities — for example, PALS and the seminary offerings — our gracious Lord provides a variety of ways for us to enhance those gifts and develop others. I am fully supportive of this effort!” — Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast, president, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

**Additional Information:** Delegates support continuing education of pastors

## Resolution Number: 5-12

### *To Encourage, Promote and Support the Recruitment of Hispanic and Spanish-Speaking Students and Faculty into Church Work Professions*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution encourages the recruitment of Spanish-speaking students and faculty into church work professions.

**Progress Report:** Several institutions are near the point of being designated “Hispanic-Serving Institutions” by the United States Department of Education. Concordia University, Irvine, Calif., is in the emerging category of Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas, expects to be designated the same by the end of 2014. Concordia University, Portland, Ore., is actively engaged in a program called “3 to PhD” with Faubion, a local school. This project works with local children, including

many Hispanic families, and offers future church work students an opportunity to be engaged in Hispanic ministry. Concordia University Texas and Concordia University, Irvine, have partnered to increase Hispanic enrollment and graduation, and federal grants are being sought to fund this project. Concordia University, Nebraska, Seward, Neb., has developed a Hispanic/Latino initiative during the last academic year, which has been adopted by the Cabinet of the University and is in the process of being implemented.

**Quote:** “Concordia University, Irvine, is partnering with Concordia University Texas in applying for a substantial federal grant to enhance our outreach to largely first-generation Hispanic students in our respective regions.” — Kurt Krueger, president, Concordia University, Irvine, Calif.



## Resolution Number: 5-14A

### *To Conduct a Study of the Alternate Routes to the Pastoral Ministry*

**Resolution Summary:** The Synod president is to appoint a task force, chaired by the executive director of Pastoral Education, to conduct a study of the non-Master of Divinity routes to the pastoral office. That group is to report its findings and recommendations concerning the appropriateness of each route, the optimal number of such routes and so on to the Synod president by 2015 for action at the 2016 Synod convention.

**Progress Report:** The task force has been appointed. It first met March 4-5, 2014, at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, with two subsequent phone conferences. The task force has agreed to follow a problem-solving model in fulfilling its responsibilities, identifying and commending appropriate programs of pastoral formation according to specific screening and evaluative criteria established by the task force.

**Quote:** “The Res. 5-14A task force is fully engaged in its task of studying the non-Master of Divinity routes to the pastoral office, considering the appropriateness of each route and examining the optimal number of such routes. ... Overviews and information on each of the routes have been provided by the various directors of them. Opinions have been collected from subject matter experts — those directly involved in key positions relating to each route. Facts and assumptions have been gathered. Screening criteria and evaluative criteria are now being developed, and a timeline has been established.” — Rev. Donald Fondow, president, LCMS Minnesota North District

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## Resolution Number: 6-01A

### *To Promote Financially Healthy Universities, Seminaries and Church Workers*

**Resolution Summary:** That the Synod president, in consultation with the Synod’s Board of Directors, develop and implement strategies by 2015 to eliminate the historic Concordia University System (CUS) debt by 2017 through a special appeal and address Synod church worker educational debt.

**Progress Report:** Several meetings have taken place with Synod leadership regarding the details of the historic CUS debt, opportunities to engage successfully in a synodwide effort to eliminate the debt and how to coordinate with other pending Synod financial matters. Planning is taking place to implement various ideas and develop means by which to address this matter on a synodwide level.

**Quote:** “One of the largest individual items in the unrestricted operating budget of our beloved Synod is known as ‘the historic CUS debt.’ It represents the accumulation of capital debt and operating deficits, from as far back as 40 years ago, from nearly all of our institutions of higher education, including some that no longer exist. It is time to free the resources it takes to service this debt and focus on funding other mission and ministry opportunities.” — Jerry Wulf, LCMS chief financial officer

**Additional Information:** COP delves into range of topics, biblical studies; Council of Presidents assigns vicarages, first calls



## Resolution Number: 6-16A

### *To Encourage Conversation and Education About Commission on Constitutional Matters Opinions*

**Resolution Summary:** As one of its requirements, 2013 Res. 6-16A calls for annual meetings of the president of the Synod, the Council of Presidents and the Commission on Constitutional Matters “to discuss matters pertinent to Commission on Constitutional Matters opinions.” It also calls for the president of the Synod to convene the Commission on Constitutional Matters, the Commission on Handbook and representatives of the Council of Presidents “to discuss making the Commission on Constitutional Matters a more integrated servant of Synod, to offer suggested bylaw changes to the next convention, and to effectuate such changes.”

**Progress Report:** The three groups and the president of the Synod have agreed to begin work toward satisfying the resolution’s expectations by setting their own regular meetings at a mutual time and place that will make possible a joint meeting. This joint meeting will take place on Nov. 20, 2014, in conjunction with the Lutheran Church Extension Fund Fall Gathering in Garden Grove, Calif.

**Quote:** “This meeting is seen by everyone involved as a good first step toward satisfying the resolution’s expectations.” — Rev. Dr. Ray Hartwig, LCMS secretary

## Resolution Number: 7-01A

### *To Set Forth Clear Mutual Expectations in Carrying Out Office of Visitation*

**Resolution Summary:** The convention reaffirmed that visitation is a primary function of the Synod and that visitation should occur at all levels of the Synod — including the Synod president, district presidents and circuit visitors — and that all visitations should follow the general guidelines established by the Council of Presidents.

**Progress Report:** The Council of Presidents created a working group to establish how visits should be done and the content of visitations. Based on the agreed-upon visitation guidelines, the Synod president and vice-presidents have begun visiting every district before July 2016. As of this report, eight district visitations have been conducted by the president and

vice-presidents. The remaining district visitations are planned to take place between July 2014 and December 2015.

**Quote:** “Along with the generous hospitality shown, the renewal of old acquaintances and forging of new associations, highlights of the visitations I have been involved in include the frank discussions among all the groups and our devotional time together.” — Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe, LCMS fifth vice-president

**Additional Information:** COP lays groundwork for ‘Ministry of Visitation’; Council of Presidents assigns vicarages, first calls



## Resolution Number: 7-15

*To Address District Membership/Ecclesiastical Supervision Issues (Bylaw 2.12, et al.)*

**Resolution Summary:** The resolution asks the Board for International Mission (BIM), in consultation and concurrence with the Council of Presidents and the Synod president, to create interim action and bylaw revisions to address two issues: (1) proper ecclesial supervision of workers living outside of the United States and (2) international congregations that desire to be received into membership in the Synod.

**Progress Report:** This is clearly a complex issue that requires careful consideration so that the needs of international workers and congregations are addressed. Currently, additional information is being gathered and consultation sought. The BIM will take up the issue in the coming months so that bylaw revisions may be considered at the next convention.

**Quote:** “This is an area of life together under the new structure of the Synod that continues to beg attention. Right now the Synod is making do with current bylaw requirements. A comprehensive solution accompanied by appropriate bylaw changes will be most helpful for the sake of uniformity, good order and the proper care of congregations and church workers in these unique situations.” — Rev. Dr. Ray Hartwig, LCMS secretary

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## Resolution Number: 7-18

*To Study Doctrinal Training for Reconcilers*

**Resolution Summary:** The Council of Presidents, Commission on Constitutional Matters and the Secretary of the Synod are to give consideration to providing doctrinal training to the Synod’s reconcilers.

**Progress Report:** This matter will be included on the docket of a joint meeting of the council and commission in November 2014.



## Resolution Number: Assorted Resolutions

### *To Set Forth Clear Mutual Expectations in Carrying Out Office of Visitation*

**Resolution Summary:** The 2013 convention adopted numerous resolutions affecting the *Handbook of the Synod*. Res. 7-02A “To Return to Use of Title ‘Circuit Visitor,’” which required a constitutional change, was ratified by vote of the congregations of the Synod and is reflected throughout the *2013 Handbook*. A number of other resolutions adopted a variety of bylaw changes that have been incorporated into the Bylaws of the Synod as well.

**Progress Report:** Accomplished.

**Quote:** “The Commission on Handbook has produced for publication on the Synod’s website an electronic Word version of the Handbook that reflects all changes and corrects a number of editorial errors.” — Rev. Dr. Raymond Hartwig, LCMS secretary

